Teaching the Progressive Era through the life and accomplishments of Jane Addams

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TEACHING THE PROGRESSIVE ERA
THROUGH THE LIFE AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS
OF JANE ADDAMS

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
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in

The Department of Curriculum and Instruction

by

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Abstract

Because of standardized testing in Louisiana, the high school American history curriculum has been reduced to a long list of facts. Students no longer learn the story of American history – the people and events that have defined America as we know it. Instead, it is presented to them in fragmented pieces. Teachers move so quickly from subject to subject that they fail to explain the origin and transformation of ideas. This paper proposes teaching a period of history through the life of an important historical figure, in this case, Jane Addams. Through the life of Jane Addams, students can negotiate the issues of the time period from her childhood in the 1880’s to her work in the First World War. Jane’s life can provide the framework for teaching the Progressive Era in a way that will make students think about how the work done by reformers in 1890, still affects our lives today. The reformers of the progressive era pushed for legislation on the local, state, and federal levels so that all people, regardless of sex, race, social class, and religious affiliation, could receive the assistance they needed to live in the new industrial society. Jane’s personal philosophy about society and social reform became part of a larger philosophy that we now identify as American pragmatism. American pragmatism and the different variations provide the philosophical basis for the progressive movement at the turn of the century. Students will be encouraged to discuss topics like social ethics, democracy, and experience. They will see how Jane Addams put philosophy to practice in her work at Hull House. Learning about the Progressive Era through the life and accomplishments of Jane Addams provides a platform for future discussion of issues both past and present.
Introduction

I have often tried to figure why I love to learn about history as well as when and how this passion for history developed. It has been the center of my academic career for as long as I can remember and it is the foundation for my professional career as a teacher of high school social studies. From a young age social studies was a favorite subject of mine. Even in elementary school coming home and telling my parents about the people we learned about in class was so exciting. History is a subject you could talk about, have an opinion about. It was exciting to share new ideas and show off the informed conclusions I had come to make. Family members talked to me often about the important events they remembered living through. My mother remembers where she was when she heard that President Kennedy was assassinated and what it was like in the days following his death. My father vividly remembers the Civil Right movement in Baton Rouge and the integration of the public schools. My grandfather was alive when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor and my grandmother remembers going to the docks in New Orleans to wave to the soldiers going off to World War II. I gained a new respect for them when we talked about what it was like to live through the depression.

In high school my passion for history only deepened. Fueled with inspiration by historical figures like Abraham Lincoln, Teddy Roosevelt, and Woodrow Wilson, I wrote papers about these men, studied their speeches and aspired to be a lawyer and someday run for public office. I watched documentaries on the Civil War and the Civil Rights Movement, two of my favorite time periods in American history. Thinking that a degree in history would be a great background for law school, the plan was to take as many history classes at Louisiana State University as possible. History classes were the only classes I truly loved, feeling empowered and enthralled in every class. It didn’t matter if
it was a class about the Intellectual and Social History of the United States or a class about Tudor England, I couldn’t get enough. Towards the end of my junior year the idea of going to law school was abandoned for something completely different. Just about the only alternative left to someone with a history degree who didn’t want to go to law school was to teach. It was here that one passion gave way to a whole new passion: teaching history. That was eight years ago and I have never regretted the decision.

When I decided to go to graduate school at Louisiana State University it was to pursue a master’s degree in history. The education classes from my undergraduate degree had done little to help me in the classroom and so the goal was to learn new information for my newly acquired world history class. Because education classes were often built around school hours, I enrolled in a curriculum theory class as an elective. It was in that very first curriculum theory class at LSU that I was reintroduced to Jane Addams. She was included in Pedagogies of Resistance (1999), a book about women educator activists during the years 1880-1960. I had never heard of educator activists and their stories fascinated me. Petra Munro had written a chapter in Pedagogies of Resistance (1999) about the formidable figure of Jane Addams and her political activism as teaching. As a teacher of American History, I could vaguely remember what my students learned about Jane Addams, but I knew that it in no way compared to the reality of what she accomplished for women and the poor as both the founder of Hull House and as a philosopher. I began looking through the various teachers’ editions in my classroom, curious to see how Jane Addams was portrayed in the high school textbooks. Surely if the material was in the textbook, I would have taught my students about her. After the chapter on westward migration and before the chapter on World War I, information about Jane Addams was situated in a chapter about the Progressive Era. In an effort to speed
through all the chapters in the book to prepare students for the Graduate Exit Exam (GEE),\(^1\) this chapter is often cut short. If anything, in the two weeks devoted to the Progressive Era in the Louisiana Comprehensive Curriculum,\(^2\) you could maybe cover the main legislation and reforms. Teaching this time period so quickly was difficult and unproductive. It was difficult to know how to connect this time period to student’s lives and interests.

With a desire to learn more about women in American history, Jane Addams became a personal interest. Regardless of what textbook you use, Jane Addams is always included. If I ever wanted to expound on a topic in the Progressive Era I could do it when we talked about her. Being new to the study of curriculum theory, it was fascinating to see the way women were presented in the textbook. Enrolling in more classes on curriculum theory, I was amazed at the different approaches there were to looking at how history is constructed. Realizing that curriculum could be constructed as gender text, or theological text, or any myriad of other things, it became my mission to look at historical text differently.\(^3\) Several history and curriculum classes later, I was reminded of the importance of teaching social and intellectual history. Despite the difficulty it presented, I wanted students to be more informed, not just about facts, but about the way we live, or the reason we live it a particular way. It was this aspect of American history that impacted their daily lives.

\(^2\) Louisiana’s new Comprehensive Curriculum is based on Grade Level Expectations (GLE’s), statements of what all students of what all students should know or be able to do by th end of each grade. <http://www.doe.state.la.us/lde/ssa/testhome.html>.
Jane Addams could be used to teach students about the history of women, the redefinition of democracy at the turn of the century, and the origin of legislation that is still in effect today. You could ultimately teach the progressive movement through the life of Jane Addams. She was part of a generation of women that was different than any that had come before them. This generation was the first generation of women in the United States to go to college, leaving the workplace of the home, for most of them indefinitely. She would be presented as a warrior who fought a patriarchal society for women’s rights and the rights of the underprivileged. Jane Addams and women like her fought for and won the right to vote and with it pushed through legislation that would help the poor and underprivileged in America. In an effort to cover the issues at the turn of the century, it became apparent why teaching this chapter to high school students was so difficult. It is hard to teach women’s suffrage or the need for social reforms without understanding the philosophical basis for them.

I read once that an examination of Jane Addams thoughts and actions reveal much about the thoughts of reformers and philosophers at the turn of the century. You do not have to teach them all in order to lay the groundwork for future study. Her life can act as a window to the age of progressive reform in a way that will leave students wanting to learn more. Jane Addams wrote eleven books, including Democracy and Social Ethics (1902) and The Excellent Becomes the Permanent (1932), hundreds of articles, and gave even more speeches. Correspondence with her friends and colleagues, articles that she wrote, and books about her philosophies and experiences all exist to paint a clear picture of who she was and what she was passionate about. It is there in her words and her own interpretation. This thesis is not a critique of Jane Addams, nor is it an effort to discover
some new aspect of her life. It is an effort to use different elements of Jane’s
development as a person and a philosopher to teach a time period that hugely impacted
our life today.

Chapter 1 contains a brief history of the United States following the Civil War. It
includes both the dominant narrative, similar to the one in a student’s textbook, and a
brief history of women. At the beginning of any unit on the Progressive Era, students
will need to understand what was going on outside the dominant discourse. For this study
the emphasis is on women, but future study could include information on ex-slaves,
immigrants, or the urban poor. A short biography of Jane Addams is included to situate
her into the time period and is used to show how a specific young person negotiated the
changes in society, whether it was education or religion, at the turn of the century.

In Chapter 2, I will investigate the religious journey of Jane Addams, her non-
traditional religious upbringing and the extent to which it informed her future decisions.
She was born into a religious family and attended a religious university. It is difficult to
understand Jane’s\textsuperscript{4} unique approach to social reform without an understanding of her
non-traditional views on religion. The focus is on Jane’s childhood and her time at
Rockford Female Seminary. Students will find it interesting to know that Jane was part of
a generation that was the first to seriously question the place that religion had in the
search for morality.\textsuperscript{5} The first to ask the question, was a personal relationship with God,
or a belief in God necessary for the improvement of society? While Jane Addams
wrestled with the functionality of organized religion, both personally and socially; she
was indeed one of the most spiritual figures in history. The question was what was she

\textsuperscript{4} For ease of reading, throughout the rest of the paper Jane Addams will be referred to as Jane. All
other people in the paper will be referred to either by their full name or last name.

\textsuperscript{5} Gioia Diliberto, \textit{A Useful Woman: The Early Years of Jane Addams} (New York: A Lisa Drew
Book/Scribner, 1999), 129.
supposed to do with it? How was it supposed to help her help others? The more I looked at her writings, the more I came to realize that her religious upbringing was likely the single most important element that propelled her into the world of social reform.

Chapter 3 describes Jane’s personal philosophy about society and social reform and how her views became of a larger philosophy that we now identify as American Pragmatism. American pragmatism and the different variations of it provide the philosophical basis for the progressive movement at the turn of the century. Because of standardized testing and the need to move quickly, students see American History as extremely fragmented - in other words, it doesn’t make sense. In an effort to move from one subject to the other, teachers often fail to explain the origin and transformation of ideas as pertaining to things like social reform. We only tell students where we are, rather than how we got from here to there. Clearing this up may help students better understand American history. Teaching philosophy is difficult, but we must start somewhere. An introduction to pragmatism with specific examples provided by Jane Addams will help get them started.

Chapter 4 is a comprehensive look at Hull House, the settlement house started by Jane Addams and Ellen Starr, and the programs it provided. Hull House was pragmatism in practice. Located in one of the poorest neighborhoods in Chicago, it housed young educated women and it became a place for them to use what they had learned in college. Open to the public, Hull house provided just about every service available that a community would need. It changed and evolved as society did so that it would always meet the needs of the people it serviced. It was the embodiment of Jane’s philosophies on everything from education to the court system. The best way to teach pragmatism is to show what it looked like, beyond the definition.
Chapter 5 contains a sample unit plan that implements the information into the American history curriculum. I propose using Jane Addams to teach the dominant narrative and how minorities negotiated their changing roles within it. Once there is a clear explanation of the history leading up to the progressive movement, students will look at how society was constructed at the turn of the century. They will read primary sources, specifically several from Jane Addams, and see how democracy needed to be redefined at the turn of the century. Students will be encouraged to use the philosophy of pragmatism to solve some of today’s social issues. Ultimately they will learn about the people and ideas that shaped modern American social thought.

We have failed students in the area of social and intellectual history, maybe because teachers think the students will not understand it or maybe because they think it is too controversial. Because of this, students have a hard time understanding the “why’s” of history. Why did it take so long for women to get the right to vote? Why was there no government assistance for the poor and infirm in 1890? Why do we have a welfare system today? Why is it necessary to have a juvenile court system? Changing the way a teacher presents history is a daunting task, however it should be our mission to equip students with the knowledge and skills they need to become an informed citizen of the United States. In my classroom it will begin with Jane Addams. In the following chapters you will see one teacher’s attempt to change the way students learn about history.
Chapter 1
Situating Jane Addams in American History

If a student opened up their history textbook, and looked up Jane Addams they would find her in the chapter about the Progressive Movement. In your typical high school American history textbook the progressive movement follows the chapter on westward migration. It consists of various topics including urban growth, helping the needy, and the need for public education. Jane is always found in a paragraph about the influx of immigrants at the end of the nineteenth century and she is most likely given credit for either starting the settlement movement in the United States or at least running the most successful settlement house in the United States. Sometimes she is mentioned later when the textbook covers topics like women’s suffrage or the peace movement during World War I. Her contributions to American History are summed up in a few sentences. Jane Addams is never called a philosopher, nor is she considered a pioneer in social reform.

In order to understand Jane Addams it is necessary to review what society was like when she was born. Situating Jane Addams in history would begin in the 1790’s. Although she would not be born for another seventy years, society was still being influenced by the outcome of the Second Great Awakening. It was an evangelical movement that focused on converting people to a belief in God so that they might experience salvation. Evangelicalism reinforced the power of the individual: Status within this movement was based on the measure of a person’s religious experience, not on the churches doctrine or the clergy’s authority. Revivalists taught that a person’s faith mattered more than their social status. Spiritual standing was directly proportionate to the
intensity of their religious experience and their dedication to evangelical disciplines. It was a new hierarchy within the church where spiritual superiority mattered much more than wealth and secular prominence. It was a new, democratic approach to religion.

Seventy years later, the ideals of the United States Constitution were challenged. The country split in two as the Union and Confederate forces fought over state’s rights and personal liberties. Although democracy persevered, the Civil War changed America socially, politically, and economically. While the North was separated from the South they made major plans for national expansion without consideration to their rural counterparts. The Civil War congress passed the first system of national taxation and the first national currency. Money was funneled into the building of public universities and the transcontinental railroad was completed. Abraham Lincoln’s Republican Party turned the federal government into “an engine of social and economic progress.”¹ By the end of the Civil War the North was using all of its resources to usher in industry and big business. Louis Menand said it best in his preface to _The Metaphysical Club_ (2001): “For more than thirty years, a strong central government promoted and protected the ascendance of industrial capitalism and the way of life associated with it – the way of life we call modern.”²

In the years following the Civil War and Reconstruction, southerners and immigrants flooded the cities as advances in technology made their jobs obsolete. Some cities in the United States actually doubled or tripled in size. The government was in the throes of laissez faire government, meaning that they had neither the desire nor inclination to interfere with a person’s life so long as citizens stayed within the

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² Menand, x.
boundaries of the law. There was no welfare system or government assistance program to help this new urban poor. The United States was undergoing an industrial revolution in the last half of the nineteenth century, and the word revolution is no exaggeration. Almost every area of life underwent a transformation. Advances in transportation, communication, agriculture, and domestic life made the United States look very different than it did in the years before the Civil War. The ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment finally freed the slaves in the United States. During this time African Americans gained citizenship and the right to vote. Unfortunately, equality was slow coming in the South, and when federal troops left the South in 1877, the Confederates regained power. They segregated the blacks from white society and in 1896, the Supreme Court ruled in *Plessy v. Ferguson* that “separate but equal” was legal.

In the 1890’s, a progressive movement began to attempt to bring under control the problems created by this industrial growth and change. Cities were busting at the seams because of the influx of immigrants, and large ethnic neighborhoods formed in major cities like New York, Boston, Chicago, and San Francisco. From the end of the Civil War to the early 1900’s, a great divide formed between the wealthy and the poor. The theory of Social Darwinism justified the power of business tycoons like Rockefeller, Carnegie, and Morgan saying that wealth was the outcome of the fittest and the best rising to the top. Opposite these millionaires were the millions who labored for long hours and low wages under inconceivable working conditions. These workers, women and children included, worked twelve hour days, seven days a week in dangerous

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factories that were completely unregulated by the government. A group of progressive reformers took note of these disparities and resolved to change the political and economic systems. The Progressive Movement lasted from about 1890-1920 and the reformers worked hard to enact progressive laws at the local and state levels. In 1912, Theodore Roosevelt, a progressive president was elected and the reformers were able to get legislation passed at the federal level. They sought reforms that would help the poor, regulate factory conditions, and expand democracy at the voting booth.\(^5\)

**Women in American History**

Even in the decade following the American Revolution there were women who could envision a more democratic society. Mary Wollstonecraft, a British woman wrote *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* in 1792. Known as the “feminist Bible,” Wollstonecraft’s work tied the libertarian views of America with the rights of women. She believed that the much discussed “natural rights” given to them by God should apply to woman also. Despite the fact that America was supposed to be the “land of opportunity,” the same restrictions that applied to women in Europe applied to women here. American society, like that of France and Great Britain, was divided into two spheres: the domestic sphere and the public sphere. Women ruled the domestic sphere where they were to be a wife, mother, and spiritual leader. Men ruled the public sphere through work, politics, and economics.\(^6\)

Essentially these spheres were based on masculine and feminine traits. If you associated any given trait with a man, than a woman should possess it’s opposite or

\(^5\) Peiser, 278.
compliment. For instance, if men were strong, than women were weak, and if men were rational, than women were emotional. The home was a safe haven for women where they were protected from the rigors of the public sphere. Every trait, quality, or characteristic applied to one or the other sex, and acceptable activities corresponded. Women lacked any sort of legal standing, and if they experienced any freedom at all it was as an unmarried woman. Once they got married they were the property of their husband.

In the first half of the eighteenth century the boundaries of the two spheres began to shift. Women gained legal rights as a consequence of Equity laws, which began in England. Equity law emphasized the principle of equal rights rather than tradition and became a precedent in Mississippi as early as 1839. These laws allowed married women to own property and separate from their husbands. Women began to work outside the home in mills and factories, challenging the notion that women were only suited for jobs that involved nurturing, like teaching. Literature began to challenge commonly held beliefs about women. In 1845, Margaret Fuller wrote Woman in the Nineteenth Century, in which she said that individuals had unlimited capacities and when people’s roles were defined according to their sex, human development was severely limited.  

When women began to insert themselves into the public sphere they changed the very meaning of public life itself. At the same time, they did not abandon the private sphere, but shaped and molded their families to be able to adept to changing times.  

They brought public attention to issues that up until then had only appeared in the domestic sphere – health, education, and poverty. They created jobs like teaching,

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nursing, and social work making public roles that originated in the private sphere. Women developed a distinctly American form of public life through voluntary associations, something that is still a fundamental aspect of American life. This achievement is important because “women have shown the continual reworking of the democratic dream in the face of great inequality of wealth and power.”

During the Civil War women threw themselves into the war effort. Women in both the North and the South worked at a level of energy and organization that had never been done in American history. In the North women took part in the efforts of the Sanitary Commission, the abolitionist movement, and campaigned for the rights of working women. In the South, white women gained a new sense of authority as many of them worked the plantations and ran communities while the men were fighting the war. Many women were prepared to fight for the gains they made in the public sphere during the war.

Modern America was born in the time between 1890 and 1920, and it was a new urban, industrial, bureaucratic America. Life changed drastically in this time period as urban industrial lifestyles replaced traditional small communities. Women began to enter the political domain traditionally occupied by men by organizing and participating in reform movements. These women worked to make changes in education, initiate prison reform, ban alcoholic drinks, and free the slaves. Women like the Grimke sisters took the platform, before mixed audiences, and spoke out against slavery. Women began to see themselves in the same boat as slaves. Just like the slaves they were supposed to be passive, cooperative, and obedient to their husbands. Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia

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9 Evans, 4.
10 Evans, 118.
Mott, and Harriet Tubman became abolitionists and feminists, seeking equal rights for slaves and women.  

Elizabeth Cady Stanton and a group of friends met in July of 1848, and the outcome was the Seneca Falls Convention. The purpose of this convention was to discuss the social, civil, and religious condition and rights of woman. It was the first meeting of its kind in the history of western civilization. These women considered it their civic duty to make America live up to its promise of a better, more egalitarian society for its citizens. Using the Declaration of Independence as a framework, Elizabeth Cady Stanton drafted the “Declaration of Sentiments.” In this document, Stanton listed areas of life where women were treated unjustly. The women of this convention called for the immediate granting of women the rights and privileges which belonged to them as citizens of the United States.

In Born For Liberty (1989), Sara Evans claims “between 1865 and 1890, public life, if not the electoral arena, seemed to be filling with women.” They did so with reform as their cause. In 1873, the Temperance Movement was born as women acted out at the consumption of alcohol. Women in the Midwest were tired of seeing families disrupted and lives destroyed by alcohol. About 60,000 women rallied in the streets to have saloons outlawed. While they did close some saloons down, the liquor industry only sustained minor changes. The impact on the women involved was far greater. As Frances Willard wrote:

\[13\] Evans, 142.
\[14\] Evans, 126.
Perhaps the most significant outcome of this movement was the knowledge of their own power gained by the conservative women of the churches. They had never seen a “woman’s rights convention,” and had been held aloof from the “suffragists by fears as to their orthodoxy; but now there were women prominent in all church cares and duties eager to clasp hands for a more aggressive work than such women had ever before dreamed of undertaking.¹⁵

Temperance was a secular reform with religious roots. This was the chance for women to protect their families from societal ills, making them the moral guardians of the family. The organized response came in the form of the Women’s Christian Temperance Movement (WTCU) in 1874.¹⁶

**Where Is Jane Situated?**

Jane was born in 1860, twelve years after the Seneca Falls Convention. She grew up in that tense time period following the Civil War. Her father had been an abolitionist and a friend of Abraham Lincoln.¹⁷ While she was only a child when the war ended, she was a teenager when the last of the Yankee troops pulled out of the South. By the time Jane entered college, the spirit of reform hung heavily in the air. She was aware of both the abolition movement and the temperance movement. For someone like Jane Addams, someone who had been raised to be confident, outspoken, and tenacious, this was an exciting time to be alive. Women were changing the boundaries of what was socially acceptable work for themselves and others, and yet they still could not vote. Jane and her peers took college seriously, ever mindful of the fact that they were privileged to be able to go to college. Anyone who has read about Jane’s college years would know that she attacked learning with a fervor and she consumed books that would help her find herself, be it books about philosophy, the Bible, or literature books.

¹⁵ Evans, 126.
¹⁶ Evans, 127.
Jane entered Rockford Female Seminary in 1877, a college that had been chartered by the Presbyterian and Congregational Conventions thirty years before. It was a place for women to receive religious and domestic training, however when Jane entered Rockford the school was going through a transition and all kinds of classes were being offered. Jane studied Latin, natural science, ancient history and literature, mental and moral philosophy, Greek, and Bible history. She devoted a lot of her time to reading and loved George Eliot and Victor Hugo. She was enamored with the new critical spirit which applied scientific rigor to all areas of life. Throughout her college years Jane would endeavor to find rational explanations for her religious speculation.

Jane gained insight from the classes she took and the books she read. Her readings in medieval history left her “fascinated by an idea of mingled learning, piety, and physical labor, more nearly exemplified by the Port Royalists than by any others.” Jane Addams, Twenty Years at Hull House (New York: MacMillan Company) 51.

The Port Royalists date back to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and became popular in their desire to remain true to the ideals of Catholicism before the Tridentine Council. “The Abbey of the Port Royalists was more than a convent of reformed nuns and the community of ‘Solitaires’ more than a band of holy men gathered together from every walk of life to give themselves wholly to God. They had ideas which, supported by brilliant minds and holy lives, were considered dangerous to the pretensions of ultra-montanists, scholastics and ecclesiastical politicos.” While Jane only talks about her fascination with the Port Royalists once in her autobiography, it is easy to see that Jane was impressed with the way they lived in community.

18 Jane Addams, Twenty Years at Hull House (New York: MacMillan Company) 51.
She was an avid student of Thomas Carlyle. She said that between Thomas Carlyle and the Bible she was “searching for a frame of reference which would secure her to the world in such a way that she would be free to use her talents and energies.”

Thomas Carlyle was a Scottish historian, critic, and sociological writer whose writings influenced Jane tremendously during her years at Rockford. Jane made several references to specific books of Carlyle’s that spoke to her, including Heroes and Hero Worship (1841) and Frederick the Great (1858). While Carlyle never found himself subscribing to any particular orthodoxy, he always believed passionately in a personal God. Hector Macpherson wrote that Carlyle “lifted a whole generation of young men out of the stagnating atmosphere of materialism and dead orthodoxy into the region of the ideal…we believe that 'no English writer has done more to elevate and purify our ideas of life and to make us conscious that the things of the spirit are real, and that in the last resort there is no other reality.'”

As a social critic, Carlyle maintained that all history depended on the will of great individuals. He thought that all men should accept stern reality as essentially good despite its attendant evils, that they should utter the “Everlasting Yea” to life. He emphasized the importance of duty, an idea that appealed greatly to Jane. She wrote her friend Ellen Starr Gates in the summer of 1879, saying “There is something in Carlyle that suits me as no one else does.”

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21 Addams, Twenty Years at Hull House, 36 and 65.
As for the Bible, Jane remembers experiencing the “beauty of holiness” on Sunday mornings when, for two years, she and a teacher of Greek studied the Greek Testament together. The teacher allowed Jane a reasonable amount of freedom of interpretation, and they did not discuss doctrine. Jane may have had issues with organized religion, however, she did not seem to have issues with the Bible. She read the Bible throughout her life, she quoted the Bible often in her writings, and I believe Jane was able to apply the Bible to everyday life. While we may be comfortable with the concept of personal interpretation of the Bible in today’s age, with our nondenominational churches, Jane was going out on a limb. Jane enjoyed reading the Gospels, in bulk, not cut up into chapters and verses. She had an “insurmountable distaste for hearing the incidents in that wonderful Life referred to as if they were merely a record.” Jane of course was referring to the life of Christ, and while throughout her life she may have struggled with His divinity, she emulated His teachings. It was Christ who exemplified the importance of relationships; that we are to love our neighbors as ourselves. It is a simple statement, but people mattered to Christ and the Gospels are full of examples of this.

Jane read the masters of English literature and was fascinated by what they had to say about the “individual confronting the universe.” She was inspired by the poetry of Robert Browning. One of her favorite lines of poetry was “God’s in Heaven/All’s right with the world.” John Rushkin, an English social critic, wrote about the corrupting aspects of great wealth and asserted the state’s responsibility to end poverty and ease

25 Addams, Twenty Years at Hull House, 52.
human suffering. He taught her that “optimism did not imply satisfaction with, or
acceptance of the human condition in its institutional manifestations.” Even though he
was British, he spoke out against some of the same injustices plaguing America at the
turn of the century. Rushkin believed that progress for the few at the expense of the
many was evil, and he believed that laissez-faire government made it possible. Matthew Arnold gave her the ideal that culture was something to be experienced and
cultivated, and that it could help raise the masses.

The time between 1870 and 1930 has been called the golden age of America’s
philosophical preoccupation with religion. Jane was part of a generation that was the
first to seriously question the role of religion in morality. The books of Matthew Arnold,
Thomas Carlyle, and John Rushkin help point this generation into what Auguste Compte
called “the religion of humanity.” This was a secular creed that called for breaking down
the barriers between the classes to improve life for all. Adherents to this were dedicated
to serving others based on the conviction that all people – regardless of class, birth, or
wealth – have the capacity to evolve into their best selves. Philosophers and
theologians, once close allies, found themselves drifting further and further apart.
Philosophers were beginning to ask the poignant, but difficult question: What is the
connection between religion and experience?

28 Ronald Bolender, "Jane Addams," Dr. Ronald Bolender.
29 Ronald Bolender, "Jane Addams," Dr. Ronald Bolender.
30 Ronald Bolender, "Jane Addams," Dr. Ronald Bolender.
31 Denise Lardner Carmody and John Tully Carmody, The Republic of Many Mansions,
32 Diliberto, 129.

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Chapter 2

From Religion to Spirituality

Many books and textbooks describe Jane Addams as religious or saintly, and upon first glance at her books and autobiographies, it is easy to wrap her up in a neat little package.¹ Why do people believe that she was a religious person? It could be because she talked about religion often in her autobiographies. As a child and at Rockford she pondered it, questioned it, challenged it, and experimented with it. Jane was raised in a non-traditional, but religious home. Her father taught her to think for herself and question everything. The lessons she learned from him provided the foundation for a moral standard that was rooted in her religious beliefs. In college, girded with a strong understanding of Biblical principles, she was confronted with traditional religion, and she had to figure out what she truly believed. She struggled with the fundamental issue of the divinity of Christ, which is the very foundation of Christianity. When she graduated from seminary, she was faced with the burning question: what good was a personal relationship with God if it did not push you to action? If Christianity demanded action, then what would she do with it? Jane grew up at a time when women had few opportunities to work in the public sphere. While we know that the action she finally took was to open Hull House, it was her childhood and time at Rockford that prepared her spiritually and morally.

In the preface of Twenty Years at Hull House (1937), Jane Addams relates her difficulties in deciding which memories to document in her autobiography. “It has been hard to determine what incidents and experiences should be selected for recital, and I

have found that I might give an accurate report of each isolated event and yet give a totally misleading impression of the whole, solely by the selection of the incidents.”\(^2\) The same concern holds true for anyone attempting to determine the role religion played in Jane Addams’ life. The purpose of this chapter is not to say that Jane was a religious person, but to look at how she negotiated her non-traditional religious upbringing with her formal religious education to create a spirituality that would guide her throughout her life. This chapter is an endeavor to find out how Jane became the person she was.

“**The Dominant Influence**”

Most of Jane’s memories from her childhood involve religion in one way or another, be it in a dream, nightmare, or in a conversation with her father. To understand the person Jane becomes, you must understand where she came from. Jane says herself in the first sentence of *Twenty Years at Hull House* (1937) that “on the theory that our genuine impulses may be connected with our childish experiences, that one’s bent may be tracked back to that ‘No-Man’s Land’ where character is formless but nevertheless settling into definite lines of future development, I begin this record with some impressions of my childhood.”\(^3\) These impressions revolve mostly around her father and the lessons he taught her, lessons that created the foundation of her spirituality. There are three things that stand out the most.

Jane’s father was non-traditional when it came to religion. She grew up in a religious family, but not in the traditional sense of the word. She was born to John and Sarah Addams, in Cedarville, Illinois in 1860. John Huy Addams, was in her own words


\(^3\) Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull House*, 1.
“the dominant influence,” in her childhood. He was a typical nineteenth century American self-made man. He was a pioneer, a businessman, a senator, and a loyal citizen of the United States. Jean Bethke Elshtain, in her book *Jane Addams and the Dream of American Democracy* (2002), says that the museum in Cedarville describes John Addams “as a religious and civic leader…and the most successful businessman in the county.” While John Addams was definitely religious, he did not belong to any particular denomination. Jane recalls a conversation that took place while she was on a break from boarding school. For as long as she could remember her family had never joined one particular church in Cedarville, rather they alternately visited the Methodist, German Lutheran, Evangelical, and Presbyterian churches. When she asked him what denomination he belonged to, he told her he was a Hicksite Quaker, and then he dropped the subject.

Hicksite Quakers were a branch of the Society of Friends. The Friends taught their followers to use the Bible as a guide for life, but to also follow one’s “inner light,” as an individual guide for life. The difference between the Hicksite Quakers and other Quakers was that they were guided more by their “inner light” than by the Scripture. For the Hicksite Quakers, the “inner light” committed them to personal integrity, charity toward others, religious toleration, and democracy in church and state. It was these beliefs he passed onto his daughter. James Linn, in his biography of Jane Addams, includes a passage from John Addams’ diary: “What would a man profit by gaining the

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4 Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull House*, 1.
whole world and lose his soul? I am firmly impressed that ‘Honesty is the best policy,’ and hope that I may by all means and through all hazards stick to the above Proverb.”

John Addams was teaching his daughter to use the Bible as the standard, but to interpret the meaning herself. Jane was a seeker, always inquisitive, while her father was conventional, but they did have one thing in common: “to possess and recognize the ‘inner light.’”

Jane was taught to challenge commonly held assumptions whether in school or church. Jane talked often with her father about religious doctrine, especially those she did not understand. An example of this would be when Jane asked her father to explain predestination. After he explained it she still did not understand. He responded saying that “it did not matter much whether one understood predestination or not, but that it was very important not to pretend to understand what you didn’t understand and that you must always be honest with yourself inside, whatever happened.” Jane’s father was teaching her to not take everything at face value. The example was predestination, but the lesson was far reaching. If you learn about it and you do not understand it, or it does not mean anything to you than you do not have to accept it as a truth for your life.

Lastly, John Addams taught Jane that Christianity demanded a social commitment. Her father was sensitive to the injustices of the world. He was interested in the plight of the less fortunate and believed strongly in improving the prisons, the insane asylums, and the state industrial and normal schools. Within the first couple of pages in her autobiography, Jane Addams tells the story of how she would not be able to

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8 Linn, 3.
9 Linn, 10.
10 Addams, Twenty Years at Hull House, 15.
11 Diliberto, 33.
12 Davis, 5.
sleep when she was young for fear “that I myself should die in my sins and go straight to that fiery Hell…”\textsuperscript{13} Jane goes on to say that she often felt “overwhelmed by an excessive sense of responsibility and the consciousness of a fearful handicap in the effort to perform what is required; but perhaps never were the odds more heavily against a ‘warder of the world’ than in those reiterated dreams of mine.”\textsuperscript{14} John Addams did not shelter his children from the harsh aspects of life. She was seven years old when she saw poverty for the first time. She had accompanied her father to the mill where he did business and after seeing the little houses around the mill, Jane remembers telling her father that “when I grow up I should, of course, have a large house, but it would not be built among other large houses, but right in the midst of horrid little houses like these.”\textsuperscript{15} How prophetic these words would be as Jane would one day buy a mansion situated in one the worst neighborhoods in Chicago and use it to promote social change.

Jane relates other conversations she and her father had about his religious philosophy in her autobiography, and it is evident through each telling of the story that she cherished his insights and advice. Jane’s testimony was “mental integrity above everything else.”\textsuperscript{16} Jane’s father was a firm believer in the Christian principles of integrity and self-respect. These beliefs were indeed passed on to his daughter. Jane’s journey to find herself does not end with her father influence. Her father taught her about the Bible and about social justice. He taught her to trust her “inner light.” He set a high standard of moral integrity. For Jane, her father was the most honorable and scrupulously moral person she knew. His Christianity was grounded in small-town life, not on

\textsuperscript{13} Addams, \textit{Twenty Years at Hull House}, 2.  
\textsuperscript{14} Addams, \textit{Twenty Years at Hull House}, 5-6.  
\textsuperscript{15} Addams, \textit{Twenty Years at Hull House}, 5.  
\textsuperscript{16} Addams, \textit{Twenty Years at Hull House}, 15.
Admiring her father as she did, Jane would try as hard as she could, for the rest of her life to live up to this standard of “mental integrity above everything else.”

**Carlyle, the Bible, and Ellen Starr**

While Jane was encouraged by her father to do well in school and think for herself, he still believed that the highest calling for a woman was to raise children. When it was time to go to college, in 1877, her father encouraged her to attend Rockford Female Seminary. Her sisters had attended Rockford, it was close to Cedarville, and her father was a trustee. The Presbyterian and Congregational Conventions had chartered the seminary thirty years before with the intent to provide instruction for the daughters of farmers and businessmen of the upper Mississippi Valley. The girls who attended Rockford tended to be interested in becoming missionaries, teachers, or librarians. The object of the school was “to combine domestic and industrial training with religious and cultural instruction and to promote piety, purity, submissiveness, and domesticity.” The curriculum focused on the classics, languages, ethics, and history. Jane’s non-traditional religious background would not find fertile ground at Rockford. Instead she would be confronted with traditional religion in all its glory. Her father had taught her to be wary of organized religion and to think for herself. It was difficult to stay true to this while she was at Rockford. From religious experience to Christ’s divinity Jane begins to develop her own belief system, independent of her father and even Rockford.

It was Anna Peck Sill who established the female section of the seminary at Rockford, and she was a dominant force the four years Jane was in school. Miss Sill was

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17 Diliberto, 66.
18 Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull House*, 15.
19 Diliberto, 56.
20 Davis, 11.
devoutly religious and even though the school was going through a transition when Jane arrived in 1877, it was still heavily influenced by Miss Sill’s fundamentalist religious beliefs. Miss Sill believed that the purpose of women’s education was not so they could shine in society, but “that they might teach the great Christian lesson, that the true end of life is not to acquire the most good, whether of happiness or knowledge, but to give oneself fully and worthily for the good of others; recognizing of course, that the Bible is the only true source of practical morality.”21 Throughout the four years Jane attended Rockford Miss Sill tried to force her to join a denomination and marry a missionary. Jane Addams was not one to be forced into anything, and she resisted the efforts by Miss Sill. Jane said once of Miss Sill: “She does everything for people merely from love of God, and that I do not like.”22 Jane was resisting that part of religion that did not require thought. Jane wanted to be more like her father who did not belong to any denomination. Like him, she believed that “true religion was to be seen in personal action rather that institutional participation.”23 This did not mean that she was opposed to joining a church. She was just searching for that one church that would “unite its adherents through a believable theology and realistic principles of moral conduct.”24 Organized religion was too easy and required no self-sacrifice.25

Jane kept a rigorous schedule at Rockford and she gained insight from both secular and religious sources. In one summer she remembers reading John Rushkin, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Washington Irving, and Edward Gibbons.26 She studied

21 Davis, 11.
22 Davis, 14.
24 Elshtain, 45.
25 Elshtain, 45.
26 Elshtain, 57.
Thomas Carlyle and read the Bible, two things that probably had the biggest impact on her in college. She said that she was forever “searching for a frame of reference which would secure her to the world in such a way that she would be free to use her talents and energies.” Miss Sill preached that the Bible was the foundation on which social commitment would be fulfilled. She believed in giving one’s life to help others, but you did so using the Bible as a guide. Jane was an avid reader of the Bible and for two years she translated the New Testament from Greek so she could be sure of the interpretation. She read the Bible throughout her life, she quoted the Bible often in her writings, and I believe Jane was able to apply the Bible to everyday life. While we may be familiar with this in today’s age, with our nondenominational churches, Jane was on the cutting edge.

Besides her father, one of the most important relationships Jane would have in her lifetime was with Ellen Starr. Jane met Ellen Starr, the woman who would be her partner at Hull House, her freshman year at Rockford. If Miss Sill represents fundamental religion at Rockford, then Ellen represents Jane’s outlet through which she negotiates her opinions. Author Gioia Diliberto described Jane as a “typical late-Victorian intellectual whose suspicions about organized Christianity would lead her outside formal religion (though without giving up Christian principles).” Ellen became more devout as time went on. The letters between Jane and Ellen during their college years and after give the most insight into how Jane was searching to place religion within her life. Ellen was a safe place for Jane where she could be honest about her hopes, fears, doubts, and concerns. Sometime during their freshman year Jane wrote:

27 Crovitz, 131.
28 Diliberto, 67.
You long for a beautiful faith, an experience. I only feel that I need religion in a practical sense, that if I could fix myself with my relations to God & universe, & so be in perfect harmony with nature & deity, I could use my faculties and energy so much better & could do almost anything.  

Jane did not want her relationship with God to be just a religious experience. She believed, which was in most part learned from her father, that Christianity was more than an experience. Not because he said as much, but because he believed that it went beyond experience to action. A person could say that they were a Christian and that they loved God, but if they did not love others then where was the evidence of their relationship to Him. Jane was seeing beyond the experience to the practical. That did not mean that Jane never “experienced” God. She remembers experiencing the “beauty of holiness” on Sunday mornings when she and a Greek teacher studied the Greek Testament together. The experience gave her inspiration to act on what she had read.

Several quotes taken from letters written to Ellen Starr during their Sophomore year at Rockford show the questions that she worked through as she figured out her thoughts on things religious. In the following quote Jane is talking to Ellen about the various ways of being saved.

Don’t you see that you are all right - what do you understand by being saved? I don’t know, of course, whether I have the correct idea or not, but what I call it is this - that a people or a nation are saved just as they comprehend their God; almost every nation has a beautiful divinity to start with, and if they would only keep right to that they would be all right, but they don’t; they keep getting farther away and lowering their ideal until at last they are lost. Comprehending your deity and being in harmony with his plans is to be saved. If you realized God through Christ, that isn’t the point. If God has become nearer to you, more of reality through him, then you are a Christian. Christ’s mission to you has been fulfilled…

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29 Diliberto, 67.
30 JA to Starr, Aug. 11, 1879, Starr MSS (Davis 15-16)
Jane explains that there is not one absolute truth that deems a person saved. While she is not specific, Jane could have been referring to the Hindus who experience their god through meditation, or the Muslims who experience God five times a day in a call to prayer. Saying that Christianity is the only way to experience Christ completely devalues a large part of the population’s religious experience. If we devalue their experience then we make them less of a person and for Jane this was unacceptable.

Jane also had a difficult time realizing God through Christ. She was a faithful reader of the New Testament and that proves that she appreciated the story of Jesus and His accomplishments. However, as a woman, she had a difficult time identifying with a male and divine Savior.

I can work myself into great admiration for his [Christ’s] life, and occasionally I can catch something of his philosophy, but he doesn’t bring me any nearer the deity - I think of him simply as a Jew living hundreds of years ago, surrounding whom there is a mystery and a beauty incomprehensible to me, I feel a little as I do when I hear very fine music - that I am incapable of understanding.  

Jane would not find an answer to her question about Christ’s divinity while at Rockford. As a matter of fact, she does not bring it up again until her essay “The Subjective Necessity for Social Settlements” (1892). In this essay she talks about the “Renaissance of Christianity” being experienced in Chicago as people exemplify the “spirit of Christ.” She came to have a great respect for Christ’s life and she found a way to identify with His works if not His divinity.

While the letters written between Jane and Ellen provide the best evidence of what Jane was thinking about in college, even more insight can be gained from her

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31 JA to Starr, Aug. 11, 1879, Starr MSS (Davis 15-16)  
32 Addams, Twenty Years at Hull House, 122.
college notebooks. In the notebooks there is an indication of religious questioning and doubt. Allen F. Davis writes that in one of the notebooks there is a paragraph on death in which Jane makes the statement “nature is the ambassador of God.” This skepticism and cynicism is not unique to Jane. She was part of a generation that was attracted to the new critical spirit which applied the test of science, or at least reason, to all areas of life even religion. While Jane was in college, society in general was becoming more and more dissatisfied with the dominant Evangelical Protestantism. Eleanor J. Stebner says in her book, The Women of Hull House: A Study in Spirituality, Vocation, and Friendship (1997), “the Christian religion in which many of these women were raised did not satisfy either their minds or their hearts.”

Different historians argue about the degree to which Jane agonized about religion while she was at Rockford. She was most likely alone in her efforts to remain true to her belief that organized religion was not the road for her.

Lately it seems to me that I am getting back all of it - superior to it, I almost feel - back to a great primal cause, not nature exactly, but a fostering mother, a necessity, brooding and watching over all things. Every time I talk about religion, I vow a great vow never to do it again, I find myself growing indignant and sensitive when people speak of it lightly, as if they had no right to, you see, I am not so unsettled as I resettled so often, but my creed is ever be sincere and don’t fuss.

In looking at the letters and papers Jane wrote in college it is obvious that Jane felt the need to negotiate her future work in the light of the restrictions Christianity imposed. Evidence that Jane was finally beginning to understand the relationship between religion and her future work can be seen in an address she gave during her junior exhibition. In

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33 Davis, 15.
35 JA to Starr, Aug. 11, 1879, Starr MSS (Davis 15-16)
an attack on Miss Sill’s educational philosophy, she never once mentioned the importance of womanly piety, of religious training or Christian morality; instead she stressed work and the Protestant ethic. Allen Davis mentions a conversation between Jane and one of teachers on this particular subject. Miss Anderson told Jane: “I do not think we are put on this earth to be religious, we have a certain work to do, and to do that is the main thing.”

36 For Jane it was not that simple:

I for my part am convinced… I can never go ahead and use my best powers until I do settle it, it seems to me sometimes - I suppose when I am wrought up - could I but determine that and have it for a sure basis, that with time and space to work in I could train my powers to do anything, it would only remain to choose what - of course this must be a false stress laid on religion, but I don’t fuss anymore, since I have discovered its importance, but go ahead building up my religion where ever I can find it, from the Bible and observation, from books and people, and in no small degree Carlyle.

Still disillusioned with institutionalized religion, Jane did what many intellectuals were doing in Europe and America - “looking to literature for authority and to the writer as prophet.”

Daniel Levine wrote that Jane just did not know what to do with the God of her childhood. Countless times throughout her childhood she spoke of being afraid - of God, of the unknown - and the older she got the more she needed to resolve this area in her life. She was no longer a child who feared God’s wrath, but an adult who was trying to find out what believing in God actually meant in her life. What would the manifestation of this belief be for her? She knew for certain that the manifestation would not be joining a religion because there was no action attached to that. It had to be something more.

Two years after graduation she wrote Starr, “I wish you could tell me how to come

36 Davis, 16.
37 JA to Starr, Nov. 22, 1879, Starr MSS (Davis 16)
38 Davis, 16.
there.” In the depressing years after her father’s death, Jane could feel, “the absolute necessity of the protection and dependence on Christ.”

In 1890, in a Christmas letter to her brother George she wrote that, “the comfort of Christ’s mission to the world and the need of the Messiah to the race has been impressed upon me as never before. It seems as if the race of life, at least the dark side, would be quite unendurable if it were not for that central fact.”

She saw the need for a Messiah, however, his skepticism and cynicism is not unique to Jane. She was part of a generation that was attracted to the new critical spirit that applied the test of science, or at least reason, to all areas of life even religion. And Jane wanted to come to God through reason, not faith.

**Religion or Spirituality?**

It is much easier to understand Jane Addams if you can see the transformation Jane made in the area of religion after she returned from Europe the second time. Eleanor J. Stebner wrote in her book titled *The Women of Hull House: A Study in Spirituality, Vocation, and Friendship* (1997) that throughout Jane’s life she is more spiritual than religious and if she could have come to that conclusion she would not have agonized as she did in her younger years over dogma and doctrine. It was spirituality instead of religion that inspired Jane to open Hull House. Jane never said in any of her diaries or letters that she was spiritual. To Jane, she never struggled with spirituality, she struggled with organized religion. She used the word religion or religious every time she talked about her “spiritual crisis.” As Stebner so eloquently puts it, “spirituality and religion are not mutually exclusive, nor is one way better than the other. A person can be

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40 Levine, 20-21.
41 Davis, 15.
42 Levine, 20.
spiritual and religious, religious but not spiritual, or spiritual but not religious.”

Religion is ritualistic. It is going to church, praying, tithing, and many other activities that tie one to a specific denomination. Following a doctrine or practicing traditional rituals was non-thinking and for someone like Jane it was an exercise in futility. Spirituality is both individualistic and communal. Spirituality is a person’s relationship to their God, but it is also something you can see or feel in a person. It is based on a personal sense of experience, morals, and ideals. Stebner goes on to say that “individual actions for social change must be grounded in a shared sense of spirituality involving personal and communal aspects. A level of uniting vision is necessary, as is a space for diverse actions and varied viewpoints.”

Jane had a strong sense of community, and this is one of the things that will push her to open Hull House.

It was the ritualistic or non-thinking aspect of religion that Jane struggled with as a child and young adult. Her father had taught her to be weary of organized religion and it made a lasting impression on her. At Rockford she maintained this viewpoint despite efforts to get her to change. She embraced the aspects of Christianity that worked for her, and that gave her the desire to go beyond the doctrine and focus on the work. Her spirituality was not defined by organized religion, but by her belief in God and her belief in herself. An 1889 article by Leila Bedell, in the magazine The Woman’s Journal, wrote: “Miss Addams’s rarest attraction – although possessing a generous share of physical attraction – is her wonderful spirituality. One cannot spend much time in her presence without wondering by what process she has attained to such a remarkable

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43 Stebner, 13.
44 Stebner, 13.
growth of soul.”\textsuperscript{45} For Jane, the understanding that she could believe in God and do good work was the culmination of a long journey to adulthood. But what would the work be? How could she help people the most?

In \textit{Twenty Years at Hull House} (1902), Jane says that she did not know exactly when she got the idea to open a settlement house. She attributes some of the vision to a bullfight she witnessed in Madrid in 1888. She does not remember a lot of the details of the fight, just that when it was over she had witnessed the killing of five bulls and many horses. Her indifference to the spectacle surprised and horrified her.\textsuperscript{46} She watched it longer than anyone else in her party and in her own defense said that she did not really think much about the bloodshed. However, later in the evening she felt herself “tried and condemned, not only by this disgusting experience, but by the entire moral situation which it revealed.”\textsuperscript{47} She realized that her trips to Europe were an excuse to keep her from having to figure out what she was going to do with her life. “It is easy to become the dupe of a deferred purpose, of the promise the future can never keep, and I had fallen into the meanest type of self-deception in making myself believe that all this was in preparation of great things to come.”\textsuperscript{48} In an effort to find herself she had fallen into the trap of inactivity, the very thing she detested. This was a turning point for her. She had already thought about opening a settlement house, and now she was ready to tell people about it. This would be the thing that would give Jane the chance to do something meaningful with her life.

\textsuperscript{45} Diliberto, 148.
\textsuperscript{46} Addams, \textit{Twenty Years at Hull House}, 85.
\textsuperscript{47} Addams, \textit{Twenty Years at Hull House}, 86.
\textsuperscript{48} Addams, \textit{Twenty Years at Hull House}, 86.
Chapter 3

Spirituality Translates to Pragmatism

The Hebrew prophet made three requirements from those who would join the great forward-moving procession led by Jehovah. “To love mercy” and at the same time “to do justly” is the difficult task; to fulfill the first requirement alone is to fall into the error of indiscriminate giving with all its disastrous results; to fulfill the second solely is to obtain the stern policy of withholding, and it results in such a dreary lack of sympathy and understanding that the establishment of justice is impossible. It may be that the combination of the two can never be attained save as we fulfill still the third requirement - “to walk humbly with God,” which may mean to walk for many dreary miles beside the lowliest of His creatures, not even in that peace of mind which the company of the humble is popularly supposed to afford, but rather with the pangs and throes to which the poor human understanding is subjected whenever it attempts to comprehend the meaning of life.

Jane Addams, Democracy and Social Ethics (1902)

Jane Addams quoted this scripture from the Bible, Micah 6:8, in a lecture entitled “Charitable Effort” that was eventually a chapter in her book called Democracy and Social Ethics (1902). The story of Micah in the Old Testament of the Bible says that he had been called from his home to be a prophet, and so he went to deliver a message of judgment to the princes and people of Jerusalem. Micah was burdened by the abusive treatment of the poor by the rich and influential, and he turned his verbal rebukes upon any who would use their social and political power for personal gain. While the book is a message of conviction, punishment and restoration, the message from God to his children is clear: “to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God” (6:8).

Jane was the epitome of “loving mercy and doing justly,” and all her life she strived to help the poor and unfortunate. Like Micah, Jane left the comfort of her privileged family and home. She denied traditional Christianity and all that it had to offer women at the turn of the century. Even though women were going to college, they were

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1 Micah 6:8 King James Version
still expected to become wives and mothers, and if they chose to work they did so in social jobs, becoming teachers or secretaries. Jane desired a more public role, one that did not exist for women at the time. Like Micah, Jane had a burden for the poor and did not want to see them abused by the rich and powerful. She too rebuked anyone who would use their social and political power for social gain rather than the greater good. As for “walking humbly with God,” what God meant was “if you do it for the least of these then you have done it for me.”² Jane may never have become a Christian in the traditional sense of the word, but she managed to combine aspects of Christianity with a faith in democracy to create a social ethic that worked for the turn of the century.

**American Pragmatism**

Jane’s work as an American pragmatist and foundational thinker of the Progressive Age has only recently been acknowledged. However, to understand Addams’ activism it is important to see how she shaped the philosophies of pragmatism and also how pragmatism shaped the theoretical framework for her activism in social reform.³ Pragmatism itself has many definitions and many characteristics. It is not necessarily one philosophy, but a group of philosophies. Native to the United States, it was especially popular at the turn of the century. American pragmatism was closely associated with the progressive movement and in order to understand the progressive movement you must understand pragmatism.⁴ John Dewey, William James, and Oliver Wendell Holmes were pioneers of pragmatism. These philosophers were interested in the

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² Matthew 25: 35-40 New King James Version.
⁴ Fischer, “Jane Addams Writings on Peace,”
intersection of theory and practice in the areas of social ethics and politics. One definition says it is based on the principle that the usefulness, workability, and practicality of ideas, policies, and proposals are the criteria of their merit; it stresses the priority of action over doctrine and of experience over fixed principles.⁵

Jean Bethke Elshtain, in The Jane Addams Reader (2002), says in the introduction “that the story of Jane Addams seems at first glance an uplifting tale of do-goodism fired by the charitable impulses of a woman who fashioned a highly personal approach to social theory and to solving social problems.”⁶ Jane has been misrepresented throughout history as someone who was merely acting out of religious impulses, not someone who developed a philosophy of social ethics that influenced social change and eventually federal legislation. This is how we describe her to high school students: She came from a privileged family and was among the first generation of women to go to college. After a trip abroad she decided to open up a settlement house in one of the poorest neighborhoods in Chicago so that immigrants would have a chance to become good American citizens and have the chance to live the American dream. That is it.

This “highly personal approach” to social theory and to solving problems that Elshtain described is what we now call pragmatism and is rarely mentioned in high school textbooks. More specifically, Jane has been called a “critical pragmatist;” one who sought not only answers to problems, but answers that were in the best interest of all, including the poor and disenfranchised.⁷ Jane says herself in the preface of Twenty⁶

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Years at Hull House (1937) that she came to Hull House in 1889 “without any preconceived social theories or economic views.”

At the heart of Jane’s philosophy was the simple belief that the only ideas that have merit are the ones that produce results and that doctrine or dogma does not always inspire action in those who adhere to it. What that means is that she did not have an agenda or an unwavering ideology. She did not believe she had all the answers and she knew that the answers she did have were not for everyone. Jane opened Hull House with a philosophy about social ethics, and in the true spirit of pragmatism it was constantly evolving to meet the needs of the community. Hull House did not have a list of services it would provide, rather it consistently attempted to meet the needs that rose around them.

The Beginning

Jane’s entrance into the world of philosophy and social work began on her second European tour. Jane finally saw Christian principles applied in a situation that was mutually beneficial to both the one giving and the one receiving charity. Toynbee Hall had been created in 1884, and is considered the first social settlement. Samuel A Barnett, it’s founder and warden, had a theory, to combine Christian Samaritanism with the ideas of Matthew Arnold, Thomas Carlyle, and John Ruskin. Toynbee Hall’s greatest benefit went to the workers because it was believed that contact with the poor improved the soul. Beyond that, it was believed that the crucial element of social reform was education, something working class Londoners got little of. It was a place where words became action, and action produced results.

Until the 1880’s most charities and philanthropic endeavors were based on giving

“relief” to the unfortunate in the form of money, food, clothes, and other services. There were always plenty of needy people to help, from the orphans to the elderly. Traditional charity was grounded in the scripture that says “the poor ye have always with you.” It was assumed that the only thing to do for them was to relieve their distress. Critics of traditional charity believed the root causes of poverty could be alleviated with a new approach. Relief seemed to encourage the poor to be more dependent and the religious zeal at the base of traditional charity seemed out of touch with the horrors of nineteenth century urban misery. The philosophies of Arnold, Carlyle, and Rushkin helped to point a new way by enacting what French author Auguste Compte called “the religion of humanity.” This was a secular creed that encouraged the breaking down of class barriers to improve life for all. Those who followed this “religion that was not a religion served others with the conviction that regardless of class, birth, or wealth, all people could evolve into their “best selves.” It was not a religious conversion of others, but a desire to draw upon common religious principles shared by a variety of people and in doing so, serve humanity.

Jane wanted to do something similar in America – a sort of home for the prosperous among the poor with a “university” feel. Addams thought that in the same way these young men had been inspired to live in Whitechapel, so might young, American college women be persuaded to live in the slums of Chicago. Just as the men in Whitechapel, young women who had never been given the opportunity use their

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10 Mark 14:7 New King James Version.
12 Diliberto, 128.
advantages and satisfy their sympathies could do so.\textsuperscript{14} Influenced by the social and religious movements in England, Jane Addams returned to the United States, finally with a mission.\textsuperscript{15} All of her life experiences finally culminated into a single passion: to bridge the gap between classes.

\textbf{“Renaissance of Christianity”}

Jane Addams first used the term “Renaissance of Christianity” in the article “The Subjective Necessity for Settlement Houses (1910).” This article serves as Jane’s explanation for the settlement movement. The last reason Jane gave in the article for the motivation of the settlement movement was a change in young people regarding Christianity. Jane saw the younger generation getting back to the basics of Christianity. She says that “the impulse to share the lives of the poor, the desire to make social service, irrespective of propaganda, express the spirit of Christ is as old as Christianity itself.”\textsuperscript{16}

What the Christian religion had become over the centuries was not how Christ had intended it to be. It had become dogmatic and dull and it did not speak to people, they merely performed Christianity out of an obligation to do so.

They [young people] resent the assumption that Christianity is a set of ideas that belong to the religious consciousness, whatever that may be, that it is a thing to be proclaimed and instituted apart from the social life of the community. ... The Settlement movement is only one manifestation of that wider humanitarian movement which ... is endeavoring to embody itself, not in a sect, but in society itself.\textsuperscript{17}

Jane believed that the life of Christ provided the ultimate example of social ethics.

It was the early Christians who understood the Gospel message “to love all men with a

\textsuperscript{15} Linn, 51.
\textsuperscript{16} Addams, Twenty Years at Hull House, 122.
\textsuperscript{17} Addams, Twenty Years at Hull House, 123-124.
joyous simplicity.” These Christians believed what Jesus said, that this revelation to be held and made manifest must be put into terms of action and that action is the only medium man has for receiving and appropriating truth. “If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine. This article explains so much about the development of Jane’s social ethic. Jane finally found a place where she could see the social function of Christianity, and rather that turning to Christian doctrine she embraced the democratic ideals expressed in the Bible. Defining democracy using religious language, Jane describes the society of the early Christians.

They grew to a mighty number, but it never occurred to them, either in their weakness or their strength, to regard other men for in instant as their foes or their aliens. They were eager to sacrifice themselves for the weak, for children and the aged. They identified themselves with slaves and did not avoid the plague. They longed to share the common lot that they might receive the constant revelation.

The early Christians did not live in a classless society instead they respected everyone’s role in society. A society can exist in which the different classes respect each one’s contribution in the grand scheme of things.

**A Unique Social Ethics**

To Jane and other pragmatists, social ethics was not a type of ethics, but ethics itself. Charlotte Perkins Gilman defines ethics as the science of social relation, how persons and social forces work with and on one another. In *Pragmatism and Feminism* (1996), Charlene Haddock Seigfried explains how the pragmatist views social ethics. Using an argument made by William James, who said that the essence of good was to

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18 Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull House*, 122.
19 Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull House*, 122.
21 Seigfried, 225.
satisfy demand and that all demands are equally respectable, she says that in our practical world demands are bound to clash. How does pragmatism solve this dilemma? Since nobody has the right to impose their views on another, the guiding principle should be to satisfy as many demands as possible and to prefer the solution that, even when prevailing, does some justice to the needs not met.\textsuperscript{22}

Two guiding principles of pragmatism are reciprocity and interdependence. Jane said that Hull House was “founded on the theory that the dependence of classes on each other is reciprocal; and that as the social situation is essentially a reciprocal relation, it gives a form of expression that has a peculiar value.”\textsuperscript{23} No man is an island. In the same vein, no person or community exists in isolation. Everyone requires cooperation and competition with each other.

We have learned to say that the good must be extended to all of society before it can be held secure by any one person or any one class; but we have not yet learned to add to that statement, that unless all men and all classes contribute to a good, we cannot even be sure it is worth having.\textsuperscript{24}

Jane was never in favor of abolishing the social classes; she believed that they should exist within a mutually beneficial relationship. Society needs different classes because they all serve a purpose. John Dewey explained that communities should educate members to understand their own interests and actions in relation to those of others. As people become more educated they will be able to break down the barriers that separate be they class race, national territory, gender, or sexual orientation.

\textsuperscript{22} Seigfried, 225.
\textsuperscript{23} Addams, \textit{Twenty Years at Hull House}, 91.
\textsuperscript{24} Jane Addams, \textit{Democracy and Social Ethics} (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1913), 220.
Pragmatists rejected the concept of personal morality in favor of social morality. In *Democracy and Social Ethics* (1913) Jane says: “to attain personal morality in an age demanding social morality, to pride one’s self upon the results of personal results when the time demands social adjustment is utterly to fail to apprehend the situation.”

The Pullman Strike of 1894 is used as an example to explain this. George Pullman set up his town on the basis that he would measure the usefulness of his benefits by the standard of the worker’s own needs. It started to fall apart whenever Pullman cared more about how he looked to his peers than he did the workers in his town. When he took on the role of benevolent benefactor he severed his relationship with his workers. As Jane says in “A Modern King Lear,” you cannot be good to people, you have to be good with them.

Pullman’s goodness was based on personal values like cleanliness, decency of living and temperance, instead of social values like decent pay or decent working conditions. People in power often do this. They think it is enough to consult their own consciences and ideals when the reality is they are unconnected with the rest of society. Bringing in those benefited as participants in the process often involves compromise and the fact that it is all right to arrive at a decision that was not envisioned beforehand. While it is a longer, more tedious process, the outcome more lasting and worthwhile because it is not dependent on one person’s insights or efforts but will be “underpinned and upheld by the sentiments and aspirations of many others.”

Jane saw the difficulty in getting people to think in terms of social rather than personal. The reality is “that we...”

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25 Seigfried, 228.
26 Seigfried, 229.
27 Seigfried, 230.
are braided and woven together, a living tissue; and what one does is modified, inevitably by what the others do.”

**Re-Inventing Democracy**

From a young age Jane remembers having a “curious sense of responsibility for carrying on the world’s affairs which little children often exhibit because ‘the old man clogs our earliest years’ and she remembers in herself an absurd manifestation.” She recalls dreaming night after night that the responsibility of inventing the wagon wheel rested upon her shoulders, and that the world would not be set right until she accomplished this formidable task. With the luxury of being able to look back over every aspect of Jane’s life, it is as if this particular dream became reality. Jane may not have had to re-invent the wheel, but she did do her best to re-invent democracy and how it responds to all of its citizens.

Early American democracy was based on the concepts of natural man and inalienable rights. Political participation was seen as an empowerment for the individual; you decide and vote for what is best for you. The regular citizen did not have to take into account what might be best for the community, much less what the outcome might be for people outside the community. It made citizens autonomous. This notion undermined “the very social relations that Jane Addams saw as central to developing the sense of social responsibility necessary for democracy.” At the birth of American democracy the founders were in the precarious situation of putting government in the hands of everyone – a scary thought in 1776. Americans had most recently come from political

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28 Seigfried, 235.
29 Addams, Twenty Years at Hull House, 5.
situations in which the upper classes made decisions for the masses. But things had changed since 1776, and society was more urban, more educated, and generally more socially aware.

In her book *The Spirit of Youth and City Streets*, published in 1926, Jane said: “Democracy like any other of the living faiths of men, is so essentially mystical that it continually demands new formulation…to refuse to receive it may mean to reject that which our fathers cherished and handed on as an inheritance.” Democracy in its infancy served the purpose at the time, but the Founding Fathers made it possible in the Constitution to make “amends” when necessary and the time was at hand. Society at the turn of the century included women, immigrants, ex-slaves, and the poor – democracy did not serve them well. Jane believed in a democracy that resulted in a responsibility to the community regardless of sex, creed, or nationality. While Jane served as the first vice president of the National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA), she felt that re-defining democracy involved more than just giving everybody the right to vote. All that really did was incorporate all citizens into the already existing framework – one that focused on the individual. She wanted to redefine citizenship to include the experiences of those who had historically been excluded.

**Democracy and Experience**

Jane’s philosophy of democracy was rooted in experience. Jane saw democracy as it was: a political system that “ignored the reality that rights are not ‘inalienable,’ but are hard won in the tragic processes of experience.” By assuming that there was such a

32 Munro, 80.
33 Munro, 77.
thing as “universal rights,” it implied that there is such a thing as universal experiences. The “universal rights” included in the Constitution reflected the experiences of only white, property owning men. This completely ignores the experiences of any other group. The word “universal” needed to be rejected and in its place should be recognition of the diversity of values that develop to answer to different needs.  

Seigfried explains it like this: “Caring is initially a value because someone holds it to be so, but to be continually reaffirmed as such and to be accepted by others, it must be judged by evaluating the outcomes that follow from holding it.” At the time the dominant ideologies included words like assimilation and Americanization. Those words made different or diverse seem like a bad thing. How strange that American democracy started out as “the product of diversified human experience and its resultant sympathy.” Jane believed that democracy must be flexible enough to acknowledge the experiences of others. “Difference, not equality, becomes the basis for a true democracy.” For Jane, social democracy would value the experiences of immigrants and it would never ask them to abandon their ethnic culture or lifestyle. She wrote Peace and Bread in a Time of War (1922) mainly to document the experiences of immigrants during World War I, giving these particular experiences credit for shaping her commitment to peace.

While Jane is most often recognized for the progress she made for immigrants, she was also sensitive to the plight of African Americans in the United States. Chicago had a small population of African Americans – about two percent. Jane said over and

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34 Seigfried, 207.
35 Seigfried, 207.
36 Addams, Democracy and Social Ethics, 12.
37 Munro, 79.
over again that “race was the gravest situation” in America.”

This oppressed group of Americans had lived in this country since the first settlers, and yet their freedom and equality was precarious at best. In order to address this issue nationally, Jane helped found the first national Negro association that would later turn into the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Jane helped establish a black settlement house in 1905, named the Frederick Douglass settlement. She fought against segregation and promoted equality without conditions. Jane begged Americans to not be afraid of experiencing “a life outside of ourselves.”

Jane put a lot of stock in “experience.” For Jane and other pragmatists, philosophizing should be an active process both as a way to change society and to use experience to modify the philosophies themselves. The power of a democratic process that is genuinely followed starts out by admitting that values are not universal, nor are they eternal. Once that is established a community is developed that will work, despite common agreement and without resorting to coercion. Jane believed that society could change and that like people, it was capable of evolving into its best self. Even more, this evolution was a process that should never stop. She believed that all experience was valid and she never presumed to know other’s experiences. How could politicians make decisions for the poor or for immigrants if they had never been in their shoes? Jane firmly believed that the immigrants knew the best way to change their circumstances; they needed only to ask them. It is the reason she wrote ethnographies. She wanted to learn from the experiences of others. As for the politicians, Jane believed that this

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38 Elshtain, 200.
39 Elshtain, 200.
40 Elshtain 201.
41 Seigfried, 215.
process was reciprocal and that we can learn the most from each other’s experiences. The hardest part is doing it.

Jane begins *Democracy and Social Ethics* (1902) by explaining how our conceptions of morality change over time. As we experience life, our morals and beliefs change to accommodate these experiences. She goes on to say that “the difficulty comes in adjusting our conduct, which has been hardened into customs and habits, to these changing moral conceptions and dealing with the fact that when this adjustment is not made, we suffer from the strain and indecision of believing one hypothesis and acting upon another.”

**A Well Spring of Philosophy**

In her lifetime, Jane Addams wrote eleven books and hundreds of articles that cover a multitude of topics on social philosophy in the tradition of American pragmatism. She influenced the philosophers of her day and they acknowledged her intellectual expertise. William James described Addams’ first book, *Democracy and Social Ethics* (1902) as one of the greatest books of our time.\(^4^2\) John Dewey said of her essay “A Modern Lear,” as “one of the greatest things I ever read both as to its form and its ethical philosophy.”\(^4^4\) She wrote on so many different topics and her books served a multitude of purposes. She wrote her autobiographies, biographies, ethnographies, political speeches and critiques. Her thoughts and ideas were not complicated and people of all classes and ages benefited from the actions produced by her philosophies.

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\(^4^2\) Addams, *Democracy and Social Ethics*, 1.
\(^4^3\) Seigfried, 228.
Jane’s book, *Democracy and Social Ethics* (1902), includes some of the articles and essays Jane had written up to the point that it was published. Included in the book is a critique of the Pullman Strike of 1894. The first three chapters address ethical issues that arise in women’s lives. In a chapter about the Pullman Strike, she uses the strike to explain that democracy meant participation in all areas of society, even in the management of businesses. In a chapter titled “Political Reform,” Jane explained how the Chicago aldermen maintain strong local ties and in doing so manage to provide assistance when needed. They may have been corrupt, but the people in the community were willing to overlook that if they thought that their leaders were listening to them and working on their behalf. “Ethics as well as political opinions may be discussed and disseminated among the sophisticated by lectures and printed pages, but to the common people they can only come through example – through a personality which seizes the imagination.”\(^{45}\) She covered a plethora of social issues that anyone could understand and apply.

Both in *Twenty Years at Hull House* (1910) and *The Second Twenty Years at Hull House* (1930), Jane concentrates on the plight of women, ethnic minorities and the working class. In her book *A New Conscience and an Ancient Evil* (1912) Jane blames the rise of prostitution and white slavery on the fact that or capitalist economy did not provide women with an adequate support system or high enough wages. Jane Addams’ philosophies were simple and consistent. She took the knowledge of both religion and academia that she learned as a child and young adult and turned it into a series of practices and those practices became a part of American pragmatism. She believed that if we let experience guide us then none of us lose. She believed in the power of

\(^{45}\) Addams, *Democracy and Social Ethics*, 228
relationships, listening and understanding both the poorest of Chicago and those who wielded the power. At Hull House, Jane put these philosophies into action and if you want to know if they stood the test of pragmatism, all you have to do is look at the programs and services the house provided. For students to actually understand how pragmatism is applied, all you have to do is show them Hull House.
Chapter 4

Pragmatism in Practice

For two years in the midst of my distress over the poverty which, thus suddenly driven into my consciousness, had become to me the “Weltschmerz,” there was mingled a sense of futility, of misdirected energy, the belief that the pursuit of cultivation would not in the end bring either solace or relief. I gradually reached a conviction that the first generation of college women had taken their learning too quickly, had departed too suddenly from the active, emotional life led by their grandmothers and great-grandmothers; that the contemporary education of young women had developed too exclusively the power of acquiring knowledge and of merely receiving impressions; that somewhere in the process of “being educated” they had lost that simple and almost automatic response to the human appeal, that old healthful reaction resulting in activity from the mere presence of suffering or helplessness; that they are so sheltered and pampered they have no chance even to make “the great refusal.”

Jane Addams, Twenty Years at Hull House (1910), 77

Jane Addams and Ellen Starr met in Chicago in 1889 to begin making plans for their settlement house. Chicago was a relatively old city that had started out as a trading post during colonial times. Because of the railroads, it had continued to grow until by 1889, it was the center of grain and lumber trade in the West. After a fire destroyed much of the city in 1871, the people of Chicago rebuilt the city. It was the second largest city in population and wealth after New York. Chicago was an enormous manufacturing center and in 1890 it was said to have over 10,000 factories. Marshall Field built the first department store in Chicago and George Pullman built his famous sleeping cars there. It was a city that attracted thousands of immigrants and laborers to work the vast amount of jobs available.¹ By the time Jane and Ellen would arrive in Chicago, seventy eight percent of the people who lived there were either immigrants from another country or the children of immigrants. The living conditions of the city were so poor that it is estimated

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that half the children born in Chicago in 1889 died before age five.²

### 335 Halstead Street

When Jane and Ellen arrived in Chicago, they immediately began to drum up support wherever they could get it – churches, missions, schools, and volunteer organizations. Jane talked to anyone that would listen. They needed a house big enough to hold classes and lectures and had to have several bedrooms to house all of the young, educated women who would come to live there.³ After touring some of the worst slums in Chicago, they found “the big house among the many small houses” that Jane had often talked about as a child. Located at 335 Halstead Street, the house was in the middle of an ethnically diverse neighborhood. A cousin of the original owner, Charles J. Hull, leased it out to Jane and Ellen. A year after the opening she gave the house, the land it was on, and other lots around it as a gift to Jane. This is what allowed Hull House to expand at such a rapid rate. Jane used her inheritance to restore the mansion and get it in working order.⁴ Jane and Ellen moved into Hull House in the fall of 1889. At first it was just they and a housekeeper.

Hull House was originally meant to follow the Toynbee Hall model. They would show the poor the possibilities of a better life, one that would enrich them. However, even from the beginning Jane knew that in order to make a lasting change, she would have to find a way to bridge the gap between the classes.⁵ The settlement was a profoundly democratic idea, mainly because it assumed that the poor “had within them

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³ Diliberto, 149.
⁴ Elshtain, 90.
⁵ Diliberto, 146.
the yeast to rise,” as Florence Kelley put it.⁶ It was a radical experiment with a unique vision of what democracy could look like if it represented everyone equally. Jane believed that democratic government was the most valuable contribution America had made to the moral life of the world.⁷ It professed that the educated had an obligation to share their privileges with the less fortunate, not in word, but in deed. Lecturing them or doling out services to them was futile, all Jane and Ellen knew to do was live among them, get to know them, and help them create a sense of community.⁸ Beyond that there were no concrete plans.

Hull House was not a welfare agency. It was essentially an educational institution, both for the workers, and for those it benefited. The primary purpose of Hull House was to “learn from life itself.”⁹ Addams promoted the project well and many newspapers began to publish stories about their endeavors. The settlement would provide an education and occupation for the young, well educated men and women who chose to live there and that they expected to gain more than they gave.¹⁰ Sara M. Evans, in her book Born for Liberty (1989), says that settlements allowed women to learn about politics in a safe setting. Settlements became not only agents of change, but a training ground for leaders who would go on to enact numerous social reforms over several decades. College educated women could spend a summer at Hull House and from there enter the world of social and political activism, despite issues of propriety.¹¹ Women gained hands on experience and leadership skills that would aid in the fight against child

⁶ Diliberto, 163.
⁷ Elshtain, 55.
⁸ Diliberto, 163.
¹⁰ Davis, 63.
labor, and for urban sanitation, improved working conditions, juvenile courts, improved public education, and union organization. Jane had a somewhat different approach to women’s equality than most feminists. She valued women’s unique qualities and Hull House would provide women the opportunity to do women’s work in the public sphere.

We wish not to be a man, nor like a man, but claim the same right to independent thought and action…We…are not restless and anxious for things beyond us, we simply claim the highest privileges of our times, and avail ourselves to its best opportunities. But while on the one hand, as young women of the 19th century, we gladly claim these privileges, and profoundly assert our independence, on the other hand we still retain the old ideal of womanhood—the saxon lady whose mission it was to give bread unto her household. So we have planned to be “Breadgivers” throughout our lives, believing that in labor alone is happiness, and that the only true and honorable life is one filled with good works and honest toil, we will strive to idealize our labor and thus happily fulfill woman’s noblest mission.

Jane’s biggest fear for Hull House was that it would “lose its flexibility, its power of quick adaptation, its readiness to change its methods as its environment may demand.” The concept of Hull House was never intended to be a social or political ideology. Hull House was to be grounded in a philosophy whose foundation was built on the strength of the human race, a philosophy that would not waver despite the race of the person representing it. In “The Objective Value of a Social Settlement,” Jane says that the value of Hull House is in immersing oneself in all it has to offer, every sight and sound. “One thing seemed clear in regard to entertaining [they are guests, remember] these foreigners: to preserve and keep for them what ever of value their past life contained and to bring them into contact with a better type of Americans.”

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12 Evans, 150.  
14 Addasm, Twenty Years at Hull House, 126.  
15 Elshtain, 97.  
16 Elshtain, 99.
House’s objective value lay in its capacity to help create strong citizens through a variety of means, methods, and media.\(^{17}\)

One of the first things Hull House provided was a safe place for the neighborhood children. On the first Monday after they moved in, Jane and Ellen opened up a kindergarten, the first one in the city. The teacher, Jennie Dow, arrived every morning at nine to open up shop, soon after they added a baby nursery. One of the first expansions they made was to convert an empty lot into a playground. It too was the first one in Chicago.\(^{18}\) For the older children, Jane began offering classes and clubs. Some were educational or taught specific skills, and others were purely cultural. They could learn to sew or draw, take piano or gymnastics, or learn Latin or English. Because of the language barrier, the classes were usually segregated by ethnic groups, but opportunities to mingle were always available. In 1890, they added a college extension program where twelve-week course could be taken in chemistry, Shakespeare, history, and many other subjects.

For adults, Jane offered classes and a place for groups to meet. Groups formed to cover almost every area of interest, and they were held at times that would accommodate stay at home moms, working moms, and working dads. Classes covered everything from art to child labor laws. Hull House sponsored parties like “Italian night” and “German night” so that the different ethnic groups could celebrate their heritage and share it with others.\(^{19}\) In the first two years Hull House was an operation of huge proportions. It was the meeting place of over fifty clubs and offered dozens of classes. It was open from nine in the morning to nine at night and it is estimated that one thousand people entered its

\(^{17}\) Elshtain, 100.
\(^{18}\) Diliberto, 159-160.
\(^{19}\) Diliberto, 160-161.
doors every week. Public baths were made available to the neighborhood, not just for personal hygiene, but because it gave them pride and dignity to appear clean in public. It was the center of union activities and the home of the bookbinders, shoemakers, shirtmakers, and cloakmakers unions. The different activities pointed to one goal: the building up of a social culture of democracy.20

The Nineteenth Ward

Unfortunately, it was not enough to effect change from inside the walls of Hull House. Despite their best efforts, living conditions in the nineteenth ward continued to get worse. In 1891, with the arrival of Florence Kelley, Hull House and everyone in it would begin to actively seek social reform.21 This is when Hull House begins to separate itself from the Toynbee model. For Toynbee Hall, the purpose was twofold: spiritual benefit and exposure to the arts. If society was to become more democratic than, it needed more than that. Therefore Hull House became a center for reform advocacy. In 1892, the State Bureau of Labor Statistics appointed Kelley to investigate Chicago’s sweatshops. Her Investigation earned her the position of chief factory inspector for Illinois and “the following year to the formation of a legislative commission to study the employment of women and children.”22

Florence Kelley helped turn Hull House into a center of sociological investigation. How was social reform to occur without a clear assessment of the problems and needs of the community? Soon after she moved into Hull House she organized the first attempt in America to systematically study a slum. The residents of Hull House went house-to-house and charted income information on maps that showed the ethnic

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20 Elshtain, 100.
21 Diliberto, 176.
22 Diliberto, 177.
makeup of the area. In 1895, *Hull House Maps and Papers* was published, one of the first examinations of an American working class urban neighborhood.\(^{23}\) While it did not sell a lot of copies, it eventually served as information to support the need for progressive social legislation.\(^{24}\) As Jane got to know her neighbors she found that the people she was trying to help had better ideas about how their lives could be improved than she or the other people working at Hull House. How novel: “the assumption that the reformer’s tastes or values are superior to the reformee’s or that philanthropy is a unilateral act of giving by the person who has to the person who has not is ineffectual and inherently false.”\(^{25}\)

**“A University Feel”**

Jane Addams herself was finally published in 1892. Until Hull House she had not had anything different to say, now she had a subject and a national audience. By this time the idea of the settlement house had become a national movement, and Addams was the leader.\(^{26}\) Addams, who had never wanted to become a professor, watched Hull House become a social laboratory for several universities, one of which was the University of Chicago. John Dewey, a professor at the University of Chicago became a regular visitor at Hull House. He considered Hull House to be a model for what he hoped schools would become, and the residents gained useful knowledge from him as well.\(^{27}\) Jane Addams was convinced that environment was more important than heredity. She believed that if you provided decent housing, better parks and playgrounds, and good schools it was possible to produce better citizens. Although, like Dewey, she was not

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\(^{24}\) Diliberto, 196.

\(^{25}\) Menand, 311.

\(^{26}\) Davis, 93.

\(^{27}\) Davis, 97.
always clear whether she wanted to help the immigrants and workers to adjust to their environment and their jobs, or whether she wanted to transform society to accept all types of people.²⁸

Hull House from the beginning was an educational institution. As Munro stated in *Pedagogies of Resistance* (1999), “The settlement houses not only expanded educational opportunities for women, immigrants, and migrants but were also curricular experiments that contested dominant notions of education.”²⁹ Like Dewey, Addams realized that the knowledge that was being made available to the workingmen was often “bookish and remote,” and concerned subjects that had nothing to do with their actual experiences. She changed the programs at Hull House, from the vocational classes to the Labor Museum, to better reflect the experiences of those who lived in the Hull House neighborhood.³⁰ This made her known as a progressive in education, and in 1905, Mayor Edward F. Dunne made her one of his reform appointees to the school board.

**Beyond Hull House**

Concern for the children and youth in the city led her and the residents at Hull House to develop activities and reform movements to help keep them out of trouble. While they provided a kindergarten, a playground, clubs, classes, and recreational activities it was not the solution for every child. Addams recognized the growing gulf developing between immigrant parents and their Americanized children. The Hull House group sought to develop ways in which the rich cultures of these immigrants could be preserved.³¹ Knowing that this would not keep all of the teenagers in the city out of trouble, the Hull House group worked for legislation that would provide for a juvenile

²⁸ Davis, 102.
²⁹ Munro, 19.
³⁰ Davis, 131.
³¹ Davis, 150.
court. In 1899, the first Juvenile Court was set up in Chicago. It was not a criminal court, and was supposed to keep the rights and interests of the offender chiefly in mind.\(^{32}\)

**Pacifism**

While Jane was a publicist and philosopher of reform, she always occupied the middle ground. She never became a radical and that always left her susceptible to attack. As an advocate for the workers, she defended their right to organize, but discouraged strikes and violence.\(^{33}\) She fought for the passage of legislation to improve the worker’s lot. She collected money, wrote articles, and made speeches in an effort to educate the public on the plight of the working man and woman.\(^{34}\) She was an adamant believer in the freedom of speech and welcomed all kinds of people into Hull House to speak and present their point of view, even if it was unpopular.\(^{35}\) Anarchist, Marxist, socialist, unionist, and leading social theorists congregated there.\(^{36}\) As a practical reformer she learned how to lobby for bills, how to marshal evidence and statistics, and how to mobilize support in order to influence elected officials. Even though she was the strategist, she often let others fight the battles. Her strength was in her ability to plan and see both sides of a situation. This was one of the aspects of her personality that made her so successful.

Believing that women had a special responsibility to preserve peace, when World War I broke out in 1914, Addams decided to devote the majority of her time and energy to the Woman’s Peace Party.\(^{37}\) Jane Addams experienced a fall from grace when she challenged the part of the American dream that saw war as glorious and patriotic. Once

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\(^{32}\) Davis, 150.

\(^{33}\) Davis, 111.

\(^{34}\) Davis, 114.

\(^{35}\) Davis, 116.

\(^{36}\) Munro, 33.

\(^{37}\) Davis, 214.
the United States became involved in World War I, Jane Addams was no longer “a heroine who represented the best of American democracy or the saint who symbolized the purity and purpose of American women, she was a high minded and deluded fool, well-meaning perhaps, but impractical and well beyond her depths.” In just a short amount of time, she became the symbol of everything anti-American, a traitor to her country, and the antithesis of what she had stood for all of her career. In 1918, she decided to stop talking about the war, and chose instead to travel the country and talk about Herbert Hoover’s Department of Food Administration. This however, was not enough to protect her from the Red Scare that would develop at the end of World War I. People who had opposed the war went from being called pacifists to communists. By opposing the war, Jane Addams had gone from American saint to “the most dangerous woman in America.” In 1919 she topped a War Department list of people who held “dangerous, destructive, and anarchist sentiments.

Every year from 1920-1930, Jane Addams’ name had been submitted for the Nobel Peace Prize. The fact that she did not receive it so many times, made the win in 1931 anticlimactic. By the 1930’s a different kind of heroine had emerged, one who did not consider maturity or service to society a badge of honor. The 1930’s saw a revival of praise for the efforts of Jane Addams in her lifetime, and the unfortunate circumstances surrounding her fall from grace in the 1920’s seemed to be forgotten. She received many awards and when Mark A. DeWolf picked “six outstanding present day

38 Davis, 241.  
39 Davis, 246.  
40 Davis, 247.  
41 Davis, 251.  
42 Davis, 252.  
43 Davis, 270.  
44 Davis, 277.
Americans,” Jane Addams was included in the list. She was also included in a list of “the seven greatest Americans of all time.” She received many honorary degrees, some of which had refused to give her one during the 1920’s. When she died in 1935, thousands came out for her funeral, held at Hull House. As writers and friends evaluated her in obituaries and memorial tributes, she entered the realm of the divine.

Looking back on her years at Rockford in Twenty Years at Hull House (1910), Jane goes into an in depth discussion about how “essentially similar are the various forms of social effort, and curiously enough, the actual activities of a missionary school are not unlike many that are carried on in a Settlement situated in a foreign quarter.” In a way, Jane did become a missionary only she was not a religious evangelist. Her mission field was the 19th ward of Chicago and democracy was her message. In “The Subjective Necessity for Social Settlements,” Jane explains that she did not mean democracy in a political sense, after all the “gift of the ballot” had already been granted to African Americans. The problem was that the social possibilities of democracy had not yet been realized. As long as minorities and women lived on the fringe of society there was progress to be made. Unless the good we seek is “secured for all of us,” it will be a precarious and uncertain thing. Hull House, in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, provided a place for a young, educated generation to try to solve the problems that plagued urban America. At Hull House they could gain hands on experience and training as writers, social investigators, or social workers. They were encouraged to try new things and if it did not produce the desired results, work on it until it did. The only ideas that counted were the ones that make a difference.

45 Davis, 283.
46 Addams, Twenty Years at Hull House, 49.
47 Elshtain 94-95.
48 Davis, 74.
Chapter 5

Unit Plan: The Progressive Era and Jane Addams

This unit of study is intended to be a 10-15 day inquiry into the streams of thought which fed the Progressive Movement and eventually led to reform in the areas of education, suffrage, freedom of the press, labor and immigration. Students will be encouraged to trace the development of ideas through a historical figure that in this lesson is Jane Addams. It is hoped that they will learn that many of the inner conflicts that engaged men and women in the past were expressed in the books that they wrote and the political policy they helped to pass. Their impact on history can be observed and felt still today. The students will be challenged to understand the ideas of the Progressive Movement in such a way that they will see that “attitude determines action” and “philosophy determines practice.” This unit will attempt to illuminate a period in American History during which many characteristics of our society and social policy exist today. The turn of the century was a time of amazing growth and change for America. The face of the entire world was changing and America was at the heart of the change. Industry, experimentation, and philosophy were the hallmarks of the turn of the century. These and the personalities of the people who created them transformed America into the diverse society that it has become. As the students consider these ideas and people it is the teacher’s hope that they may see something of themselves in the process. As they see the great lengths through which people in the past went to change America for the better, they will see that they can make a difference also.
Louisiana State Benchmarks and Grade Level Expectations (GLE’s)

1. Evaluate and use multiple primary or secondary materials to interpret historical facts, ideas, or issues.

25. Analyze the role of the media, political leaders, and intellectuals in raising awareness of social problems among Americans in the United States (e.g., Muckrakers, Presidents Roosevelt and McKinley, Jane Addams).

26. Evaluate the Progressive Movement in terms of its goals and resulting accomplishments (e.g., Sixteenth through Nineteenth Amendments, Pure Food and Drug Act, advances in land conservation).

H-1A-H2 – Explaining and analyzing events, ideas, and issues within a historical context.

H-1A-H3 – Interpreting and evaluating the historical evidence presented in primary and secondary sources.

H-1A-H5 – Conducting research in efforts to analyze historical questions and issues.

H-1B-H6 – Analyzing the development of industrialization and examining its impact on American society.

Objectives/Guiding Questions

1. Can students explain the role of the media, political leaders, and intellectual leaders in raising the awareness of social problems in America?

2. Can students identify Jane Addams and Hull House and their impact on society at the turn of the century?

3. Can students identify characteristics of a democracy?

4. Can students give examples of how the philosophy of pragmatism provided the theoretical basis for progressive reforms?
5. Can students explain the goals and accomplishments of the Progressive Movement?

**Lesson 1/Day 1**

**Introduction:** What was life like at the turn of the century (1890’s)?

**Instruction:**

1. View PowerPoint Presentation: “Life at the Turn of the Century.” (Appendix 1)
2. Students will take notes on the images, in pairs, on a handout version of the presentation. (Appendix 1) They will write down what they noticed about the photos.
3. The teacher will have students share their thoughts on what they thought life was like at the turn of the century, encouraging them to see the vast difference between the rich and the poor.
4. Students will divide into groups and read excerpts from *Major Problems in American History*. The excerpts will represent women, ex-slaves, immigrants, and the urban poor.

**Closure:** One student from each group will share what they found.

**Day 2**

**Instruction:** Students will read a primary source written by one of the reformers from the progressive era and answer questions.

1. Excerpts from *Twenty Years at Hull House* – Jane Addams (Appendix 2)
2. Excerpts from *The Gospel of Wealth* – Andrew Carnegie (Appendix 3)
3. Introduction to *How the Other Half Lives* – Jacob Riis (Appendix 4)
4. Introduction to *The Shame of the Cities* – Lincoln Steffens (Appendix 5)

**Closure:** Bring the answers back tomorrow.
**Assessment:** Written response to PowerPoint Presentation

**Materials:**

PowerPoint Presentation: Life at the Turn of the Century

Excerpts from *Major Problems in American History*:

“Missouri Senator Carl Schurz Admits the Failures of Reconstruction, 1872”

“Immigrant Thomas O’Donnell Laments the Plight of the Worker, 1883”

“Black Leader Booker T. Washington Advocates Compromise, 1895”

“Elias Hill, an American Man, Recounts a Nighttime Visit from the Ku Klux Klan, 1871”

**Lesson 2/Day 1**

**Introduction:** Jane Addams

**Instruction:**

1. Introduce Jane Addams with a short PowerPoint presentation on her childhood and years at Rockford. (Appendix 6)

2. Distribute Jane Addams handout: “Charitable Effort” from *Democracy and Social Ethics*. (Appendix 7)

3. Define: ethics, social ethics, morals and charity

4. Read aloud and stop after each paragraph to explain and assess understanding.

5. Students will answer the questions in pairs after we have read and discussed. What did Jane Addams think was a problem (or problems) with society? What did she think was the solution to this problem?

6. On Day 2, divide students into groups with one person representing one reformer in each group (Jane Addams, Jacob Riis, Andrew Carnegie, and Lincoln Steffens). Have students share the views of their reformer with the group.
7. Students should compile a list for their group of issues and possible solutions.

Materials:
PowerPoint Presentation: “Jane Addams”
Reading: “Charitable Effort” from Democracy and Social Ethics.
Closure: Ask students – Based on yesterday’s PowerPoint and today’s reading, what do you think would have helped people the most?
Homework: none
Technology Integration: computer/projector

Lesson 3
Introduction: Define Democracy

Instruction:
1. Ask students to share their definitions of democracy.
2. Ask students if the pictures and readings from the day before represent a democratic society.
3. After the topic has been thoroughly discussed, show PowerPoint “Philosophy and Reform.”

Materials: PowerPoint Presentation: “Philosophy and Reform” (Appendix 8)
Closure: Discussion
Homework: none
Technology Integration: computer/projector

Lesson 4
Introduction: Write a new definition of democracy.

Instruction:
1. Review the PowerPoint from the day before.
2. Have students make a list of the issues in society at the turn of the century. (city problems, labor conditions, monopolies, food production, corruption in politics, and inequality of wealth distribution discrimination against women and African Americans)

3. Have students take out their list of issues in society at the turn of the century.

4. Divide students into groups of four. Based on their understanding of the philosophy of pragmatism, write down examples of how some of these issues could be solved. Students will take into consideration democracy and experience.

Closure: Bring the class together and have at least one person from each group share one of their ideas.

Homework: none

Technology Integration: computer/projector

Lesson 5

Introduction: Which of the issues from the list compiled was the easiest to solve?

Instruction: (this class will meet in the computer lab)


2. Explain the settlement house movement.

3. Students will spend the rest of the class period finding pictures of Hull House to correspond with the Hull House firsts hand out. Students will put the pictures in Microsoft word and submit them electronically for assessment.

Materials: Handouts – “Chronology of Jane Addams,” and “Hull House Firsts”

Closure: Submit word documents.

Homework: none

Technology Integration: computer/projector
Chapter 6

Conclusion

In his biography of Jane Addams, American Heroine (1973), Allen F. Davis states: “most of the capsule summaries of the careers of famous women in history textbooks often distort their importance or hide their significance behind a veil of half-truths.”¹ This statement by Davis, while probably true for most women in history, is especially true for Jane Addams. While Jane Addams is one of the women found most often in American History textbooks, she is portrayed as a saintly woman who opened a settlement house in Chicago to help poor, illiterate immigrants. The American history textbook, America: Pathways to the Present (2000) says this:

As social worker Jane Addams explained in a 1910, Ladies Home Journal article, women had a special interest in the reform of American society. She is quoted as saying “Women who live in the country sweep their own dooryards and may either feed the refuse [trash] of the table to a flock of chickens or allow it innocently in the open air and sunshine. In a crowded city quarter, however, if the street is not cleaned by the city authorities no amount of private sweeping will keep the tenement free from grime; if garbage is not properly collected and destroyed a tenement house mother may see her children sicken and die of diseases.” In short, Addams argued that women in cities could not care for their children without government help.²

This, and her name associated with the settlement movement, is the only exposure to Jane Addams that a high school student receives. As someone who has researched Jane Addams, the immediate reaction is to create a lesson that would tell students who she was and what she did. However, the lasting impression this would leave on a high school student is minimal at best. Having taught high school social studies for eight years, I can

already hear their response: “So I should put Jane Addams and Hull House in my notes?” It is enough to make a teacher cringe, as the bigger picture is lost so that the facts can survive.

In April 2005, the Louisiana State Department of Education adopted the Louisiana Comprehensive Curriculum. The new social studies curriculum was created so that every teacher in Louisiana can teach exactly the same topics at exactly the same time. According to the comprehensive curriculum, the entire Progressive Era must be taught and tested within ten school days making any chance to highlight the life and accomplishments of one particular historical figure difficult. In order to work within the limits of the comprehensive curriculum and also have history make a lasting impression on students, teachers will have to find a creative and efficient way to teach more than the facts. Using Jane Addams to teach the Progressive Era would give teachers a chance to teach the facts and also cover the social and intellectual history of the time period.

Jane’s childhood and her years at Rockford are a microcosm of what was going on in society in the 1870’s and 1880’s. She was influenced by the abolitionist movement as a child and by the women’s suffrage movement at Rockford. Her generation was learning to negotiate the changing roles of both women and religion in society. However to sum Jane Addams up as either religious or feminist is to grossly misunderstand her historical significance. Her father exemplified morality, integrity, and service to the community and he taught her a unique view of Christianity. Between him and the influence of Rockford Female Seminary, Jane Addams learned to negotiate the issues of her day to define a social ethic that would later influence federal legislation. Because she used religious language in her speeches and writings does not make her religious.
Student will be encouraged to look at the dominant historical narrative leading up to 1890; maybe she communicated her thoughts that way because it was a language that people at the turn of the century could understand. Historically it was the church that provided social services, at the turn of the century the role of the church was diminishing. Evidence of the churches attempt to relieve the poor and diseased was sporadic and insufficient. Society had changed so drastically and gotten so bad that even their best efforts were not enough. Jane Addams and other progressive reformers saw the need to turn their personal morality, religious or not, into a secular social ethic. They pushed for legislation on the local, state, and federal levels so that all people, regardless of sex, race, social class and religious affiliation could receive the assistance they needed to live in the new industrial society.

Studying the time period using Jane Addams will allow the teacher to introduce topics like ethics and morality and how they provide the theoretical basis for government policy. Students will learn the difference between morals and ethics and they will see how they change and develop, both personally and socially, to accommodate changes in society. As a teacher of American history, I will never attempt to teach the progressive movement again without first introducing the philosophy of pragmatism. It is not an easy topic to explain, especially for students who have had no exposure to theory or philosophy. Before standardized testing, teachers had an opportunity to talk about John Locke or Thomas Paine; teachers could also talk about the philosophies of presidents like Thomas Jefferson, Andrew Jackson, or Abraham Lincoln. Today high school American history begins with Reconstruction. By the time they get to the progressive movement they have no idea what laissez-faire has to do with social issues.
After studying Jane Addams it became evident that her life could provide the framework for teaching the progressive movement in a way that would give students something to think about. Jane’s pragmatism could be made simple enough for the high school student to understand. At the heart of Jane’s philosophy about social reform is that how good an idea is should be judged by its outcome. If the idea does not produce a positive outcome for the majority involved then it should be reworked until it does. Once students understand pragmatism a multitude of topics could be debated: social ethics, democracy, justice, ideology and experience are just a few.

Let me explain why this thesis is personally important to me as a teacher. When hurricane Katrina hit the Gulf Coast in September of 2005, the United States saw something that is an abomination to democracy. How, in 2005, was there a place in the United States that the police would not patrol or that children were not made to go to school. What happened to the “War on Poverty” and the “War on Drugs?” In New Orleans, Louisiana, Americans were exposed to a poverty level that should not exist in a democratic society. The reaction of high school students to this covered the entire spectrum. This generation of young people has seen a lot. They have lived through the biggest terrorist attack and survived the worst natural catastrophe in United States history. They are currently living through the “War on Terror” and watching their friends and family members go to the Middle East to fight to protect “our very way of life.” These students are future voters and policy makers. It is imperative that we do the best we can to prepare them to be responsible citizens of the United States. We have to start somewhere. Jane Addams said, “Democracy, like any other of the living faiths of men, is
so essentially mystical that it constantly demands new formulation…to refuse to receive
it may mean to reject that which our fathers cherished and handed on as an inheritance.”

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Appendix 1

PowerPoint and Notes Page: Life at the Turn of the Century

Slide 1

Slide 2
Appendix 2

Excerpts from *Twenty Years at Hull-house* by Jane Addams

*Jane Addams* (1860-1935) was one of the first generation of American women to attend college. After graduation, unmarried, she struggled to find a career and a purpose. Finally in London she discovered Toynbee Hall and the cause to which she would devote her life: the settlement house. In 1889 she and a college friend moved into the slums of Chicago. They called their dilapidated old mansion Hull House.

Soon a nationwide settlement house movement sprang up. Jane Addams spoke and wrote widely about settlement work. Her vivid stories made the plight of the poor heartbreakingly immediate. She prodded America to respond to the terrible ills of industrial development: child labor, infant mortality, urban crowding and unsanitary conditions, unsafe workplaces, juvenile delinquency, unemployment, and poverty wages.

*Her pacifism during World War I caused Jane Addams's reputation to suffer. In the hysterical intolerance of the "Red Scare" she was branded "the most dangerous woman in America" by self-appointed superpatriots. But her accomplishments could not be denied. Calmer times brought renewed recognition, capped by the Nobel Peace Prize in 1931.*

As social reformers gave themselves over to discussion of general principles, so the poor invariably accused poverty itself of their destruction. I recall a certain Mrs. Moran, who was returning one rainy day from the office of the county agent with her arms full of paper bags containing beans and flour which alone lay between her children and starvation. Although she had no money, she boarded a street car in order to save her booty from complete destruction by the rain, and as the burst bags dropped "flour on the ladies' dresses" and "beans all over the place," she was sharply reprimanded by the conductor, who was the further exasperated when he discovered she had no fare. He put her off, as she had hoped he would, almost in front of Hull-House. She related to us her state of mind as she stepped off the car and saw the last of her wares disappearing; she admitted she forgot the proprieties and "cursed a little," but, curiously enough, she pronounced her malediction, not against the rain nor the conductor, nor yet against the worthless husband who had been sent up to the city prison, but, true to the Chicago spirit of the moment, went to the root of the matter and roundly "cursed poverty."

It was also during this winter that I became permanently impressed with the kindness of the poor to each other; the woman who lives upstairs will willingly share her breakfast with the family below because she knows they "are hard up"; the man who boarded with them last winter will give a month's rent because he knows the father of the family is out of work; the baker across the street who is fast being pushed to the wall by his downtown competitors, will send across three loaves of stale bread because he has seen the children looking longingly into his window and suspects they are hungry....
I remember one family in which the father had been out of work for this same winter, most of the furniture had been pawned, and as the worn-out shoes could not be replaced the children could not go to school. The mother was ill and barely able to come for the supplies and medicines.

Two years later she invited me to supper one Sunday evening in the little home which had been completely restored, and she gave as a reason for the invitation that she couldn't bear to have me remember them as they had been during that one winter, which she insisted had been unique in her twelve years of married life. She said that it was as if she had met me, not as I am ordinarily, but as I should appear misshapen with rheumatism or with a face distorted by neuralgic pain; that it was not fair to judge poor people that way. She perhaps unconsciously illustrated the difference between the relief-station relation to the poor and the Settlement relation to its neighbors, the latter wishing to know them through all the varying conditions of life, to stand by when they are in distress, but by no means to drop intercourse with them when normal prosperity has returned, enabling the relation to become more social and free from economic disturbance....

During the many relief visits I paid that winter in tenement houses and miserable lodgings, I was constantly shadowed by a certain sense of shame that I should be comfortable in the midst of such distress. This resulted at times in a curious reaction against all the educational and philanthropic activities in which I had been engaged. In the face of the desperate hunger and need, these could not but seem futile and superficial. The hard winter in Chicago had turned the thoughts of many of us to these stern matters. A young friend of mine who came daily to Hull-House consulted me in regard to going into the paper warehouse belonging to her father that she might there sort rags with the Polish girls; another young girl took a place in a sweatshop for a month, doing her work so simply and thoroughly that the proprietor had no notion that she had not been driven there by need; still two others worked in a shoe factory;—and all this happened before such adventures were undertaken in order to procure literary material. It was in the following winter that the pioneer effort in this direction, Walter Wyckoff's account of his vain attempt to find work in Chicago, compelled even the sternest businessman to drop his assertion that "any man can find work if he wants it."

The dealing directly with the simplest human wants may have been responsible for an impression which I carried about with me almost constantly for a period of two years and which culminated finally in a visit to Tolstoy—that the Settlement, or Hull-House at least, was a mere pretense and travesty of the simple impulse "to live with the poor," so long as the residents did not share the common lot of hard labor and scant fare.

Actual experience had left me in much the same state of mind I had been in after reading Tolstoy's "What to Do," which is a description of his futile efforts to relieve the unspeakable distress and want in the Moscow winter of 1881, and his inevitable conviction that only he who literally shares his own shelter and food with the needy can claim to have served them.

Doubtless it is much easier to see "what to do" in rural Russia, where all the conditions
tend to make the contrast as broad as possible between peasant labor and noble idleness, than it is to see "what to do" in the interdependencies of the modern industrial city. But for that very reason perhaps, Tolstoy's clear statement is valuable for that type of conscientious person in every land who finds it hard, not only to walk in the path of righteousness, but to discover where the path lies.

I had read the books of Tolstoy steadily all the years since "My Religion" had come into my hands immediately after I left college. The reading of that book had made clear that men's poor little efforts to do right are put forth for the most part in the chill of self-distrust; I became convinced that if the new social order ever came, it would come by gathering to itself all the pathetic human endeavor which had indicated the forward direction. But I was most eager to know whether Tolstoy's undertaking to do his daily share of the physical labor of the world, that labor which is "so disproportionate to the unnourished strength" of those by whom it is ordinarily performed, had brought him peace!


Appendix 3

Excerpts from The Gospel of Wealth by Andrew Carnegie

Andrew Carnegie (1835-1919) was a massively successful business man - his wealth was based on the provision of iron and steel to the railways, but also a man who recalled his radical roots in Scotland before his immigration to the United States. To resolve what might seem to be contradictions between the creation of wealth, which he saw as proceeding from immutable social laws, and social provision he came up with the notion of the "gospel of wealth". He lived up to his word, and gave away his fortune to socially beneficial projects, most famously by funding libraries. His approval of death taxes might surprise modern billionaires!

The problem of our age is the administration of wealth, so that the ties of brotherhood may still bind together the rich and poor in harmonious relationship. The conditions of human life have not only been changed, but revolutionized, within the past few hundred years. In former days there was little difference between the dwelling, dress, food, and environment of the chief and those of his retainers. . . . The contrast between the palace of the millionaire and the cottage of the laborer with us today measures the change which has come with civilization.

This change, however, is not to be deplored, but welcomed as highly beneficial. It is well, nay, essential for the progress of the race, that the houses of some should be homes for all that is highest and best in literature and the arts, and for all the refinements of civilization, rather than that none should be so. Much better this great irregularity than universal squalor. Without wealth there can be no Maecenas [Note: a rich Roman patron of the arts]. The "good old times" were not good old times. Neither master nor servant was as well situated then as to day. A relapse to old conditions would be disastrous to both-not the least so to him who serves-and would sweep away civilization with it....

. . . We start, then, with a condition of affairs under which the best interests of the race are promoted, but which inevitably gives wealth to the few. Thus far, accepting conditions as they exist, the situation can be surveyed and pronounced good. The question then arises-and, if the foregoing be correct, it is the only question with which we have to deal-What is the proper mode of administering wealth after the laws upon which civilization is founded have thrown it into the hands of the few? And it is of this great question that I believe I offer the true solution. It will be understood that fortunes are here spoken of, not moderate sums saved by many years of effort, the returns from which are required for the comfortable maintenance and education of families. This is not wealth, but only competence, which it should be the aim of all to acquire.

There are but three modes in which surplus wealth can be disposed of. It can be left to the families of the decedents; or it can be bequeathed for public purposes; or, finally, it can be administered during their lives by its possessors. Under the first and second modes most of the wealth of the world that has reached the few has hitherto been applied. Let us in turn consider each of these modes. The first is the most injudicious. In monarchial
countries, the estates and the greatest portion of the wealth are left to the first son, that the vanity of the parent may be gratified by the thought that his name and title are to descend to succeeding generations unimpaired. The condition of this class in Europe today teaches the futility of such hopes or ambitions. The successors have become impoverished through their follies or from the fall in the value of land.... Why should men leave great fortunes to their children? If this is done from affection, is it not misguided affection? Observation teaches that, generally speaking, it is not well for the children that they should be so burdened. Neither is it well for the state. Beyond providing for the wife and daughters moderate sources of income, and very moderate allowances indeed, if any, for the sons, men may well hesitate, for it is no longer questionable that great sums bequeathed oftener work more for the injury than for the good of the recipients. Wise men will soon conclude that, for the best interests of the members of their families and of the state, such bequests are an improper use of their means.

. . . As to the second mode, that of leaving wealth at death for public uses, it may be said that this is only a means for the disposal of wealth, provided a man is content to wait until he is dead before it becomes of much good in the world.... The cases are not few in which the real object sought by the testator is not attained, nor are they few in which his real wishes are thwarted....

The growing disposition to tax more and more heavily large estates left at death is a cheering indication of the growth of a salutary change in public opinion.... Of all forms of taxation, this seems the wisest. Men who continue hoarding great sums all their lives, the proper use of which for public ends would work good to the community, should be made to feel that the community, in the form of the state, cannot thus be deprived of its proper share. By taxing estates heavily at death, the state marks its condemnation of the selfish millionaire's unworthy life.

. . . This policy would work powerfully to induce the rich man to attend to the administration of wealth during his life, which is the end that society should always have in view, as being that by far most fruitful for the people....

There remains, then, only one mode of using great fortunes: but in this way we have the true antidote for the temporary unequal distribution of wealth, the reconciliation of the rich and the poor—a reign of harmony—another ideal, differing, indeed from that of the Communist in requiring only the further evolution of existing conditions, not the total overthrow of our civilization. It is founded upon the present most intense individualism, and the race is prepared to put it in practice by degrees whenever it pleases. Under its sway we shall have an ideal state, in which the surplus wealth of the few will become, in the best sense, the property of the many, because administered for the common good, and this wealth, passing through the hands of the few, can be made a much more potent force for the elevation of our race than if it had been distributed in small sums to the people themselves. Even the poorest can be made to see this, and to agree that great sums gathered by some of their fellowcitizens and spent for public purposes, from which the
masses reap the principal benefit, are more valuable to them than if scattered among them through the course of many years in trifling amounts.

. . .This, then, is held to be the duty of the man of Wealth: First, to set an example of modest, unostentatious living, shunning display or extravagance; to provide moderately for the legitimate wants of those dependent upon him; and after doing so to consider all surplus revenues which come to him simply as trust funds, which he is called upon to administer, and strictly bound as a matter of duty to administer in the manner which, in his judgment, is best calculated to produce the most beneficial result for the community-the man of wealth thus becoming the sole agent and trustee for his poorer brethren, bringing to their service his superior wisdom, experience, and ability to administer-doing for them better than they would or could do for themselves.

http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1889carnegie.html

Appendix 4

Excerpts from How the Other Half Lives by Jacob Riis

1. LONG ago it was said that "one half of the world does not know how the other half lives." That was true then. It did not know because it did not care. The half that was on top cared little for the struggles, and less for the fate of those who were underneath, so long as it was able to hold them there and keep its own seat. There came a time when the discomfort and crowding below were so great, and the consequent upheavals so violent, that it was no longer an easy thing to do, and then the upper half fell to inquiring what was the matter. Information on the subject has been accumulating rapidly since, and the whole world has had its hands full answering for its old ignorance.

2. In New York, the youngest of the world's great cities, that time came later than elsewhere, because the crowding had not been so great. There were those who believed that it would never come; but their hopes were vain. Greed and reckless selfishness wrought like results here as in the cities of older lands. "When the great riot occurred in 1863," so reads the testimony of the Secretary of the Prison Association of New York before a legislative committee appointed to investigate causes of the increase of crime in the State twenty-five years ago, "every hiding-place and nursery of crime discovered itself by immediate and active participation in the operations of the mob. Those very places and domiciles, and all that are like them, are to-day nurseries of crime, and of the vices and disorderly courses which lead to crime. By far the largest part--eighty per cent. at least--of crimes against properly and against the person are perpetrated by individuals who have either lost connection with home life, or never had any, or whose homes had ceased to be sufficiently separate, decent, and desirable to afford what was regarded as ordinary wholesome influences of home and family. . . . The younger criminals seem to come almost exclusively from the worst tenement house districts, that is, when traced back to the very places where they had their homes in the city here." Of one thing New York made sure at that early stage of the inquiry: the boundary line of the Other Half lies through the tenements.

3. It is ten years and over, now, since that line divided New York's population evenly. To-day three-fourths of its people live in the tenements, and the nineteenth century drift of the population to the cities is sending ever-increasing multitudes to crowd them. The fifteen thousand tenant houses that were the despair of the sanitarian in the past generation have swelled into thirty-seven thousand, and more than twelve hundred thousand persons call them home. The one way out he saw--rapid transit to the suburbs--has brought no relief. We know now that these is no way out; that the "system" that was the evil offspring of public neglect and private greed has come to stay, a storm-centre forever of our civilization. Nothing is left but to make the best of a bad bargain.

4. What the tenements are and how they grow to what they are, we shall see hereafter. The story is dark enough, drawn from the plain public records, to send a chill to any heart. If it shall appear that the sufferings and the sins of the "other half," and the evil they breed, are but as a just punishment upon the community that gave it no other choice,
it will be because that is the truth. The boundary line lies there because, while the forces for good on one side vastly outweigh the bad—-it were not well otherwise--in the tenements all the influences make for evil; because they are the hot-beds of the epidemics that carry death to rich and poor alike; the nurseries of pauperism and crime that fill our jails and police courts; that throw off a scum of forty thousand human wrecks to the island asylums and workhouses year by year; that turned in the last eight years a round half million beggars to prey upon our charities; that maintain a standing army of ten thousand tramps with all that that implies; because, above all, they touch the family life with deadly moral contagion. This is their worst crime, inseparable from the system. That we have to own it the child of our own wrong does not excuse it, even though it gives it claim upon our utmost patience and tenderest charity.

5. What are you going to do about it? is the question of to-day. Forty per cent. of the distress among the poor, said a recent official report, is due to drunkenness. But the first legislative committee ever appointed to probe this sore went deeper down and uncovered its roots. The "conclusion forced itself upon it that certain conditions and associations of human life and habitation are the prolific parents of corresponding habits and morals," and it recommended "the prevention of drunkenness by providing for every man a clean and comfortable home. Years after, a sanitary inquiry brought to light the fact that "more than one-half of the tenements with two-thirds of their population were held by owners veto trade the keeping of them a business, generally a speculation. The owner was seeking a certain percentage on his outlay, and that percentage very rarely fell below fifteen per cent., and frequently exceeded thirty. [2] . . . The complaint was universal among the tenants that they were entirely smeared for, and that the only answer to their requests to have the place put in order by repairs and necessary improvements was that they must pay their rent or leave. The agent's instructions were simple but emphatic: 'Collect the rent in advance, or, failing, eject the occupants.' Upon such a stock grew this upas-tree. Small wonder the fruit is bitter. The remedy that shall be an effective answer to the coming appeal for justice must proceed from the public conscience. Neither legislation nor charity can cover the ground. The greed of capital that wrought the evil must itself undo it, as far as it can now be undone. Homes must be built for the working masses by those who employ their labor; but tenements must cease to be "good property" in the old, heartless sense. "Philanthropy and five per cent." is the penance exacted.

6. If this is true from a purely economic point of view, what then of the outlook from the Christian standpoint? Not long ago a great meeting was held in this city, of all denominations of religious faith, to discuss the question how to lay hold of these teeming masses in the tenements with Christian influences, to which they are now too often strangers. Might not the conference have found in the warning of one Brooklyn builder, who has invested his capital on this plan and made it pay more than a money interest, a hint worth heeding: "How shall the love of God be understood by those who have been nurtured in sight only of the greed of man?"

http://www.cis.yale.edu/amstud/inforev/riis/introduction.html

Appendix 5

Excerpts from The Shame of the Cities by Lincoln Steffens

There must be such a thing, we reasoned. All our big boasting could not be empty vanity, nor our pious pretensions hollow sham. American achievements in science, art, and business mean sound abilities at bottom, and our hypocrisy a race sense of fundamental ethics. Even in government we have given proofs of potential greatness, and our political failures are not complete; they are simply ridiculous. But they are ours. Not alone the triumphs and the statesmen, the defeats and the grafters also represent us, and just as truly. Why not see it so and say it?

Because, I heard, the American people won’t “stand for” it. You may blame the politicians, or, indeed, any one class, but not all classes, not the people. Or you may put it on the ignorant foreign immigrant, or any one nationality, but not on all nationalities, not on the American people. But no one class is at fault, nor any one breed, nor any particular interest or group of interests. The misgovernment of the American people is misgovernment by the American people.

When I set out on my travels, an honest New Yorker told me honestly that I would find that the Irish, the Catholic Irish, were at the bottom of it all everywhere. The first city I went to was St. Louis, a German city. The next was Minneapolis, a Scandinavian city, with a leadership of New Englanders. Then came Pittsburgh, Scotch Presbyterian, and that was what my New York friend was. “Ah, but they are all foreign populations,” I heard. The next city was Philadelphia, the purest American community of all, and the most hopeless. And after that came Chicago and New York, both mongrel-bred, but the one a triumph of reform, the other the best example of good government that I had seen. The “foreign element” excuse is one of the hypocritical lies that save us from the clear sight of ourselves.

Another such conceit of our egotism is that which deplores our politics and lauds our business. This is the wail of the typical American citizen. Now, the typical American citizen is the business man. The typical business man is a bad citizen; he is busy. If he is a “big business man” and very busy, he does not neglect, he is busy with politics, oh, very busy and very businesslike. I found him buying boodlers in St. Louis, defending grafters in Minneapolis, originating corruption in Pittsburgh, sharing with bosses in Philadelphia, deploring reform in Chicago, and beating good government with corruption funds in New York. He is a self-righteous fraud, this big business man. He is the chief source of corruption, and it were a boon if he would neglect politics. But he is not the business man that neglects politics; that worthy is the good citizen, the typical business man. He too is busy, he is the one that has no use and therefore no time for politics. When his neglect has permitted bad government to go so far that he can be stirred to action, he is unhappy, and he looks around for a cure that shall be quick, so that he may hurry back to the shop. Naturally, too, when he talks politics, he talks shop. His patent remedy is quack; it is business.
“Give us a business man,” he says (“like me,” he means). “Let him introduce business methods into politics and government; then I shall be left alone to attend to my business.”

There is hardly an office from United States Senator down to Alderman in any part of the country to which the business man has not been elected; yet politics remains corrupt, government pretty bad, and the selfish citizen has to hold himself in readiness like the old volunteer firemen to rush forth at any hour, in any weather, to prevent the fire; and he goes out sometimes and he puts out the fire (after the damage is done) and he goes back to the shop sighing for the business man in politics. The business man has failed in politics as he has in citizenship. Why?

Because politics is business. That’s what’s the matter with it. That’s what’s the matter with everything—art, literature, religion, journalism, law, medicine,—they’re all business, and all—as you see them. Make politics a sport, as they do in England, or a profession, as they do in Germany, and we’ll have—well, something else than we have now, if we want it, which is another question. But don’t try to reform politics with the banker, the lawyer, and the dry-goods merchant, for these are business men and there are two great hindrances to their achievement of reform: one is that they are different from, but no better than, the politicians; the other is that politics is not “their line.” There are exceptions both ways. Many politicians have gone out into business and done well (Tammany ex-mayors, and nearly all the old bosses of Philadelphia are prominent financiers in their cities), and business men have gone into politics and done well (Mark Hanna, for example). They haven’t reformed their adopted trades, however, though they have sometimes sharpened them most pointedly. The politician is a business man with a specialty. When a business man of some other line learns the business of politics, he is a politician, and there is not much reform left in him. Consider the United States Senate, and believe me.

The commercial spirit is the spirit of profit, not patriotism; of credit, not honor; of individual gain, not national prosperity; of trade and dickering, not principle. “My business is sacred,” says the business man in his heart. “Whatever prospers my business, is good; it must be. Whatever hinders it, is wrong; it must be. A bribe is bad, that is, it is a bad thing to take; but it is not so bad to give one, not if it is necessary to my business.” "Business is business“ is not a political sentiment, but our politician has caught it. He takes essentially the same view of the bribe, only he saves his self-respect by piling all his contempt upon the bribe-giver, and he has the great advantage of candor. "It is wrong, maybe,“ he says, "but if a rich merchant can afford to do business with me for the sake of a convenience or to increase his already great wealth, I can afford, for the sake of a living, to meet him half way. I make no pretensions to virtue, not even on Sunday." And as for giving bad government or good, how about the merchant who gives bad goods or good goods, according to the demand?

http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/5732/%20

Appendix 6

PowerPoint Presentation: Jane Addams – Childhood and Rockford Female Seminary

Slide 1

Jane Addams
Childhood and Rockford Female Seminary

Slide 2

“Earliest Impressions”

- Born on September 6, 1860, in Cedarville, Ill.
- Laura Jane Addams was born to Sarah Weber Addams and John Addams (the same year in which Abraham Lincoln ran for president)
- Jane’s father was a leader in Cedarville - he was in the State Legislature for sixteen years and directed a bank as well as a railroad
Slide 4

**Quotes from Twenty Years at Hull House:**

- "the moral concerns of life"
- She remembered asking her father why people lived in awful little houses so close together. Then replied, she would have a large house in the middle of all the terrible small ones

Slide 5

**Rockford Female Seminary**

- Her father had become the trustee of Rockford and it was understood that Jane would attend the same school as her two sisters.
- The principal of Rockford was a feminist who believed women deserved the same quality education that men received and that "women had a supreme duty to preserve morality, culture and the heritage of western civilization"
“We believed, in our sublime self-conceit, that the difficulty of life would lie solely in the direction of losing these precious ideals of ours, of failing to follow the way of manhood and high purpose we had marked out for ourselves, and we had no notion of the obscure paths of tolerance, just allowance, and self-blame wherein, if we held our minds open, we might learn something of the mystery and complexity of life's purpose.”
Appendix 7

“Charitable Effort,” from Democracy and Social Ethics
By Jane Addams

All those hints and glimpses of a larger and more satisfying democracy, which literature and our own hopes supply, have a tendency to slip away from us and to leave us sadly unguided and perplexed when we attempt to act upon them.

Our conceptions of morality, as all our other ideas, pass through a course of development; the difficulty comes in adjusting our conduct, which has become hardened into customs and habits, to these changing moral conceptions. When this adjustment is not made, we suffer from the strain and indecision of believing one hypothesis and acting upon another.

Probably there is no relation in life which our democracy is changing more rapidly than the charitable relation—that relation which obtains between benefactor and beneficiary; at the same time there is no point of contact in our modern experience which reveals so clearly the lack of that equality which democracy implies. We have reached the moment when democracy has made such inroads upon this relationship, that the complacency of the old-fashioned charitable man is gone forever; while, at the same time, the very need and existence of charity, denies us the consolation and freedom which democracy will at last give.

It is quite obvious that the ethics of none of us are clearly defined, and we are continually obliged to act in circles of habit, based upon convictions which we no longer hold. Thus our estimate of the effect of environment and social conditions has doubtless shifted faster than our methods of administrating charity have changed. Formerly when [end page 11] it was believed that poverty was synonymous with vice and laziness, and that the prosperous man was the righteous man, charity was administered harshly with a good conscience; for the charitable agent really blamed the individual for his poverty, and the very fact of his own superior prosperity gave him a certain consciousness of superior morality. We have learned since that time to measure by other standards, and have ceased to accord to the money-earning capacity exclusive respect; while it is still rewarded out of all proportion to any other, its possession is by no means assumed to imply the possession of the highest moral qualities. We have learned to judge men by their social virtues as well as by their business capacity, by their devotion to intellectual and disinterested aims, and by their public spirit, and we naturally resent being obliged to judge poor people so solely upon the industrial side. Our democratic instinct instantly takes alarm. It is largely in this modern tendency to judge all men by one democratic standard, while the old charitable attitude commonly allowed the use of two standards, that much of the difficulty adheres. We know that unceasing bodily toil becomes wearing and brutalizing, and our position is totally untenable if we judge large numbers of our fellows solely upon their success in maintaining it.

The daintily clad charitable visitor who steps into the little house made untidy by the vigorous efforts of her hostess, the washerwoman, is no longer sure of her superiority to
the latter; she recognizes that her hostess after all represents social value and industrial use, as over against her own parasitic cleanliness and a social standing attained only through status.

The only families who apply for aid to the charitable agencies are those who have come to grief on the industrial side; it may be through sickness, through loss of work, or for other guiltless and inevitable reasons; but the fact remains that they are industrially ailing, and must be bolstered and helped into industrial health. The charity visitor, let us assume, is a young college woman, well-bred and open-minded; when she visits the family assigned to her, she is often embarrassed to find herself obliged to lay all the stress of her teaching and advice upon the industrial virtues, and to treat the members of the family almost exclusively as factors in the industrial system. She insists that they must work and be self-supporting, that the most dangerous of all situations is idleness, that seeking one's own pleasure, while ignoring claims and responsibilities, is the most ignoble of actions. The members of her assigned family may have other charms and virtues—they may possibly be kind and considerate of each other, generous to their friends, but it is her business to stick to the industrial side. As she daily holds up these standards, it often occurs to the mind of the sensitive visitor, whose conscience has been made tender by much talk of brotherhood and equality, that she has no right to say these things; that her untrained hands are no more fitted to cope with actual conditions than those of her broken-down family.

The grandmother of the charity visitor could have done the industrial preaching very well, because she did have the industrial virtues and housewifely training. In a generation our experiences have changed, and our views with them; but we still keep on in the old methods, which could be applied when our consciences, were in line with them, but which are daily becoming more difficult as we divide up into people who work with their hands and those who do not. The charity visitor belonging to the latter class is perplexed by recognitions and suggestions which the situation forces upon her. Our democracy has taught us to apply our moral teaching all around, and the moralist is rapidly becoming so sensitive that when his life does not exemplify his ethical convictions, he finds it difficult to preach.

Added to this is a consciousness, in the mind of the visitor, of a genuine misunderstanding of her motives by the recipients of her charity, and by their neighbors. Let us take a neighborhood of poor people, and test their ethical standards by those of the charity visitor, who comes with the best desire in the world to help them out of their distress. A most striking incongruity, at once apparent, is the difference between the emotional kindness with which relief is given by one poor neighbor to another poor neighbor, and the guarded care with which relief is given by a charity visitor to a charity recipient. The neighborhood mind is at once confronted not only by the difference of method, but by an absolute clashing of two ethical standards.

Appendix 8

PowerPoint Presentation: Philosophy and Reform

Slide 1

Philosophy and Reform

Jane Addams and Pragmatism

Slide 2

In order to understand the progressive movement you must understand pragmatism.

(From: Fahrenheit 451)
Slide 3

What is pragmatism?

- It is a philosophy native to the United States.
- It was especially popular at the turn of the century.
- Jane Addams, John Dewey, William James, and Oliver Wendall Holmes were pioneers of pragmatism (Encyclopedia Britannica, Pragmatism).

Slide 4

Pragmatism Defined:

It is based on the principle that the usefulness, workability, and practicality of ideas, policies, and proposals are the criteria of their merit (Encyclopedia Britannica, “Pragmatism”).

Slide 5

Jane Addams
“A highly personal approach…”

- Jane believed that the only ideas that have merit are the ones that produce results or those that do not always inspire action in those who adhere to it.
- Ideas should constantly evolve to meet the needs of the community.
- Jane believed that the life of Christ provided the ultimate example of social ethics.
- She defined democracy using religious language.
Slide 6

Who saw to the social needs of the community before the progressive movement?

- Churches – “relief”
- Influence of the church (Diliberto, 128)
- Voluntary associations
  - Women

Slide 7

Auguste Comte and “the religion of humanity” (Hecbey, 91)

- Secular creed that encouraged the breaking down of class barriers to improve life for all.
- Those who adhered believed that regardless of class, birth, or wealth, all people could evolve into their best selves.
- They did not seek a religious conversion of others, but a desire to draw upon common religious principles shared by a variety of people, and in doing so serve humanity.

Slide 8

Jane and Social Ethics

- “Renaissance of Christianity” (Addams, Twenty Years at Hull House, 122)
- She believed that the 2 guiding principles of reform should be reciprocity and interdependence
  - Hull House was founded on the theory that the dependence of classes on each other is reciprocal...” (Addams, 91)
- Personal ethics vs. social ethics
Re-Inventing Society

- Early democracy – natural man and inalienable rights
- "Democracy like any other of the living futurs of men, is so essentially mystical that it continually demands new formulation...to refuse to receive it may mean to reject that which our fathers cherished and handed on as an inheritance." (Addams, The Spirit of the Youth in City Streets, )

Democracy and Experience

- Ideologies of assimilation and Americanization
- Jane believed that democracy must be flexible enough to acknowledge the experiences of others. (Munro, 79)
- As we experience life, our morals and beliefs change to accommodate these experiences.
Appendix 9

Jane Addams Chronology

1860 Born in Cedarville, Illinois

1877 Enters Rockford Female Seminary

1881 Graduates from Rockford

1881 Visits Toynbee Hall in London, England

1889 Founds Hull House, a social settlement in Chicago, with Ellen Gates Starr

1894 Helps found Chicago Federation of Settlements

1895 Becomes garbage inspector for 19th Ward, Near West Side

1903 Becomes vice president of National Woman's Trade Union League

1905-1908 Serves as member of Chicago Board of Education

1909 Helps to found the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
Elects first woman President of National Conference of Charities and Corrections
(later National Conference of Social Work)

1910 Mediator in Chicago Garment Worker's Strike
Publishes Twenty Years at Hull-House

1911-1914 First Vice President of national American Woman Suffrage Association
First head of national Federation of Settlement and Neighborhood Centers

1912 Seconds Theodore Roosevelt's nomination at Progressive Party convention

1913 Attends Conference and Congress of International Woman's Suffrage Alliance,
Budapest, Hungary

1915 Helps organize Woman's Peace Party, elected First Chairman
Presides at International Congress of Women at the Hague, Netherlands

1919 Founds Women's International League for Peace and Freedom; serves as President
1919-29

1920 Helps found the American Civil Liberties Union

1928 Presides over conference of Pan-Pacific Women's Union in Hawaii
1931 First American woman recipient of Nobel Peace Prize

1935 Dies in hospital in Chicago and is buried in Cedarville, Illinois

* Source: Jane Addams' Hull-House Museum
The University of Illinois at Chicago
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Hull House Firsts

- First social settlement house in Chicago
- First public swimming pool, kitchen and playground in Chicago
- First free art exhibits and painting loan program in Chicago
- Investigations that led to the creation and enactment of the first factory laws in Illinois
- Creation of the first four labor unions: Women's Skirt Makers, Women Cloak Makers, Dorcas Federal Labor Union, Chicago Women's trade Union League
- First investigations resulting in laws relating to truancy, sanitation, child labor, public school curriculum
- First private venture capital fund in the U.S. targeted toward neighborhood business development
- First domestic violence court in Chicago in conjunction with the Chicago Metropolitan Battered Women's Network (Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Program)
- First on-site emergency medical team in a Chicago public housing development (First Aid Care Team)
- First infant care facility in a Chicago high school (Orr Infant and Family Development Center)
- First community-based foster care program of its kind in the country (Neighbor to Neighbor)
- Hull House Web site http://www.hullhouse.org/

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Vita

Kacy Taylor Edwards graduated from Louisiana State University with a Bachelor of Arts degree in the fall of 1997. She earned her teaching certificate the same semester in middle and high school social studies. In the fall of 1998, she began her teaching career at Tara High School and has been teaching social studies there for eight years. In that time she has taught free enterprise, world geography, and world history. Mrs. Edwards began working on her Master of Arts degree in Education in the fall of 2000. Her course of study has included classes in history, curriculum and instruction, and women and gender studies. She will complete her degree in the fall of 2005 and continue teaching social studies at Tara High School.