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# Hull House, the Pullman Strike, and Tolstoy: Documenting the Work of Jane Addams

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Hull House, the Pullman Strike, and Tolstoy:  
Documenting the Work of Jane Addams

Mary Lynn McCree Bryan, Maree de Angury, and Ellen Skerrett, editors. *The Selected Papers of Jane Addams, Volume III: Creating Hull-House and an International Presence, 1889-1900.*

University of Illinois Press, 2019.

The sheer amount of material packed into the nearly 1,000 pages of *The Selected Papers of Jane Addams*, volume 3, is breath-taking. In this volume the editors, Mary Lynn McCree Bryan, Maree de Angury, and Ellen Skerrett include a generous selection of Addams's correspondence and writings during the first decade of Hull House's existence, supplemented by extensive endnotes and commentary. This continues the pattern the editors used in volumes 1 and 2 that covered Addams's life up to the founding of Hull House. These volumes are part of the Jane Addams Project, which first produced the 82-reel microfilm edition of the Jane Addams Papers. The documents in these volumes are from the microfilm edition.

The documents, endnotes, and commentary in *Selected Papers*, volume 3, provide materials on every facet of Addams's life and work during Hull House's first decade. The editors

chose to focus primarily on Addams's correspondence with family members and friends. Newspaper clippings detail Addams's activities in Chicago as well as show how her reputation spread nationally and internationally. The editors included a few of her published essays and transcriptions of a few of her speeches; however, for the bulk of these, scholars will still need to consult the microfilm.

The endnotes accompanying each document are highly detailed and generally take up significantly more space than the documents themselves. Persons mentioned in the documents are identified and extensive biographical material is provided for many of them. Locations and events are described and placed in historical context.

The apparatus accompanying the documents and endnotes is extensive and very helpful. The introductions to the volume and each section contextualize the decade by giving material on labor unrest, political corruption, and exploitative labor practices in Chicago. The editors include long biographical profiles of Louise de Koven Bowen, Julia Lathrop, and Mary Rozet Smith and her family. These add to profiles in volume 1 on Addams's family members and on Ellen Gates Starr, cofounder of Hull House. The volume also contains an 85-page bibliography, a nearly 100-page index, and many illustrations.

This volume is an essential resource for scholars and students in every field interested in Addams, the social settlement movement, and the history of social reform. The volume is particularly strong in documenting the step-by-step processes through which Hull House grew. The cumulative effect is to recast readers' image of Addams and Hull House from a singular individual with her remarkable social settlement, to viewing Addams and Hull House as transmission nodes within complex networks of people, organizations, and institutions dedicated to transforming every facet of city life.

In describing the volume's contents, I will note how the volume can serve readers most interested in Addams's theorizing. A strength of pragmatism is its insistence that fruitful theorizing arises out of concrete experience and must subsequently be tested by experience. While the documents, endnotes, and commentary rarely deal directly with the questions theorists want to engage, they are invaluable in presenting the concrete, on-the-ground experiences and experiments out of which Addams's theorizing emerged and to which she daily returned. Thus, the volume gives the experiential grounding that made Addams one of the founders of classical American pragmatism and arguably its most significant theorist-practitioner.

Part 1 (1889-1893) tells the story of Hull House's early years through letters Addams wrote to family and friends. In the months before Hull House opened, Addams and Starr sought support from an astonishing number of people and organizations. Through these efforts Addams and Starr created a vast network of future collaborators in social reform. Addams's letters describe the settlement's ever-expanding array of clubs, classes, and programs; the letters' informal, chatty style reveal Addams's imagination, perseverance, and good humor in the face of exhaustion and failure—traits she would rely on throughout her life. The section also includes Addams's first published addresses, initially delivered at the School of Applied Ethics in 1892 (238-96). (They are now known under the titles, "The Subjective Necessity for Social Settlements," and "The Objective Value of Social Settlements.") For social theorists these essays are particularly significant as they point toward the multiple layers of Addams's conception of social democracy. Addams's conception is of a democracy of place, grounded in and emerging out of the new, industrializing, multi-national city.

Part 2 (1894-1896) opens with the story of how Addams and Hull House residents responded as an economic depression hit Chicago. They had to respond as deprivation and labor

unrest further devastated their neighbors, already living at survival's edge. Addams was forced to grapple with the question of how the settlement could function as a democratic institution in the face of needs so immediately pressing that hierarchical methods of charity relief had to be used. The documents cover Addams's and Hull House's efforts to support the labor union movement, particularly among women workers; their sociological investigations leading to the publication of *Hull House Maps and Papers*; and Addams as negotiator and theorist of the Pullman Strike.

For peace theorists, the documents and endnotes on Addams's engagement with the Pullman Strike and on her visit to Tolstoy in 1896 are particularly important as they contain perspectives with which Addams developed her conceptions of peace and pacifism. I wish the editors had included transcriptions of Addams's speeches analyzing the Pullman strike, titled "A Modern Tragedy." These would eventually be published in 1912 as "A Modern Lear." However, the extensive endnotes point toward resources theorists can use for interpreting that essay and considering how Addams's reflections on labor unrest contributed to her theorizing on peace. Also during this time Addams studied Tolstoy's texts and gave many speeches on his life and works. *Selected Papers*, volume 3 contains a few documents on Addams's visit to Tolstoy; the extensive endnotes point to resources with which to compare her conception of pacifism with Tolstoy's.

Part 3 (1897-1900) continues to chart the growth of Hull House and its deepening engagement in urban social reform. Much of this section focuses on Addams's expanding role as a public speaker locally and nationally. Her addresses were widely reported in the national press. Addams also gave a series of lectures through the University of Chicago extension division that provided material for her first book, *Democracy and Social Ethics*, published in 1902.

Peace theorists will be particularly interested in two addresses Addams gave in 1899 and 1900 at anti-imperialist rallies protesting the Philippine-American War and the British war against the Boers in South Africa (625-29, 646-50). These addresses mark Addams's turn from theorizing about democracy within local and national contexts to adopting an international lens. The section concludes by documenting the editors' observation that by the decade's end, "Addams had become a national, even international, figure" (535).

The Jane Addams Project, under the direction of Dr. Cathy Moran Hajo, has now moved to Ramapo College. Three more volumes of *Selected Papers* are planned. Meanwhile, Dr. Hajo and her team are digitizing the Jane Addams Papers Microfilm, supplemented by additional documents and materials to contextualize them. The aim is to make Addams's papers widely and freely available. Papers from 1901 through 1915 are already posted at <https://digital.janeaddams.ramapo.edu> (as of June 2019). The importance of the digitization project cannot be overstated, given that few libraries own the microfilm edition and fewer still own the *Comprehensive Guide*, an exhaustive index essential to making full use of the microfilm.

Make sure you and your students have access to this volume. If the price is too steep (\$150) for your personal library, request that your university library or local library acquire it. It is an essential resource for research on Addams and her initial theorizing on social democracy and peace.

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