

PRESERVING WITH PURPOSE: NARRATIVES OF SETTLEMENT WOMEN AND
HISTORIC INTERIORS AT HULL HOUSE AND ON HENRY STREET

By

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This dissertation is dedicated to my husband Joel whose devotion to, and enthusiasm for, his work never fails to impress and inspire me.

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Abstract of Dissertation Presented to the Graduate School
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Chair: Margaret Portillo
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Major: Design, Construction and Planning

This study explores the preservation of two nineteenth-century social settlement houses, the Hull House Settlement in Chicago and the Henry Street Settlement in New York City. In the 1960s and 1970s, the National Park Service designated both these complexes as nineteenth-century historical landmarks. This study traces the history of these two settlements with the intent of shedding light on how the meaning and significance of these sites was established and negotiated. Additionally, it examines how the interior environment of these two settlements reflected these negotiations.

Specifically, this study examines three critical junctures, or turning points, in the history of these two settlement houses. These critical junctures include: the founding of the settlements by Jane Addams and Lillian Wald, the transition in leadership after the passing of Addams and Wald, and the preservation and landmarking of the settlements. Each critical juncture is examined from multiple stakeholder perspectives, utilizing narrative inquiry methodology. By exploring diverse stakeholder narratives, this dissertation highlights the ways that multiple voices can shape a single site. In the process, the study opens broad new lines of inquiry into the preservation of historic

interiors, the people who lived in them and the construction of historical meanings associated with historic spaces.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Introduction

“In the first decades of the twenty-first century, the preservation field finds itself at a crossroads,” Randall Mason proclaims in *The Once and Future New York*.¹ And this crisis, Mason continues, stems from the preservation field’s struggle to acknowledge the diverse stakeholders involved in shaping historic sites, the conflicts between architectural, historic and preservation values that play out at historic sites, and the precarious balance between preservation and urban development.²

Standing at this crossroads, historic preservation academics and professionals have called for a reevaluation of the preservation field’s guiding assumptions and principles. This reevaluation has taken place on several, overlapping levels. Preservationists have dissected basic tenets that underlie preservation practices, such as historical significance and architectural integrity, with the intent of broadening the parameters of the field.³ They have challenged the conventional history of the preservation movement, particularly the origins of historic preservation in the grassroots movement to save Mount Vernon in the 1850s, and an anti-development response to urban renewal and the destruction of New York’s Penn Station in 1963, with the intent of revealing the Progressive Era social reform roots of preservation as well as the role

¹ Randall Mason, *The Once and Future New York* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009), 247.

² Mason, *Once and Future New York*, 248.

³ See: Max Page and Randall Mason, eds., *Giving Preservation a History: Histories of Historic Preservation in the United States* (London: Routledge, 2003); Mason, *Once and Future New York*; Michael Tomlan, *Preservation of What for Whom?: A Critical Look at Historical Significance* (Ithaca, N.Y.: National Council for Preservation Education, 1998).

preservation has played in developing and modernizing the urban landscape.⁴

Alongside chronicling preservation efforts, preservation scholars increasingly locate the preservation of historic sites in their historical context to examine the “places and narratives” historic preservation constructs as “meaningful cultural documents.”⁵ Finally, the field has challenged its bias towards preserving historic properties associated with white, upper class males with a new focus on gender, race and class in the analysis and designation of historic sites.⁶

Importantly, this reevaluation of the practice and scholarship of historic preservation has introduced a new focus on interiors. Historic interiors have traditionally presented a challenge for preservationists. Interiors, including their layout and furnishings, are more continuously changed than the exterior architecture. These physical changes compromise the interiors’ architectural integrity and, often, preclude them from preservation or serious study.⁷ The preservation of historic buildings does not usually constrain the continual modification of interiors. Preserving the interiors of historic buildings remains largely a voluntary activity. It is more easily challenged in

⁴ See Max Page, *Giving Preservation a History*.

⁵ See: Mason, *The Once and Future New York*, xi; See also: Tomlan, *Preservation of What for Whom?*; Richard Handler and Eric Gable, *The New History in an Old Museum: Creating the Past at Colonial Williamsburg* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2002); Judy Morley, *Historic Preservation and the Imagined West: Albuquerque, Denver, & Seattle* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2006); Margaret Ponsonby, *Stories from Home: English Domestic Interiors, 1750-1850* (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd., 2006); Page and Mason, eds., *Giving Preservation a History*; Chris Wilson, *The Myth of Santa Fe: Creating a Modern Regional Tradition* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1997).

⁶ See: Gail Lee Dubrow and Jennifer B. Goodman, *Restoring Women's History through Historic Preservation* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2003); Ned Kaufman, *Place, Race, and Story: Essays on the Past and Future of Historic Preservation* (New York: Routledge, 2009).

⁷ Abigail A Van Slyck, “On the Inside: Preserving Women’s History in American Libraries,” in *Restoring Women’s History Through Historic Preservation*, eds. Gail Lee Dubrow and Jennifer B. Goodman, 145-176 (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2003).

court as a greater “intrusion on property rights” than the preservation of historic exteriors, resulting in the focus of preservation statutes and ordinances on protecting the exteriors of buildings.⁸ And, when historic interiors are preserved this preservation has stopped at the structural composition of the interiors and rarely extends to the furnishings and material contents of the rooms.⁹

However, preservationists’ increasing interest in issues of gender, race and class as well their reexamination of historic sites as important “cultural documents,” has opened up the field to a reexamination of the value of historic interiors. The furnishings and objects found in historic interiors have come under new scrutiny, as preservation scholars have successfully argued that “the destruction of historic interiors, disproportionately obscures the activities of women – housewives, schoolteachers, shop assistants, waitresses, librarians, and others – who often accepted responsibility for arranging the interiors of architectural shells designed, built, and paid for by men.”¹⁰

The preservation field has found new research opportunities in the continual modification enacted upon historic interiors. This modification has provided important insight into issues of race and class. For example, in the 1990s when the National Register of Historic Places was looking to preserve sites associated with the Underground Railroad, they determined that although the interiors of structures retaining traces of the railroad were no longer architecturally pure they were still

⁸ Jonathan Lloyd, “Interior Preservation: In or Out?” *Georgetown Law Historic Preservation Series*, (2008): 13.

⁹ Van Slyck, “On the Inside,” 145.

¹⁰ Van Slyck, “On the Inside,” 147.

important “cultural documents.”¹¹ The homes associated with the Underground Railroad had gone through a transition from “black to white ownership” in the nineteenth century, which was paralleled through a “layering of physical evidence.”¹² This layering of evidence, the Park Service determined, was an importance source for understanding how the Underground Railroad entered middle-class “white collective consciousness in the late nineteenth century.”¹³

Historic interiors provide a unique access to the past that is hard to obtain from exterior architecture. The adaptation and modification of historic interiors demonstrates that preserved sites do not have a singular significance but instead are sites of multiple meanings and interpretations, sometimes in conflict and other times in accord. Consequently, examining historic interiors calls us to look beyond physical structures and address the multiple, and evolving, interpretations of significance that lie behind their physical modifications. It also calls for a closer look at the material culture of interiors as a way in which to access the layering of meaning at sites. Seminal design studies, such as Beverly Gordon’s analysis of material culture and Clare Cooper Marcus’ work on the home, suggest that preservation’s examination of furnishings and objects should be expanded upon.¹⁴ This study contributes to the reorientation of the

¹¹ Judith Wellman, “The Underground Railroad and the National Register of Historic Places: Historical Importance vs. Architectural Integrity,” *The Public Historian* 24 (Winter 2002): 28.

¹² Wellman, “The Underground Railroad and the National Register of Historic Places,” 28.

¹³ Wellman, “The Underground Railroad and the National Register of Historic Places,” 28.

¹⁴ Note: Gordon explores what material objects reveal about meaning and value systems. And, Marcus explores how people express themselves through the design of their homes. See: Beverly Gordon, “Women’s Domestic Body: The Conceptual Conflation of Women and Interiors in the Industrial Age,” *Winterthur Portfolio*, 31 (Winter 1996): 281-301; Beverly Gordon, Embodiment, Community Building, and Aesthetic Saturation in ‘Restroom World,’ a Backstage Women’s Space, *The Journal of American Folklore*, 116 (Autumn 2003): 444-464; Clare Cooper Marcus, *House as a Mirror of Self: Exploring the Deeper Meaning of Home* (Maine: Nichlas-Hays, 2006).

preservation field to embrace interiors, and provides a critical model for thinking about the preservation of historic interiors.

This Inquiry: Settlement Houses

What follows is a study examining the preservation of the interiors of two prominent historic sites: the Hull House Settlement in Chicago and the Henry Street Settlement in New York City. These settlement houses were established at the turn of the twentieth century as part of a larger Progressive Era reform initiative called the Settlement House Movement. A unique type of social reform in turn-of-twentieth-century America, this movement represented the efforts of middle class women and men to improve the lives of urban poor by encouraging social contact between the classes. To facilitate this contact, these middle-class women and men established homes for themselves, called settlement houses in poor, urban neighborhoods, dominated by immigrants.

Furnished as middle-class homes, these settlement houses provided residents with a communal living environment from which they could start to learn about and shape the people and culture of the surrounding communities. At the same time, they were places where the settlements' ethnically diverse neighbors could be exposed to and experience firsthand many of the advantages of middle-class American life, such as art, music and theater. Alongside access to the fine arts, settlement houses offered a range of services to their neighbors, including English language instruction, nutrition training and kindergarten classes.¹⁵

¹⁵ See: Allen Freeman Davis, *Spearheads for Reform: The Social Settlements and the Progressive Movement, 1890-1914* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984); Mina Carson, *Settlement Folk: Social Thought and the American Settlement Movement 1885-1920* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press,

Social settlement houses provide a good vehicle for the study of the preservation of historic interiors. Historic settlement houses are complex historic sites that have evolved over many years and have accommodated many different actors. Since the inception of the Settlement House Movement, its social goals have been intimately tied to the physical structures of its settlement houses. And, with its settlement houses, the movement has focused on interiors and their impact on the character and experiences of their neighbors. Finally, preservation ideals have been an ongoing focus of the Settlement House Movement. Through their homes, settlement residents sought to preserve social and cultural ties among the different classes of the city.

Among the multitude of settlement houses that were established in the United States, the Hull House and Henry Street settlements stand out. Both Hull House and Henry Street were among the first settlements to be founded in the United States. The founders of the Hull House and Henry Street settlements, Jane Addams and Lillian Wald respectively, were women whose work in settlements as well as related reform efforts gave them national prominence. And their handiwork, the Hull House Settlement and the Henry Street Settlement, are the only two settlement houses to receive National Landmark Designation.

Two Cases: Hull House and Henry Street

There are striking parallels in the histories of the Hull House and Henry Street settlements that make this case comparison so interesting. Jane Addams founded Hull House in Chicago in 1889 with her friend Ellen Gates Starr. Four years later, Lillian Wald founded the Henry Street Settlement in New York City with her colleague, Mary

1990); Harry Kraus, *The Settlement House Movement in New York City, 1886-1914* (New Hampshire: Arno Press, 1980).

Brewster. Addams and Wald were Head Residents of their respective settlement houses until Addams' death in 1935, and Wald's death, five years later in 1940. The National Park Service awarded National Historic Landmark status to Hull House in 1965 and eleven years later, in 1976, to Henry Street.¹⁶

Understandably, the National Park Service grounded the historical significance of the sites in the figures of their two founders, Addams and Wald. However, over the vast time span of these settlement houses, many different people used, worked and lived at both the Hull House and Henry Street sites. And, accordingly, there are many other narratives that contribute to the significance of these sites.

For example, in 1895, when Wald shifted the location of the Henry Street Settlement into the three federal style townhouses on the Lower East Side she maintained that her reuse of these historic buildings would serve as a reminder to New Yorkers of the more illustrious past of the Lower East Side. Through this move, she reinforced a connection to a neighborhood that had become increasingly foreign as properties in the area deteriorated and the neighborhood became dominated by immigrants. In the *House on Henry Street*, she described how middle class families who had once resided in that neighborhood recalled stories of “the schools and churches they attended, their dancing classes, and the homes where they were entertained.”¹⁷ In the “dingy and dull” Lower East Side the settlement structures evoked memories of “the pleasant, comfortable life of a bygone time” and, perhaps the promise, that this

¹⁶ A National Historic Landmark is the “highest form of designation, which recognizes properties of national significance in American history and culture.” National landmark designation forms require a statement of significance that narrates the value a historic site holds for the nation. See: Norman Tyler, *Historic Preservation: An Introduction to Its History, Principles, and Practice* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2000), 106.

¹⁷ Lillian Wald, *House on Henry Street* (New York: H. Holt and Co., 1915), 169.

neighborhood could be reclaimed.¹⁸ When the Henry Street Settlement was given landmark designation in 1976 it was to serve as a reminder to the national community of Lillian Wald's role as a founder of the Henry Street settlement and "pioneer" of "liberal causes," such as public nursing, "housing reform" and "women suffrage."¹⁹ However, somewhere between the settlement's founding and landmarking, between Wald's decision to settle on the Lower East Side and the commemoration of the settlement in her honor, the significance of the site as a neighborhood anchor had shifted. A similar shift occurred with Hull House in its evolution over time.

In order to examine how the significance of the Henry Street and Hull House sites has evolved, this project poses the following three questions:

- How did the figures of Jane Addams and Lillian Wald come to be the ascendant narratives in the significance and interpretation at the Henry Street and Hull House sites?
- What do these narratives leave out?
- And how have individual personalities and community values manifest themselves in the interior spaces of these two settlement houses?

Studying how the interiors of the Hull House and Henry Street settlements were adapted over time provides a unique lens into how meaning was negotiated at these historic sites. The remaining physical structures of the Hull House and Henry Street settlements provides clues as to shifts in conceptions of significance as well as conflicts over the interpretation of these two sites. Although the Hull House and Henry Street settlement received the same National Landmark Designation, the physical preservation of these two settlement houses differed dramatically.

¹⁸ Wald, *House on Henry Street*, 170.

¹⁹ "Henry Street Settlement and Neighborhood Playhouse," *National Register Nomination Form*, 1973.

The preservation of the Henry Street Settlement did not involve extensive changes to the physical fabric of its buildings while the preservation of the Hull House Settlement witnessed the demolition of eleven of its thirteen structures and the restoration of the exterior of the remaining Hull House mansion to its appearance in 1856, decades before Addams moved in. Also, while the Henry Street Settlement remained an active neighborhood centre, Hull House's preservation marked its transformation from a settlement house into a house museum. Finally, while preservation efforts on the interior of the Henry Street settlement aimed at making the historic interiors more conducive to modern-day use, the interiors of the Hull House Settlement were restored to represent a period between 1840 and 1860. The similarity of the historical trajectories of these two settlements and the marked differences in their preservation makes them ripe for comparison.

The objectives of this study are twofold. First, this study examines the history of the Hull House and Henry Street settlements to identify how the meaning and significance of these two sites were established and negotiated over time. A second objective is to capture how different ideologies and values played out in the physical environments, with a focus on the interior spaces, of the Hull House and Henry Street Settlements.

Three Critical Junctures

Given that the entire history of these two settlement houses before they were landmarked is beyond the scope of this work, this study proposes an in-depth analysis focusing on three critical junctures in each site's history. Critical junctures refer to key moments, or turning points, in the history of these two settlement houses where the

meaning of these sites were negotiated or contested. The critical junctures examined in this dissertation are:

- Founding of the Hull House Settlement in 1889 and the Henry Street Settlement in 1893
- Transition of leadership at the two settlements from founder to successor after Lillian Wald's resignation in 1933 and Jane Addams' death in 1935
- Preservation of these two settlement houses in the 1960s and their National Landmark Designation in 1967 and 1976

These critical junctures were determined by a detailed examination of available primary and secondary sources. They were chosen for several reasons. First, at these moments in time preservationists, reformers and community members had to define the significance of these sites in order for these institutions to move forward. Second, they reflect parallels in each sites' history. Finally, these junctures were chosen because they mark moments when debate over the meaning of the Hull House and Henry Street settlements materialized in their interior environments.

Each critical juncture is examined from multiple stakeholder perspectives, utilizing narrative inquiry methodology as a way to examine different interpretations of the meaning and significance of these settlement houses. Through the analysis and construction of stories, narrative inquiry provides unique access to the viewpoints and experiences of multiple stakeholders as they struggle to define the meanings of these two sites.²⁰

²⁰ Note: Narrative inquiry involves the "scholarship of stories." It utilizes the construction and examination of stories to "reveal shared meanings and values." Employing narrative methods allows this dissertation to identify and incorporate often ignored and marginalized voices, like the individuals who succeeded Addams and Wald as heads of these settlements, the patrons of the settlements, their cofounders and the community residents, which are excluded from the preservation narratives of both settlements. The narratives of these groups are pulled from a range of archival sources, including historic interviews, autobiographies and personal correspondence. See: Margaret Portillo, "Narrative Inquiry," *Journal of Interior Design* 26 (May 2000): iv.

Analyzing significance at three critical junctures in the history of the Hull House and Henry Street settlements requires some attention to the urban environment and twentieth-century reform. This study situates the founding of the settlements and the original construction of their interiors in the broader context of Progressive Era reform, Social Gospel ideals and Municipal Housekeeping. The landmark designation of Hull House and Henry Street in the 1960s and 1970s also informs a larger discussion of urban renewal and slum clearance during that period.

Structure of the Dissertation

This study is comprised of three sections, with Chapters One, Two and Three forming the first section of the dissertation. Chapter One introduces the project while Chapter Two outlines the study's methodological approach, an amalgam of case study methodology and narrative inquiry. As previously noted, two cases are employed in this study, the Hull House Settlement and the Henry Street Settlement. Within each case, narrative inquiry is used to examine the three critical junctures in the settlement's history: the settlements' founding, change in leadership, and its preservation and landmarking.

Chapter Three provides an overview of the Settlement House Movement and its relationship to its architecture, from the inception of each house in the late nineteenth century, through to the late twentieth century and provides context for the individual stakeholder narratives presented in Chapter Four and Five of this study. It builds on current scholarship on the Settlement House Movement by linking a discussion of

settlement interiors to larger national events, such as Progressive Era reform, the Great Depression and urban renewal.²¹

While Chapters Two and Three form the backdrop for the Hull House and Henry Street cases in the second section of this study, Chapters Four and Five contain an in-depth analysis of the Hull House and Henry Street settlements: their founding, transition in leadership, and preservation and landmarking. Exploration of each critical juncture involves the presentation of a series of stakeholder narratives, which illustrate different viewpoints about the significance of these two sites at a particular time in the settlements' histories. An analysis of these narratives explores how certain viewpoints came to dominate the interpretation of each site. Notably, the intent of the second section of this dissertation is to demonstrate how the two settlement houses and their preservation projects traverse varied, intersecting narratives in the creation and interpretation of these historic sites.

²¹ Current literature on the history of settlement houses tends to compartmentalize the study of settlement houses into either an architectural standpoint or a historical standpoint. With the exception of urban sociologist Daphne Spain, architect and urban historian Dolores Hayden, architectural historian Gwendolyn Wright and historian Sara Deutsch, few authors try to span these "spatial and aspatial disciplines" (Spain, 2001, 28). Specifically, Spain examines how settlement houses provided sites to negotiate evolving issues of race, gender and class in the city, which ultimately contributed to "social order at a critical" time in the development of urban centers (237). By examining how the form of the Hull House settlement, particularly the settlement's cooperative domestic living arrangement, represented a feminist activist response to the traditional home environment, Hayden provides new insight into the development of American feminism in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Wright examines progressivism through the development of modern homes, arguing that settlement leaders' promotion of the environment, particularly the environment of settlement houses as a tool of social reform, promoted a middle class conception of what was normal and eventually limited the social reform activities of settlement leaders. Deutsch charts how women altered Boston's cityscape between 1870 and 1940, arguing that the settlement houses eradicated boundaries between public and private space thereby modifying the cityscape by expanding women's space within the city. By linking an analysis of the interiors of settlement houses to larger socio-cultural trends in the urban environment, Chapter Three continues in the tradition of this research. See: Daphne Spain, *How Women Saved the City*, (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001); Dolores Hayden, *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History* (Cambridge Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1995); Gwendolyn Wright, *Moralism and the Model Home: Domestic architecture and Cultural Conflict in Chicago 1873-1913*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1980); Sarah Deutsch, *Women and the City: Gender, Space, and Power in Boston, 1870-1940*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).

Examining diverse narratives allows for a more nuanced understanding of how significance is invested in historic interiors. However, there are numerous narratives that surround the preservation of the Hull House and Henry Street settlements. These include the narratives of community members, the Head Residents, the patrons the residents, preservationists and land developers. Not all of these narratives can be covered within the scope of this dissertation. Instead, it was necessary to select representative and cogent accounts, thereby, privileging some narratives over others.

Chapters Four and Five also include images generated from original three-dimensional computer models, created by the author of this study, of the Hull House and Henry Street settlement interiors before and after preservation. These three-dimensional models provide a visual narrative of the physical preservation of these two sites. They further supplement and bolster written evidence, thereby enriching our understanding of how these spaces were inhabited in the past and how they were reinterpreted through their landmarking.

Chapter Six forms the final section of this study. It provides a cross-case analysis of the settlement houses under study as well as concluding comments. Altogether, this study seeks to explore how historic spaces are interpreted by examining the *why* and *how* of preservation using qualitative research strategies. These research questions shape the types of conclusions that are drawn from the findings. For example, the stories surrounding the preservation of the Hull House and Henry Street settlements are uniquely representative of the context of these sites. At the same time, however, the insight that these stories provide about the process of preservation may inform other settings and situations.

Concluding Comments

This study charts the history and memorialization of the Hull House and Henry Street settlements from the late nineteenth century up until the 1970s. It demonstrates that the significance of these sites, documented in their landmark designation, arose from a history of negotiation and conflict over the meaning of these sites. It shows that these negotiations were tied to larger political, economic, social and environmental trends. It also demonstrates that the artifacts, interior spaces and significant design characteristics of the original and preserved Hull House and Henry Street structures reveal how the significance of these sites evolved.

This study highlights the need for the preservation field to address historic interiors, the people who lived in them and the meanings associated with these spaces. Preservation efforts rarely go beyond the exterior surface of buildings leaving historically significant interiors particularly vulnerable to changing conceptions of significance. However, the significance of a site is often located in the actions that took place within the walls of these buildings. This study moves beyond appearance and design form to examine the experiences and relationships to which they gave space and context. Key to understanding these experiences and relationships is acknowledging the multiple voices that were involved in negotiating these sites' significance. Examining diverse stakeholder narratives brings to life the values, beliefs, and emotionality surrounding a protected site. It takes us beyond simply chronicling preservation efforts and allows for the examination of deeper understandings that arise from the built environment, bringing forward stories and experiences of those who shaped historic spaces, which might otherwise be lost in physical preservation efforts.

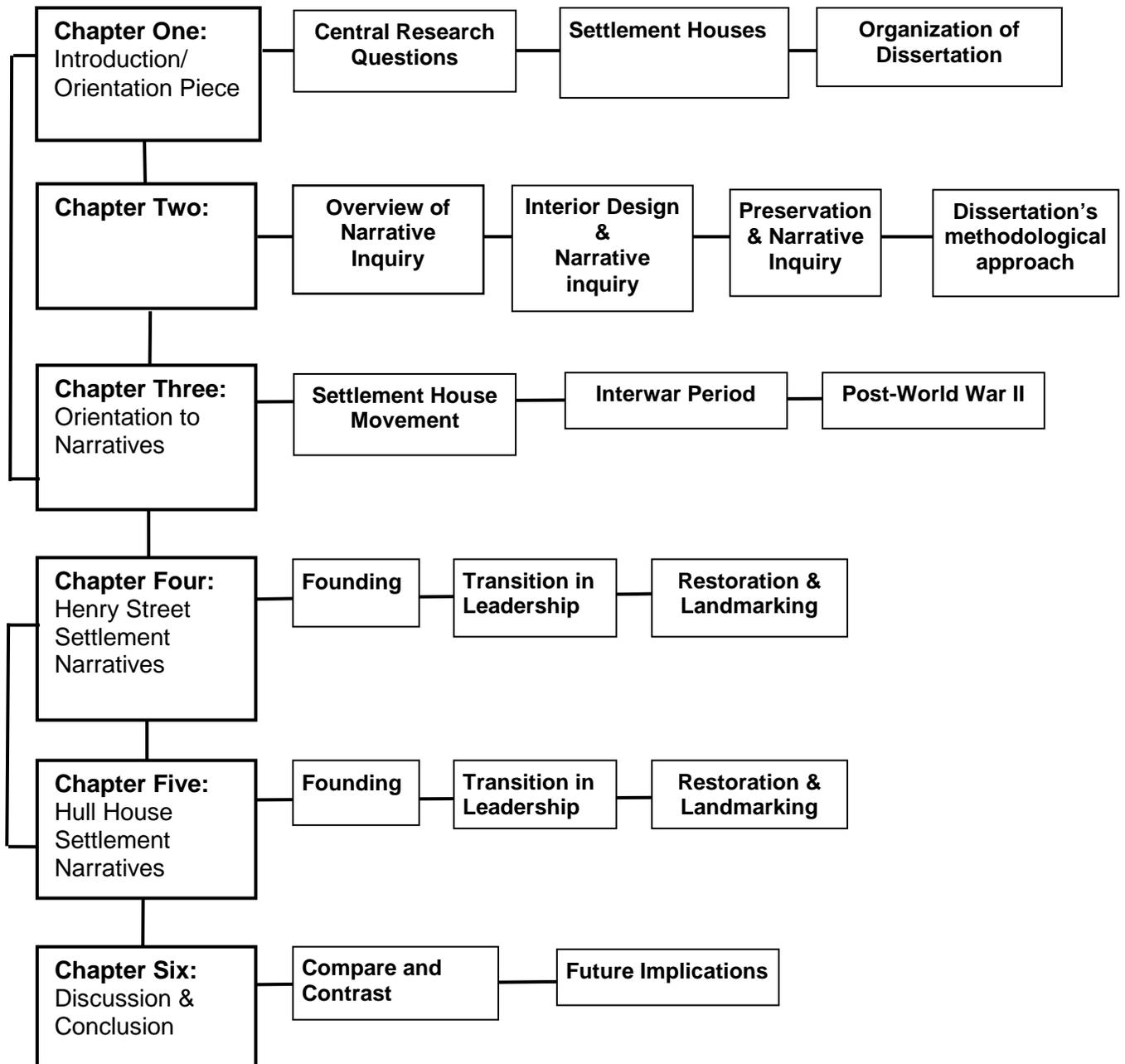


Figure 1-1. Outline

CHAPTER 2 METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The central methodological approach of this study is the explanatory case study method. The choice of an explanatory case study method is based on the type of research questions it poses, which involve mainly “how” and “why” questions.¹ Specifically, this study asks: How did the figures of Jane Addams and Lillian Wald come to be the ascendant narratives in the significance and interpretation at the Henry Street and Hull Houses sites? What do these narratives leave out? And, how have individual personalities and community values manifest themselves in the interior spaces of these two settlement houses?

Case study methodology provides the framework for an examination of historic interiors within their larger context and over a period of time.² The two cases explored are the Hull House Settlement in Chicago and the Henry Street Settlement in New York City. Each case examines critical junctures in the history of these two settlement houses. These critical junctures are the settlements’ founding, transition in leadership, and preservation and landmarking. Each juncture is presented chronologically. After exploring each case individually, the cases are subjected to a cross-case analysis, lending insight into the way preservation developed differently at each site. Each case is based extensively on archival sources, which include government documents, letters, meeting minutes and diaries. Although the overarching research framework for this

¹ Robert K. Yin, *Case Study Research: Design and Methods* (Sage Publications: California, 2008), 9.

² Yin, *Case Study Research*, 4.

project is the case study structure, narrative inquiry methods shape the approach to the sources within each case.

Narrative inquiry focuses on the “scholarship of stories.”³ With narrative inquiry, stories, or narratives, can be both the “phenomena under study and a method of study.”⁴ Academics from a diverse group of fields, including history, psychology, sociology, education and law, have found narrative inquiry’s focus on human experience and meaning making valuable. Recently, an interesting body of literature has emerged that couples narrative research with an analysis of the interior environment. Scholars have applied it to interior design as a theoretical orientation, as a way in which to examine design processes and as a tool for enhancing design analysis and communication.⁵ One promising avenue for design research that has not been explored, however, is the use of narrative inquiry as a tool for analyzing historic interiors. To bridge this gap, this study proposes that narrative inquiry offers a vehicle for capturing primary tension points in the development of historic interiors. It helps to illustrate different stakeholder perspectives that shaped critical periods in the preservation of the Hull House and Henry Street settlements. This chapter provides a general overview of narrative research, how it is currently applied to the study of the built environment, and

³ Margaret Portillo, “Narrative Inquiry,” *Journal of Interior Design* 26 (May 2000): iv.

⁴ D. Jean Clandinin and F. Micheal Connelly, *Narrative Inquiry: Experience and Story in Qualitative Research* (San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons, 2000), 4.

⁵ See: Cathy Ganoë “Design as Narrative: A Theory of Inhabiting Interior Space,” *Journal of Interior Design*; 25 (1999): 1-15; Diane Smith “Interior Architecture as a Storied Life: Narrative-Research and the Built Environment,” *IDEA* 1 (2001): 1-5; Margaret Portillo and J. Dohr, “Creativity and Narrative in Eva Maddox Associates: Design Beyond Space,” *Journal of Interior Design* 26 (May 2000): 41-57; Shelia Danko, Margaret Portillo and Jason Meenely “Humanizing Design Through Narrative Inquiry,” *Journal of Interior Design* 31 (January 2006): 10-28.

its value as a way to understand how historic interiors were experienced and interpreted in the past.

Narrative Inquiry

Narrative inquiry revolves around the production and analysis of stories. It developed in the mid-twentieth century as a response to the dominance of behaviorism and positivism within the academic environment.⁶ It draws on two distinct intellectual traditions, humanism and structuralism/poststructuralism, which has led to a number of “theoretical divisions” in how narrative research should be conducted.⁷ The humanist approach is “holistic” and “person-centered,” while the structuralist approach focuses on “story structure and content” as well as the power relations that shape narratives.⁸ The adoption of narrative inquiry by many different academic fields has further resulted in a splintering of approaches to how narrative inquiry should be conducted and why. Consequently, as a way of navigating this complex methodology, most narrative projects begin with an examination of the roots and forms of current narrative research, illustrating how these exemplars have shaped their own narrative inquiry approach.⁹ This study will follow in this tradition and briefly analyze current narrative research before outlining this project’s approach.

In this study, a distinction is made between the study of existing narratives and the use of research data to construct new narratives, which respectively reflect narrative

⁶ See: Catherine Kohler Reissman, *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences* (Los Angeles: Sage Publications, 2008); Jeromen Bruner, *Acts of Meaning* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1990).

⁷ Molly Andrews, Corinee Squire, Maria Tamboukou, eds., *Doing Narrative Research* (London: Sage, 2008), 4.

⁸ Andrews, Squire and Tamboukou, *Doing Narrative Research*, 3.

⁹ Andrews, Squire and Tamboukou, *Doing Narrative Research*, 3.

inquiry's structuralist and humanist roots. This distinction is derived from Donald Polkinghorne's work, which divides narrative inquiry into two groups: analysis of narratives and narrative analysis. Analysis of narrative utilizes existing stories as its starting point. It then takes these stories and examines them for common themes and elements. Its basic function is to create "general knowledge" out of a "set of particular instances."¹⁰ Conversely, "narrative analysis" utilizes raw data as its starting point. Out of this data it tries to construct a story that explains particular events or situations. Importantly, as illustrated in the literature to be reviewed, these two approaches to narrative inquiry can inform one another. Both types of inquiry influence this project's approach to narrative methodology.

Analysis of Narratives

The "systematic study of narrative data," analysis of narratives, is based on the premise that narratives are not self explanatory, but instead need to be interpreted.¹¹

Catherine Reissman's study *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences* outlines various approaches to narrative analysis. Reissman identifies four types of narrative analysis: thematic, structural, dialogical and visual. Structural analysis of narratives focuses on how a narrative is organized to "achieve a narrator's strategic aims."¹²

Thematic analysis of narratives is content focused and concentrates on the meaning of a narrative rather than its form. Dialogical, or performance, analysis deals primarily with

¹⁰ Polkinghorne, "Narrative Configuration in Qualitative Analysis," in *Life History and Narrative*, eds., J. Amos Hatch and Richard Wisniewski (London: Routledge, 1995),14.

¹¹ Reissman, *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences*, 6.

¹² Riessman, *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences*, 77.

oral narratives and how they are “produced and performed.”¹³ Finally, visual analysis focuses on images rather than written narratives. Three of these approaches influence this study, namely structural, thematic and visual analysis. This study does not borrow from the dialogical approach because it draws largely from archival sources.

Structural analysis and socio-linguistics

Structural analysis focuses primarily on the narrative form and is most often used to interpret interview transcripts, which limits its relevance for this study. Its roots lie in socio-linguistics, particularly the well recognized work of linguist William Labov. In his 1972 study, *Language in the Inner City*, which investigates African American vernacular English, Labov argues that the way in which we construct narratives and stories is not random but subject to certain cultural conventions. In order to be considered a story, he argues, a piece of writing or spoken words should contain a number of vital components. Labov documents these structural features of narratives¹⁴

According to Labov, a “fully-formed” narrative contains six basic structural units: an abstract, an orientation, a complicating action, an evaluation, a resolution, and finally a coda. An abstract usually initiates a narrative by summarizing the story in a couple of sentences and establishing what it is about. Following the abstract, is the orientation, which provides the context of the narrative, thereby, orientating the listener in terms of the situation, the characters involved, the time and the location. Basically the orientation establishes the “who, when, what, where” of the narrative.¹⁵ The orientation is followed

¹³ Riessman, *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences*, 105.

¹⁴ William Labov, *Language in the Inner city: Studies in the Black English Vernacular* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1972), 360.

¹⁵ Labov, *Language in the Inner City*, 370.

by a complicating action, which forms the main body of the narrative. The complicating action encompasses a series of events and provides the answer to the question “then what happened?”¹⁶ Next comes the evaluation, which provides the point of the story. The evaluation usually takes place between the complicating action and the resolution, although, it can sometimes coincide with the resolution. The resolution concludes the narrative while the coda then outlines the impact of the story in terms of the present.

Importantly, Labov recognizes that narrative structures lack uniformity and can vary in terms of complexity, structural elements and the use of these structural elements. He argues, however, that a well-developed narrative should at least include an orientation, complicating action, resolution and evaluation. Out of these, the two most vital narrative components are the *complicating action*, which allows the reader or listener to recognize a narrative, and the *evaluation*, which explains why the narrative was “worth reporting.”¹⁷ Significantly, Labov argues that the manner in which these simple and complex narratives are “temporally ordered” influences the meaning that is derived from them.¹⁸ He offers an illustrative example of the impact of the sequence of a narrative with the example of the following simple narrative, “This boy punched me/and I punched him”.¹⁹ Notably, when reversed, “I punched this boy/and he punched me,” the interpretation of the narrative changes.²⁰

¹⁶ Labov, *Language in the Inner City*, 370-372.

¹⁷ Labov, *Language in the Inner City*, 371.

¹⁸ Labov, *Language in the Inner City*, 371.

¹⁹ Labov, *Language in the Inner City*, 360.

²⁰ Labov, *Language in the Inner City*, 360.

Labov's definition of what constitutes a narrative has sometimes come under criticism for being too narrow. Under the Labovian framework the inclination is to "recognize as narratives only texts that appear to be well organized, with a beginning, a middle and an end, that are teller-led and largely monological, and that occur as responses to (an interviewer's) questions."²¹ This ignores narratives that do not have an "active teller," a clear sequence of events, are not generated in an interview-like setting and do not have a "constant moral stance," as expressed in a coda.²² As well, Labov's structuralist approach is further critiqued for failure to account for the context in which a narrative is told, particularly how the dynamics between the interviewer and interviewee might impact the telling of a narrative.²³ Despite these limitations, narrative inquiry scholars continue to use Labov's basic explanation of the narrative structure as a foundation for further narrative inquiry explorations.²⁴

Thematic analysis

Whereas a structural analysis focuses on narrative form, thematic analysis focuses on the content of narratives. Thematic analysis of narratives closely parallels research methods used by historians and is often utilized when addressing archival

²¹ Anna De Fina and Alexandra Georgakopoulou, "Analyzing Narratives as Practices," *Qualitative Research* 8 (2008): 380.

²² De Fina and Georgakopoulou, "Analyzing Narratives as Practices," 380.

²³ Norman Denzin and Yvonne Lincoln, *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research* (Lincoln: Sage Press, 2005), 656.

²⁴ Current research that pulls on Labov's structural framework includes: Sheila Danko, "Beneath the Surface: A Story of Leadership, Recruitment, and the Hidden Dimensions of Strategic Workplace Design," *Journal of Interior Design* 26 (May 2000): 1-24; Portillo and Meenely "Humanizing Design Through Narrative Inquiry"; S. Kaulka-Blum, *Dinner Talk: Cultural Patterns of Sociability and Socialization in Family Discourse* (Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum); S. Wortham, "Interactional Positioning and Narrative Self-construction," *Narrative Inquiry* 10 (2000): 157-184.

sources, such as “letters, diaries” and “auto/biographies.”²⁵ This makes thematic analysis a useful option for this study, which draws heavily on similar sources. In *Narrative Methods for the Human Science*, Reissman presents sociologist Maria Tamboukou’s study on space in the late nineteenth century as an excellent example of an academic study that applies a thematic analysis to archival sources.²⁶

To assess how nineteenth century female teachers approached space, particularly domestic space, Tamboukou examines a series of “life writings” of English school teachers compiled from letters and autobiographies. Reissman outlines her methodological approach to these sources. During her initial read through the letters and autobiographies Tamboukou underlined “words and phrases” associated with domestic space that interested her, such as the frequently reiterated verbs “go out,” “get out,” “be out,” “spread my wings,” “run away,” and “leave.”²⁷ From this initial reading of her narrative sources, she created spatial thematic categories, such as “confinement and escape,” which provided a focus for a more intensive review of the teachers’ narratives.²⁸ After this deeper interrogation of her sources, Tamboukou found that the teachers’ relationship with domestic space was often contradictory; they wanted to escape “enclosed” spaces while at the same time “wanting a room.”²⁹ Finally she compared these thematic findings with historical and theoretical readings that examined women’s place in the domestic sphere at this time. What she found was that the idea of

²⁵ Riessman, *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences*, 63.

²⁶ Riessman, *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences*, 63.

²⁷ Riessman, *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences*, 64.

²⁸ Riessman, *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences*, 64.

²⁹ Riessman, *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences*, 64.

“a room of your own” was prevalent in women’s colleges in the late 19th century. Many colleges provided room for their female students and this room represented autonomy from bourgeois family life from which they wanted to escape. This finding reaffirmed the spatial categories that Tamboukou established and allowed her to resume a more focused analysis of the concept of the college room. Reissman maintains that the success of Tamboukou’s narrative study rests in the close triangulation of letters and supporting primary and secondary sources.

As evident from the above description, Tamboukou ignores entirely the structural form of the narratives she studies, instead, concentrating solely on their content. However, analysis of “narrative structure” can be coupled with a thematic analysis, in order to assess not only *how* something is being said, but *what* is being said. Visual narrative inquiry, which is explored in the next section, can also compliment these two approaches.

Visual narrative analysis and archival sources

Research on the use of visual analysis in narrative inquiry is in its infancy, particularly research that couples visual analysis with a historical focus. In *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences*, Reissman investigates the burgeoning field of visual narrative analysis and details two research exemplars, which tie a visual analysis to a historic focus: gender scholar Elena Creef’s study on Japanese Internment Camps during World War II and sociologist Maria Tamboukou’s study of the Welsh painter Gwen John.³⁰

³⁰ Elena Tajima Creef, *Imaging Japanese America: The Visual Construction of Citizenship, Nation, and the Body* (New York: New York University Press 2004); Maria Tamboukou, “Broken Narratives, “Visual Forces: Letters, Paintings and the Event,” in *Beyond Narrative Coherence*, eds., Matt Hyvarinen, et al (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Pub., 2010), 67-77.

Creef's study on Japanese internment camps augments an analysis of written historical sources with a study of historical photographs. She uses the work of three photographers to construct an untold story of Japanese internment. She analyzes the content of the photographs themselves as well as the context of their production.³¹ In these camps there were strict rules in place over what photographers could capture on film. Specifically, they were not allowed to photograph the barb wire that surrounded the internment camps, the guards or the guard towers. Consequently, many of the photographs of life in these camps depict scenes of smiling school girls. Creef uses written sources, such as archived interviews and government documents, to look at the stories behind these pictures of smiling girls. For instance, one of the girls in these photographs was separated from her mother, who died during her tenure at another camp. By negotiating back and forth between the written and the visual Creef is able to construct a "suppressed" story of the internment experience, which would remain incomplete if the author was to rely exclusively on one type of source.³² Importantly, Creef does not read the photographs individually as narratives but instead "sequence[s] images (in dialogue with written texts)" to construct a narrative of Japanese internment."³³ The benefit of this approach is that the archival photographs give her a glimpse into the past that is missing from the written sources. The drawback of this approach is that Creef's study is "limited in its visual history by the pictorial record preserved."³⁴

³¹ Riessman, *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences*, 147.

³² Riessman, *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences*, 145-149.

³³ Riessman, *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences*, 152-153.

³⁴ Riessman, *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences*, 146.

In her study of Welsh painter Gwen John, Tamboukou analyzes John's paintings alongside letters written by and to the artist at the same time the paintings were produced. The purpose of this analysis is to construct a biography of the painter's life. The particular focus of this biography is John's experience as a "women artist living in a male-dominated art environment."³⁵ Similar to her work on space and gender, Tamboukou utilizes "thematic narrative methods" on both the paintings and the letters, which she analyzes in conjunction with one another.³⁶

For example, Tamboukou examines a self portrait of John in which a hat and a parasol are "prominently" displayed in the background. She uses these objects as a launching point into a discussion of the painter's life outside of her domestic space with the intent of "shattering the image of the artist as 'recluse'."³⁷ She then relates her analysis of the paintings to letters that John wrote to demonstrate more thoroughly how "the world outside enters into [John's] interior space."³⁸ In this manner, Tamboukou "tacks back and forth between visual images and written texts, evolving relevant concepts inductively, as she works through the data."³⁹ From this movement back and forth between the visual and the verbal, Tamboukou constructs a narrative of the artist's active engagement with the outside world.⁴⁰

³⁵ Riessman, *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences*, 160.

³⁶ Riessman, *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences*, 160.

³⁷ Riessman, *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences*, 161.

³⁸ Riessman, *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences*, 163.

³⁹ Riessman, *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences*, 163.

⁴⁰ Riessman, *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences*, 163.

Creef and Tamboukou's visual analysis approach is appealing for its use of visual sources to reveal individual development over time. Although both scholars concentrate on visual sources they supplement these sources through the use of written sources. Notably, these studies do not merely analyze the content of the visual sources, but also seek to construct new narratives formed through a combination of visual and written sources.

Creef and Tamboukou's visual analysis of narratives blurs the boundaries between Polkinghorne's distinction between analysis of narratives and narrative analysis. A visual narrative can take the form of a "story constructed by the investigator from data (which include images), or the storyline suggested in a set of images, and/ or narrative fragments from accompanying spoken or written texts."⁴¹ By constructing stories, visual analysis ventures into the territory of narrative analysis.

Narrative Analysis: Research Stories

Polkinghorne defines narrative analysis as the piecing together of fragmentary evidence into a coherent whole, or an "emplotted story."⁴² Narrative analysis involves more than just compiling a diverse assortment of sources. It also involves forging this data into a "systematic whole" through the development of a narrative structure, which "unites and gives meaning to the data" that is not in narrative form."⁴³ The result of narrative analysis is the creation of a story, such as "a historic account, a case study, a life story, or a storied episode of a person's life."⁴⁴ The purpose of narrative analysis is

⁴¹ Riessman, *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences*, 145.

⁴² Polkinghorne, "Narrative Configuration in Qualitative Analysis," 12.

⁴³ Polkinghorne, "Narrative Configuration in Qualitative Analysis," 18.

⁴⁴ Polkinghorne, "Narrative Configuration in Qualitative Analysis," 15.

to “answer how and why a particular outcome came about.”⁴⁵ The explanatory approach of narrative analysis speaks to this study, which looks to answer how and why questions.

Notably, the story, or narrative, the researcher creates is not an “objective” account of an event, but rather a detailed look into the subjective experience of an individual or group of people. As a result, the researcher has to establish credibility concerning the “accuracy of the data and the plausibility of the plot.”⁴⁶ The “accuracy of the data” is established through the use of triangulation where the what, when and how of the narrative is corroborated by collecting evidence through multiple methods. The “plausibility of the plot” rests on the “explanatory power and plausibility” of the researcher’s story.⁴⁷

As an exemplar for narrative analysis, Polkinghorne references Irving Seidman’s work. In his book *Interviewing as Qualitative Research*, Seidman advocates the use of “storied vignettes” as a way of communicating what a researcher has learned from in-depth interviews.⁴⁸ He develops these vignettes through a process of cutting, pasting and synthesizing transcribed interviews. Basically, Seidman reads through a transcript, marks “compelling” passages as important, cuts and pastes these passages together, rereads the synthesized interview and then crafts a vignette out of the remaining passages.⁴⁹ Where possible the narrative is in the interviewees’ own words. The

⁴⁵ Polkinghorne, “Narrative Configuration in Qualitative Analysis,” 19.

⁴⁶ Polkinghorne, “Narrative Configuration in Qualitative Analysis,” 20.

⁴⁷ Polkinghorne, “Narrative Configuration in Qualitative Analysis,” 20.

⁴⁸ Polkinghorne, “Narrative Configuration in Qualitative Analysis,” 20.

⁴⁹ Irving Seidman, *Interviewing as Qualitative Research: A Guide for Researchers in Education and the Social Sciences*, 2d ed. (New York: Teachers College Press, 1998), 103.

resulting narrative represents collaboration between the interviewer and the interviewee: “It is in the participant’s words, but it is crafted by the interviewer from what the participant has said.”⁵⁰ Steidman recognizes that some transitions will have to be in the narrator’s voice, but he asserts that these instances should be clearly marked within the narrative in order to avoid confusion. Steidman provides examples of these minimal-intervention vignettes in his book. Although the passages are strung together by the interviewer, they are almost entirely in the interviewees own words and represent more of an abridged version of an interview than researcher crafted story.

Law: Creating narratives to surface client perspective

In contrast to Steidman’s minimal-intervention vignettes, legal scholar Richard Delgado’s narratives are not only crafted by him, but also in his own words. In “Storytelling for Oppositionists and Others: A Plea for Narrative,” Delgado provides a compelling example of how personal narratives constructed by the researcher through narrative analysis, can supplement stock stories and provide a more nuanced understanding of events. Delgado explores the experiences of an African American professor who applied for a teaching position at a predominantly white law school. Despite being well qualified, the professor did not get the job. After obtaining information about the decision not to hire him from sympathetic members of the search committee, the professor files a discrimination lawsuit against the university. When the lawsuit went to court the judge dismissed it, ruling that the defendant failed to prove that the

⁵⁰ Steidman, *Interviewing as Qualitative Research*, 102.

University's decision not to hire him was based on discrimination. Delgado creates five narratives that describe this single "race-tinged event."⁵¹

First, Delgado outlines the stock narrative, which he constructs around the hiring committee's explanation of why the African American professor did not get the job despite his qualifications and the obvious need for more minority representation on the staff. He presents this stock story as a dialogue between a professor, who was on the hiring committee and a student. The committee member explains to the student that the African American professor was not hired because his research goals were vague, he was only interested in teaching peripheral courses and he was not on the University's law review. Delgado then uses four different narratives, that of the African American professor, the narrative of a student activist protestor, the Legal Complaint and Judge's order dismissing action, and the narrative supplied by an anonymous leaflet that outlines how the University's hiring policies are discriminatory. The purpose of including these multiple narratives is to illustrate what the stock story "includes and leaves out and how it perpetuates one version of social reality rather than another."⁵²

Delgado presents narrative inquiry as way to rejuvenate legal studies. He argues that narratives are an effective presentation tool for capturing individual perspectives, because "they invite the reader to suspend judgment, listen for their point or message, and then decide what measure of truth they contain."⁵³ In this way, Delgado suggest, stories help to humanize the participants in a legal dispute.

⁵¹ Richard Delgado, "Storytelling for Oppositionists and Others: A Plea for Narrative, *Michigan Law Review* 87 (1989): 2418.

⁵² Delgado, "Storytelling for Oppositionists and Others," 2415.

⁵³ Delgado, "Storytelling for Oppositionists and Others," 2415.

A drawback of Delgado's paper is that the manner in which he constructs his narratives, and the sources he bases these narratives on, are not transparent. The reader is left to wonder if the narratives are based on actual events and people or whether Delgado is modeling a hypothetical legal scenario involving race and law. Despite these drawbacks, Delgado's paper provides a valuable model on how a researcher can construct narratives to inform a larger research project. It is compelling for its use of multiple narratives, and voices, to provide a more in-depth, nuanced understanding of a particular event as well as for illustrating how stories can allow us to "see the world through others' eyes."⁵⁴ Delgado's research highlights the ability of narratives to capture subjective experience and interpretation. His use of narrative speaks to this study, which examines the Hull House and Henry Street settlements through the multiple perspectives of the settlements' founders, residents and communities.

History: Constructing multiple narratives around a single events

Drawing disparate pieces of information together into a coherent narrative is common in the field of history. Traditionally, histories were written in narrative form. These narratives were sweeping, often multi-volume works, which documented the political history of different nations or societies over a significant span of time. Monographic or scientific history, "technical, specialized analyses of particular events or problems in the past," succeeded narrative history in the early twentieth century as the predominant historic form. In the late twentieth century, however, there was a renewed

⁵⁴ Delgado, "Storytelling for Oppositionists and Others," 2439.

interest in the narrative form.⁵⁵ At its most extreme, the revival of interest in narrative took the form of relativism, a questioning of the boundaries between history and fiction and a debunking of the notion of a common historic truth. More moderate views have emerged, however, that do not claim that all history is fiction or advocate the return of narrative in the grand narrative manner of traditional histories. Instead, some scholars advocate the use of narrative as an experimental form of historical writing that provides a new way to access the past and different voices from the past.⁵⁶

An excellent example of the reorientation of the use of narrative in historical studies is James Goodman's book *Stories of Scottsboro*. Similar to Delgado, Goodman uses multiple narratives to explore a single event, the Scottsboro trials. In 1931, nine African American boys, ranging in age from 13 to 19, were accused of raping two white women in Scottsboro, Alabama. An all white jury convicted and sentenced to death eight of the defendants. Numerous civil rights groups and political organizations appealed the ruling and the case was tied up in state and federal courts for nearly two decades. Each chapter of Goodman's book narrates a different actors' point of view of the events surrounding the trials, including the views of the Black defendants, the women they were accused of raping, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People and the white Alabamans, among others. Goodman argues, like Delgado, that readers "cannot fully understand that conflict, or any other, without trying to understand it from many different points of view."⁵⁷

⁵⁵ Gordon Wood, *The Purpose of the Past: Reflections on the Uses of History* (New York: Penguin Press, 2008), 41.

⁵⁶ James Goodman, "For the Love of Stories Reviews," *American History* 26 (1998): 255-274.

⁵⁷ James Goodman, *Stories of Scottsboro* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994), xiii.

Presented in the third person, the narrative chapters in Goodman's book are based on archival sources, including trial manuscripts, newspaper accounts and court articles.⁵⁸ Goodman supplies only a preface, with no written introduction or conclusion. As such, his analysis is not separated from the narratives, but instead rises almost inductively from the presentation of the stories, particularly in his choice of stories, themes, and context.⁵⁹ The use of narrative in *Stories of Scottsboro* enables readers to see the trial from completely different perspectives. Like, Delgado, Goodman's focus is on people, the quality of their experience as well as their interpretation of events. He invites us to participate actively in a historical event from the eyes of those involved rather than the researcher. Shifting between different stakeholder narratives allows Goodman to explore how one historical event could be construed differently by various groups.

Narrative analysis, as illustrated in Delgado and Goodman's studies, provides not only a methodology for exploring events, whether historical or not, but also a way of presenting research. Both authors draw on the narrative form to offer new insight into their research fields. By focusing on stakeholders and their experiences, narrative allows the authors to humanize contemporary and historical events.

Narrative Inquiry and the Interior Environment

Recently, an interesting body of literature has emerged that couples narrative research with an analysis of the interior environment. Specifically, it has been applied to interior design as a theoretical orientation, as a way to examine design processes and

⁵⁸ Goodman, *Stories of Scottsboro*, xii.

⁵⁹ Goodman, *Stories of Scottsboro*, xiii.

as a tool for enhancing design education.⁶⁰ A great deal of the literature that links the interior design field to narrative inquiry research focuses on the structure of narratives. Interior design scholars have linked narrative structure to the principles and elements of design as well as the creative process. And, they have used it to construct narratives as well as to distill information from interview narratives. The findings of these studies point to the ability of narrative inquiry to aid designers in understanding how people physically and mentally experience and inhabit space, which in turn enables designers to create more nuanced designs.

One of the first studies to advocate the investigation of the interior environment through narrative inquiry was Cathy Ganoë's article "Design as Narrative: A Theory of Inhabiting Interior Space." Ganoë contends that design parallels narrative in that they both bring a "complex variety of human and environmental phenomenon" into a "comprehensible whole."⁶¹ As such, Ganoë asserts, we need to develop methods to read design in the same manner that we read narratives. Ganoë introduces a ten component structural framework for analyzing design. She defines this approach as "design narrative theory."⁶² Reading interior design as narrative, Ganoë suggests, enhances knowledge of "how the environment is psychologically inhabited by the individual."⁶³ Importantly, the structuralist focus of Ganoë's article has set the tone for subsequent research.

⁶⁰ See: Ganoë "Design as Narrative"; Smith "Interior Architecture as a Storied Life"; Portillo and Dohr "Creativity and Narrative in Eva Maddox Associates"; Danko, Portillo and Jason Meenely "Humanizing Design Through Narrative Inquiry."

⁶¹ Ganoë, "Design as Narrative," 14.

⁶² Ganoë, "Design as Narrative," 14.

⁶³ Ganoë, "Design as Narrative," 14.

Strategic Stories: Capturing Stakeholder Perspectives

In May 2000 a special issue of the *Journal of Interior Design* was published devoted to the use of narrative inquiry in the Interior Design field. The issue consisted of five articles that were based on a research project by the Foundation of Interior Design Education titled “Strategic Stories: Shaping Interior Design for the 21st Century.” The purpose of this study was to produce a body of real-life stories that focused on workplace design and could help to inform interior design practice and research. This strategic story project advocated a particular approach to narrative inquiry, which was showcased in the articles in the May 2000 edition of *Journal of Interior Design*. Specifically, the project utilized a combination of structuralist and thematic narrative analysis. The narratives in the articles were pulled from oral sources, these sources were subjected to a thematic analysis, and in the case where narratives were constructed, drew on the six-component Labovian framework. By dissecting and constructing narrative, these articles also showcased a hybrid approach to narrative inquiry that pulled from both the analysis of narrative and narrative analysis traditions. Despite the similarities between these articles’ methodological approach, each article used narrative inquiry to capture different user perspectives on design and the workplace at different periods of time. An examination of these articles provides insight into the ability of narrative inquiry methodology to capture a wide range of stakeholder’s perspectives as well as address processes that unfold over a series of time. Following is an exploration of three of the articles from this special edition journal, which are particularly relevant to this project and its methodological approach.

The first article is Sheila Danko’s article, “Beneath the Surface”, which utilizes narrative inquiry to assess the voice of an end user of a designed space. Her article

focuses on Boston Financial, an investment services firm that strategically redesigned their office space to better reflect the firm's "values of an egalitarian corporate culture."⁶⁴ In order to assess how the design of this office space influenced the subjective experience of a user of the space, Danko utilized narrative inquiry to examine an executive recruit's exposure to the firm's redesigned workspace. Danko's research design involved interviewing the recruit, transcribing the interview, conducting a thematic analysis of the transcribed interview to "identify major issues and recurring themes," and then utilizing Labov's six-part structure to organize and synthesize the interview data into a focused narrative.⁶⁵ After completing the narrative, to establish validity, Danko presented it to the interviewee to confirm that it accurately represented her intent. The end result of Danko's research was a focused story of an executive recruit's personal response to Boston Financial's redesigned office. From this narrative, Danko was able to illustrate that the democratic work environment expressed in the interior design of Boston Financial's workspace played an important role in the recruit's decision to take the job.

In *Creativity and Narrative in Eva Maddox Associates Design Beyond Space*, Margaret Portillo and Joy Dohr examine creativity and workplace design through a combination of case study research and narrative inquiry. With this work, the case study provides the "basic frame" of the study and then, within the case study, narrative inquiry methods are utilized to create a narrative. The narrative documents the development of an award winning creative design project from the perspectives of two groups, the

⁶⁴ Danko, "Beneath the Surface," 4.

⁶⁵ Danko, "Beneath the Surface," 5.

designer and the client. The intent of the study is to debunk the idea of the creative genius and show that many players are involved in the creative design process. Like Danko, Portillo and Dohr construct their narrative from semi-structured interviews that are transcribed, subjected to a content analysis and then filtered through the Labovian framework.⁶⁶ However, unlike Danko's narrative, which is told from a single user perspective, Portillo and Dohr's narrative is told from several different perspectives, incorporating the voices of the designer and the client. The voice of the researcher is also clear within the presented narrative, providing context, explanation and marking transitions from one user perspective to another. Also, in contrast to Danko's narrative that documents a relatively short period of time, Dohr and Portillo's narrative spans two decades. Part of the intent of this long time-frame is to illustrate how the client-designer relationship evolved over time.

Building on Portillo and Dohr's research, in her article, "A Strategic Story of Using Computer Technology," Joan McLain-Kark uses a multi-vocal narrative to examine whether computer technology can help designers better meet the needs of clients. In order to explore this issue she constructs a narrative that documents the use of 3D computer technology as a communication device between designers and clients in the design of a workplace environment. McLain-Kark's narrative captures the perspectives of the client, the computer modeler and the lab designer. As well, her voice is clear within the narrative and helps to provide context and explanation as the narrative switches between the different perspectives. Similar to the other articles in the journal, McLain-Kark's methodological approach involved a series of interviews that were

⁶⁶ Portillo and Dohr, "Creativity and Narrative in Eva Maddox Associates," 45.

transcribed and then formed into a single narrative using Labov's six point narrative structure.

In an interesting departure, McLain-Kark provides another narrative, which concentrates on a fictional future scenario involving a computer interaction between a client and designer. This future scenario takes the lesson learned from the fact-based narrative and envisions new technology to enhance designer-client relations. The purpose of this scenario is to challenge designers to start to think about ways they can improve technology to better meet client needs. This future scenario, while interesting, has a different purpose than the fact-based narrative. Although a future scenario can be thoughtfully constructed, it is more fiction than fact. Unlike a research narrative, it does not benefit from a triangulation of sources. Although, perhaps, not suited for a research dissertation, the future scenario narrative offers promise for design pedagogy, which is explored in the next section.

In these three studies, narrative inquiry is utilized to capture a variety of user perspectives, including those of the client, the designer, and the end user. Although they pull from the same framework for their narrative methodology, each article examines different phenomena ranging from creativity to computer technology. This approach to narrative inquiry is interesting, particularly for its ability to distill a large amount of interview data. However, the use of Labov's six component structuralist framework is not always successful. At its best, the Labovian framework provides a focused in-depth narrative, at its worst it leads to an overly formal, almost stilted narrative. As illustrated in the next section, subsequent design research tackles this

problem by breaking down the strict Labovian framework, providing more flexibility in its use.

Recent Work: Design Pedagogy

A more recent article, “Humanizing Design Through Narrative Inquiry,” utilizes a modified version of the Labovian framework to demonstrate connections between narrative structure and the design process. The co-authors, Sheila Danko, Margaret Portillo and Jason Meneely, reduce Labov’s six components to four main elements, “voices, setting, action and resolution,” which provides more flexibility to its application.⁶⁷ They then relate these four elements to the well-established four components of creativity: “person, process, product and press.”⁶⁸ Combining these two frameworks provides the authors an avenue for exploring the use of narrative as a “design method.”⁶⁹ To test narrative inquiry’s utility as a design method the authors incorporated the use of narratives into a senior design studio and examined its effectiveness as a design tool. Specifically, senior design students were asked to include narrative inquiry in their design process by reading and writing narratives focused on how people would experience their proposed office space design. During the programming phase students were asked to read a story about design that detailed user needs with the intent of sensitizing them to these needs. During the conceptualization and schematic phases students were asked to create their own design narratives “to describe the encounter that visitor[s] might have with the space

⁶⁷ Danko, Portillo and Meenely, “Humanizing Design Through Narrative Inquiry,” 12.

⁶⁸ Danko, Portillo, and Meenely, “Humanizing Design Through Narrative Inquiry,” 12; See also: Ross Lawler Mooney, *Explorations in Creativity* (New York: Harper & Row, 1967).

⁶⁹ Danko, Portillo, and Meenely, “Humanizing Design Through Narrative Inquiry,” 13.

they [the students] were designing.”⁷⁰ And, during the presentation phase students were asked to present their final designs as a narrative in order to “explore the various ways narrative could be utilized as a design communication tool.”⁷¹

After completing the design project, students were then asked to reflect on the project and how narrative inquiry impacted their design process. To analyze the student’s responses, Danko, Portillo and Meneely utilized a thematic analysis. In much the same way as Tamboukou’s analysis of narratives, the students’ responses were evaluated for different themes. Three overriding themes surfaced from the student responses: the use of narrative inquiry “heightened user empathy,” enhanced multi-sensory conceptualization and visualization,” and “facilitated holistic thinking.”⁷² From these findings the authors concluded that the use of narrative inquiry helped to “humanize design thinking,” shifting the student’s focus from the design product to the user and how the user might experience and inhabit a designed space.⁷³ This conclusion—that narrative enables a unique focus on people and their experiences—is similar to the case Delgado makes for the incorporation of narrative into legal research.

As evident from these studies, narrative inquiry offers a flexible approach to the study of interior design. Design Scholars have used it as an instrument to enhance the design process as well as a method for collecting and analyzing data and capturing how people experience and make sense of the built environment. As illustrated in the Danko, Portillo and Meneely study, narrative inquiry has been used as a tool of design

⁷⁰ Danko, Portillo and Meneely, “Humanizing Design Through Narrative Inquiry,” 15.

⁷¹ Danko, Portillo and Meneely, “Humanizing Design Through Narrative Inquiry,” 18.

⁷² Danko, Portillo and Meneely, “Humanizing Design Through Narrative Inquiry,” 23.

⁷³ Danko, Portillo and Meneely, “Humanizing Design Through Narrative Inquiry,” 25.

pedagogy and as a way to explore end user perspectives. The interior design field has adopted narrative inquiry methods from both the structuralist and the humanist traditions. Ganoë uses a structuralist approach as a way in which to read the environment. By doing so she introduces a type of visual narrative analysis that diverges from the thematic visual narratives explored by Reissman. Danko, Portillo and Meneely couple Labov's structuralist approach with a thematic analysis of narratives as a way in which assess the design process. Finally, Danko in *Beneath the Surface*, uses a Labovian approach to interior design as a way in which to construct stories, thereby merging the structuralist tradition with the humanist tradition. Utilizing this hybrid approach to narrative inquiry allows the authors to capture how interior space is produced, inhabited and interpreted.

Clearly the findings of these studies speak to this project, which is interested in how people interpret space. And, the insight that narrative inquiry provides into how space is produced, inhabited and interpreted certainly warrants its use. However, an apparent difference between this study and these exemplars of narrative inquiry is that these studies are dealing with contemporary phenomena. In contrast, this project proposes the use of narrative inquiry as a tool for analyzing historic interiors. Most of these studies rely on interview data and they are able to check their final narratives with the interviewees to establish validity. This study, which relies on archival sources, cannot utilize these techniques. That is why it is important for this project to draw on exemplars that deal with historical events and sources, such as Tamboukou and Goodman's research. These studies demonstrate that narrative inquiry can be applied to an historical analysis and draw on archival sources. The ability of narrative inquiry to

address the built environment, access historical perspectives and engage archival sources, makes it an apt tool for this study of historic interiors.

Narrative Inquiry and Historic Preservation

Narrative inquiry has not made significant inroads into the preservation field, even though the idea of narrative is fundamental to the preservation process. Historic preservation and the process of landmark designation are excellent subjects for narrative inquiry research. Principally this has to do with the American system of designation, which requires that the historic significance of a site be determined before a site receives heritage designation. In order to establish significance, the nominator must construct a persuasive narrative around a historic site or structure detailing its historic importance to contemporary society. The historic nomination forms provide these stories and help to mold the meaning of historic sites and structures.⁷⁴ The story told by the site's official designation "strongly mediates" the way the past is approached at historic sites.⁷⁵

But the statement of significance in the designation application does not represent the complete story of historic sites. The story of a historic site does not begin or end with its designation. Historic sites are reproduced countless times as they are occupied and consumed. Consequently, many different narratives surround the interpretation of these sites. In the case of the Hull House and Henry Street settlements, their preservation and interpretation represents an ongoing arbitration between public

⁷⁴ Howard Green, "The Social Construction of Historical Significance," in *Preservation of What, for Whom?*, ed., Michael Tomlan (Ithaca, NY: National Council of Preservation Education, 1998), 89.

⁷⁵ Green, "The Social Construction of Historical Significance," 90.

and professional narratives. These intermingled stories continue to redefine the significance of these historic sites.

In his book *Place, Race and Story*, preservationist Ned Kaufman suggests a new model for thinking about historic spaces that highlights the importance of stories to the understanding of historic sites. Specifically, Kaufman proposes that preservationists start to think of historic sites as story sites, claiming that “stories can live in places” and that “specific places are often essential to their survival.”⁷⁶ “One of the ways people express feelings about places” Kaufman asserts, “is by telling stories.”⁷⁷ Accordingly, he challenges preservationists to pay attention to stories and to examine them “for what they reveal about people and places.”⁷⁸ When “people frame their thoughts in narratives,” he continues, “they reach into realms of feeling and value that the profession’s scientific or evaluative methods do not capture.”⁷⁹ Not only does Kaufman look at historic sites and the physical environment as the “container of stories” but he also casts historic sites as the “embodiment” of stories.⁸⁰ This is a particularly appealing idea because it suggests that the physical environment can be read as a narrative. Thinking about the physical environment as a story, in itself, raises the possibility that it can be subjected to a visual narrative analysis similar to the photographs and paintings used in Creef and Tamboukou’s studies, respectively.

⁷⁶ Ned Kaufman, *Place, Race, and Story: Essays on the Past and Future of Historic Preservation* (New York: Routledge, 2009), 3.

⁷⁷ Kaufman, *Place, Race, and Story*, 3.

⁷⁸ Kaufman, *Place, Race, and Story*, 5.

⁷⁹ Kaufman, *Place, Race, and Story*, 5.

⁸⁰ Kaufman, *Place, Race, and Story*, 54.

Methodological Approach of this Dissertation

This study pulls from several of the projects examined in this chapter to inform its methodological approach. Particularly, by using visual as well as written sources, this study draws on Maria Tamboukou's visual analysis of the painter Gwen John and Elena Creef's visual analysis of Japanese internment camps. It also borrows from Richard Delgado and John Goodman's studies on racial discrimination, which construct multiple narratives around a single event in order to provide a more nuanced and inclusive understanding of a moment in time. Finally, this study pulls on Seidman's concept of "storied vignettes" and the strategic stories project, to inform how it approaches the construction and presentation of narratives.

Similar to the work of Tamboukou and Creef, this study pulls from visual and verbal archival sources in order to facilitate a better understanding of the connection between the physical environment of historic settlement houses and the creation of significance at these sites. It is possible, however, to expand upon the written narrative, like those developed by Tamboukou and Creef, by digitally constructing a visual narrative and analysis of the Henry Street and Hull House settlements. This study reconstructs the visual story of Hull House and Henry Street before and after preservation through the creation of 3-dimensional computer models of the settlements' interiors. By creating a model of the Henry Street and Hull House settlements, it captures Kaufman's perspective of historic sites as the "embodiment" of stories.⁸¹ The 3-D model enables the depiction of the visual story that evolved from the preservation of Hull House and Henry Street's physical structures.

⁸¹ Kaufman, *Place, Race, and Story*, 54.

Reconstructing the interiors of the Hull House and Henry Street Settlement before and after their preservation presents challenges of evidence. Photographic documentation of these sites is incomplete, which makes charting changes to the physical structures of these two settlement houses difficult. As such, a combination of photographs, floor plans, site visits and written descriptions were used to visually reconstruct these spaces.⁸² An analysis of these primary sources was coupled with an exhaustive examination of secondary sources, which detail the furnishings and physical layouts of domestic and institutional interiors during the time periods under study. Due to limits in the available evidence, this reconstruction is limited to the main floor of the Hull House mansion and Henry Street's dining room.

Similar to Delgado and Goodman, this project also constructs and presents a series of narratives around significant historic moments. These narratives are based on a variety of primary sources including interview transcripts, newspaper accounts, personal letters and autobiographies. This approach involved an initial reading of these archival sources to isolate critical junctures in the negotiation over meaning in the history of these two settlements. Once these junctures were established, additional

⁸² Material regarding the Henry Street Settlement is located at the University of Minnesota's Social Welfare History Archives. These archives contain personal correspondence, board minute meetings, settlement studies, overviews of public housing conferences and fund raising information. They also include a series of documents on the buildings, grounds and other properties of the Henry Street Settlement. Additionally, these archives include the Henry Street Oral History Project, which include oral interviews of Lower East Side residents, and the Helen Hall Papers. Information on the founding and early years of the Henry Street Settlement was gathered from the New York Public Library's Lillian Wald Papers and Columbia's Visiting Nurse Service of New York Records. Information regarding the Hull House Settlement was pulled from the University of Illinois at Chicago's Special Collections, which house the Jane Addams Memorial Collection, including the Hull House Collection as well as the Hull House Oral History Collection. UIC's special collections also contain the Louise deKoven Bowen Papers and the University Archives, which include documents from the Chancellor, Auxiliary Services, and the Chicago Circle Center. Information on Ellen Gates Starr was pulled from the Sophia Smith Collection at Smith College, MA. Finally this paper drew from the microfilm version of the Jane Addams Papers, which is available from the University of Illinois Special Collections and the Sophia Smith Collection at Smith College MA.

investigation isolated a variety of perspectives revolving around each critical juncture. Out of this data a series of narratives were formed that revolve around the three critical junctures in the history of Hull House and Henry Street: the settlements' founding, change in leadership, and preservation and landmarking. The narratives arise from three interests groups: the narratives of leaders, like Jane Addams and Lillian Wald, whose lives are represented by the preservation work, the narratives of other settlement residents, and those narratives generated from the community within which these two sites remain.

Each narrative represents a different stakeholder's perspective. In some cases the stakeholder is an individual such as Jane Addams or Lillian Wald and sometimes the stakeholder represents a group, like the Save Hull House Committee. The purpose of these narratives is to capture the subjective "voice" of these diverse stakeholders. To inform the construction of these narratives, this study pulls from Siedman's use of "storied vignettes" and Portillo and Dohr's study of creativity and workplace design. Like Siedman's construction of his "storied vignettes," archival sources were read carefully, compelling passages were marked and these passages were forged together to create a coherent narrative. The forging of the narratives was an iterative process involving multiple drafts to ensure that the narratives captured the language, wording and emotional tenor of the stakeholder. Within the narratives shifts between the narrator's voice and the stakeholder's voice are carefully indicated with the use of quotation marks. And, similar to the approach employed by Portillo and Dohr, around these narratives, the researcher provides context, explanation and transitions.

Within this study each narrative is explored as an individual story as well as compared to other stories to determine interaction and intersections. Significantly, utilizing narrative inquiry methodology enables this dissertation to move beyond an architectural analysis of historic interior spaces and, instead, capture the relationships that the interior spaces of the Hull House and Henry Street settlements represented. Through exploring the various narratives that surround these historic sites, this study exposes the human context that informed, and continues to inform, the presentation and interpretation of these historic sites.

One of the ways narrative researchers achieve validation of their constructs is by emic verification—having the interviewee read the finished narrative for accuracy. This is not possible with narratives based on archival sources. Validity has to be established in a different manner. Where possible these narratives use direct quotes from the archival sources. Additionally, this study uses triangulation of sources to establish narrative validity. Individual narratives are validated through the use of corroborative evidence collected from multiple sources. Sources for these narratives include, personal correspondence, board minute meetings, settlement studies, fund raising information and newspaper articles. From such diversity of records may be drawn an account of the processes by which first reformers and later preservationists made decisions regarding the manner in which these two sites would be maintained and interpreted. These extensive records allow for an examination of alternative community narratives, which offer further insight into the negotiation of significance at the Hull House and Henry Street settlements.

Summary

As a methodology and type of research writing, narrative inquiry is attractive for its ability to bring forward marginalized voices and provide a more nuanced understanding of historical events. This study's approach is shaped by narrative studies that deal with similar subject matter, stakeholders and sources. These include Tamboukou's and Creef's visual analysis of archival sources, Delgado's multiple narrative approach to legal cases, Goodman's multiple narrative approach to contentious historic events and the strategic stories project, which examines how space is produced.⁸³ These studies come from multiple fields, including sociology, law, history and interior design. By demonstrating narrative inquiry as a way in which to enhance understanding of historic preservation and historic interiors, this study contributes to this body of knowledge. Like Delgado and Goodman, it suggests that we cannot fully understand critical historical junctures without first examining these junctures from multiple points of view. Accordingly, this study seeks to determine how different voices have shaped the Hull House and Henry Street sites. By emphasizing the experience and relationships that are continually played out in the built environment, the narrative approach of this project allows for a new perspective on these familiar spaces. It allows for the possibility that "architecture and space" can be "multivoiced" and "multifaceted" and, through doing so, provides a more fluid explanation of the preservation process and its contribution to the study of the past.⁸⁴ The next chapter provides the historical background for the

⁸³ Reissman, *Narrative Methods for the Human Sciences*; Creef, *Imaging Japanese America: The Visual*; Maria Tamboukou, "Broken Narratives, "Visual Forces: Letters, Paintings and the Event," 67-77; Delgado, "Storytelling for Oppositionists and Others"; Goodman, "For the Love of Stories Reviews"; Portillo and Dohr, "Creativity and Narrative in Eva Maddox Associates."

⁸⁴ Mark Llewellyn, "Polyvocalism and the Public: 'Doing' a Critical Historical Geography of Architecture," *Area* 35 (2003): 269.

examination of diverse stakeholder narratives that will take place in Chapters Four and Five.

CHAPTER 3 SETTLEMENT HOUSES: PHILOSOPHY AND ARCHITECTURE

Introduction

In the late nineteenth century there was a movement among middle class women and men to found philanthropic outposts in poor urban neighborhoods. This trend became known as the Settlement House Movement. By making their homes among the poor, predominantly immigrant, urban dwellers, these reformers sought to bridge the social, economic and cultural divide between the wealthy upper classes and the working classes in industrial society. When moving into these neighborhoods, members of the movement carefully deliberated over the architectural form their settlements houses would take and how they would arrange, decorate and use the interiors of these settlement homes. In this way, the act of settling was both a physical act as well as a philosophical act, and the settlement house was “both concept and space, subject and object, a set of activities and a complex of buildings.”¹

Because of this dual nature, settlement houses are difficult spaces to categorize. They were both houses and reform institutions, private and public spaces and, finally, a refuge from the city streets as well as portals into city life. The interiors reflected this dichotomy of uses, simultaneously open and closed to the public, displaying home-like features like dining rooms and parlors alongside a communal living arrangement, showcasing new advances in home economics with the use of pre-industrial furnishings and textiles, and offering a space for neighborhood residents to escape from the city while at the same time providing a space for their settlement residents to engage the

¹ Sharon Haar, “The Hull House Settlement and the Study of the City,” in *Embodied Utopias: Gender, Social Change, and the Modern Metropolis*, eds. Amy Bingaman, Lise Sanders, and Rebecca Zorach (London: Routledge, 2002), 101.

urban environment. Compounding the problem of examining the relationship of the Settlement House Movement to its architecture is that this relationship shifted over time.

Both the Hull House and Henry Street settlements started as compact, single-family homes, occupied by a small group of founding female members. But they grew quickly both in number of buildings and residents. As their physical size and reform initiatives grew, these settlement houses developed from small detached homes to large sprawling institutions with multiple dwellings. And, as these settlements transitioned from homes to institutions, and people stopped living in them at various points after World War I, the significance of their architecture changed. However, despite these multiple meanings, the original concept of the settlement house as a home remained one of its central and defining features.²

This chapter provides an overview of the history of the Settlement House Movement from the late 1880s to the 1970s. It examines the settlement house from both an architectural and historical perspective. By exploring the evolution of the relationship between the social reform activities of the Settlement House Movement and the architecture of its settlement houses, this section demonstrates how the settlement house was both a social reform agenda as well as a physical place informed by conceptions of the home.

Toynbee Hall and Settlement House Architecture

Episcopalian clergyman Samuel Barnett, his wife, Henrietta Barnett, and a group of male Oxford University students founded the first settlement, Toynbee Hall, in the East End of London in 1884. A fundamental goal of the Toynbee Hall founders was “to

² Guy Szuberla, “Three Chicago Settlements,” *Illinois State Historical Society* 70 (February 1977): 116.

reconstruct a more 'natural,' organic relationship between classes."³ They felt that the rapid industrialization of England had led to a "dangerous, nationwide drift towards social disintegration."⁴ A symptom of this "social disintegration" was the physical and social isolation of the poor from the rest of society. By creating a cooperative living environment in close proximity with the poorer classes, the Toynbee founders hoped to reestablish connections between the classes and rectify inequities by bringing "light and refinement" to the dispossessed.⁵ At Toynbee Hall, residents held lectures, educational evening classes and picture exhibitions as well as started theater, music and chess clubs to serve the poor. Notably, the founders maintained that the creation of Toynbee Hall was not only for the benefit of the neighborhood but for the residents, who could learn from their new neighbors, and for the larger society, which would benefit from the reconnection of the different class.⁶

With an emphasis on close physical contact as well as personal service to the poor rather than anonymous money giving, Toynbee Hall distinguished itself from early nineteenth century private charity practices. Unlike traditional charity efforts, Toynbee Hall did not attribute poverty to a deficit in the moral character of the poor. Instead, it emphasized environmental conditions as the cause and solution to poverty.⁷ The

³Deborah Weiner, *Architecture and Social Reform in late-Victorian London* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994), 161.

⁴ Standish Meacham, *Toynbee Hall and Social Reform* (New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press, 1987), x.

⁵ Weiner, *Architecture and Social Reform in late-Victorian London*, 158.

⁶ Mina Carson, *Settlement Folk: Social Thought and the American Settlement Movement 1885-1930*, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1990), 51.

⁷ See: Carson, *Settlement Folk*, 51; Michael McGerr, *A Fierce Discontent: The Rise and Fall of the Progressive Movement in America* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 67.

Settlement House Movement borrowed this idea from Social Gospel theology, which “attributed poverty to social, economic, and political conditions rather than to the personal failings of individuals”.⁸

Despite its forward looking approach to poverty and charity, the Toynbee Settlement drew a great deal of inspiration from the past, especially when it came to the architecture and location of its inaugural settlement house. By settling in an impoverished section of London, the founders of Toynbee Hall hoped to reconstruct a preindustrial, agrarian living environment, where rich and poor were neighbors.⁹ This was suggested in the architecture of Toynbee Hall, which was purpose-built to resemble an Elizabethan manor house. With its “ecclesiastical doors, dogtooth patterns and mullions,” Toynbee Hall, was also loosely modeled on the gothic-revival styles of the Oxford and Cambridge colleges.¹⁰ By adopting these pre-industrial architectural styles, Toynbee Hall hoped to resurrect some of the moral values and sense of community that they felt existed before industrialization.

While the exterior of Toynbee Hall reflected a bucolic past, the interiors of Toynbee Hall were carefully designed according to popular aesthetic tastes of the day with heavy draperies, Japanese prints, oriental rugs and gothic fireplaces. The decor also exposed an underlying premise of Toynbee Hall’s reform agenda: that the poor benefitted from exposure to middle class taste, design and culture.¹¹ With the design of

⁸ Daphne Spain, *How Women Saved the City* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2001), 7.

⁹ Weiner, *Architecture and Social Reform in Late-Victorian London*, 161.

¹⁰ Asa Briggs and Anne Macartney, *Toynbee Hall: The First Hundred Years* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1984), 22.

¹¹ Briggs and Macartney, *Toynbee Hall*, 22.

its interiors, Toynbee Hall drew on the Arts and Crafts style for inspiration. A response to industrialization, the Arts and Crafts style was a social movement as well as an aesthetic movement, which extolled the process of creating products, the virtues of individual craftsmanship, and favored the work of the craftsman over mass production. This style was characterized by the use of “natural materials such as wood, shingle and greenery, exposed structural elements and surfaces, and open flexible spaces.”¹²

The architecture and social reform goals of Toynbee Hall would become a model for the American Settlement House Movement. The settlement concept reached the United States in the late nineteenth century. In 1886 the first American settlement house was founded on the Lower East Side of New York City. Originally called the Neighborhood Guild, the University Settlement was established by Dr. Stanton Coit who had been a short-term resident at Toynbee Hall. From there, the American Settlement House Movement grew rapidly. By 1897 there were 74 settlements in the United States; by 1905 there were approximately 204 settlements and by 1911 there were around 400 settlement houses.¹³ These settlements were generally located in cities, and the majority of them were established in the Eastern United States.

The size of the settlement houses and the number of their residents also grew rapidly. Founded in 1889, the Hull House Settlement in Chicago grew from two female residents to twenty-five residents within a decade. These residents were comprised of both men and women. And within twenty years the size of the Hull House Settlement grew from one building to a complex of thirteen buildings. Hull House’s increase in size

¹² Briggs and Macartney, *Toynbee Hall*, 22.

¹³ Albert J. Kennedy and Kathryn Farra, *Social Settlements in New York City: Their Activities, Policies and Administration* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1935), VI.

was indicative of broader trends. Although the number of residents varied in settlement houses, by the turn of the twentieth century it was not uncommon for settlements to have upwards of twenty people in residence.¹⁴ These residents, particularly the women, lived in the settlements for long periods of time. The average residency for women in settlement houses was ten years. However, this residency could stretch to over three decades. For example, Jane Addams lived at the Hull House Settlement for forty-four years while her cofounder Ellen Gates Starr lived at the settlement for thirty-one years. Lillian Wald lived at the Henry Street Settlement for thirty years, while her successor, Helen Hall lived at the settlement for thirty-four years. In contrast, men generally resided in settlement houses for an average of three years.¹⁵

American settlement houses had much in common with their British predecessor. The settlement founders were educated women and men who, through their settlement activities, displayed a continued interest in “poverty,” “social inequities” and “personal service.”¹⁶ Like the British founders, the American founders hoped to address these issues by becoming neighbors with the impoverished. However, the people that occupied these poor urban districts formed one of the most notable differences between the American and British settlement movements. For Toynbee Hall, their neighbors were native born Londoners and culturally homogenous. In the United States, immigrants from a diversity of backgrounds populated the most impoverished areas of cities like New York and Chicago. These neighbors posed a unique challenge to the

¹⁴ Judith Ann Trolander, *Settlement Houses and the Great Depression* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1975), 44.

¹⁵ Camilla Stivers, “Settlement Women and Bureau Men: Constructing a Usable Past for Public Administration,” *Public Administration Review* 55 (November 1995): 527.

¹⁶ Carson, *Settlement Folk*, 48.

American Settlement House Movement and influenced its approach to social reform as well as its architecture. Many American settlement house programs aimed at addressing issues of assimilation and easing the transition of the new immigrants to American urban life. The design of the interiors of these settlement houses, alongside language, civic and history courses were some of the key ways that the Settlement House Movement attempted to Americanize their immigrant neighbors.¹⁷

The American Settlement House Movement and its Architecture

In England and the United States, the Settlement House Movement signaled momentum in the development of the Progressive Movement. Stretching from the late nineteenth century into the early twentieth century, the Progressive Reform Movement advocated legal and social reform as a response to rapid industrialization, urbanization and immigration—and the problems associated with each—in American society.

Borrowing from the Social Gospel Movement, the Progressive's alarm over the rich and their excesses, the middle class and their new affluence, and the poor and their social inequities were often cast in "environmentalist terms."¹⁸ The environment needed to be reorganized and this reorganization often started with the home. In their 1935 study of settlements in New York City, Albert Kennedy and Kathryn Farra explained that many "settlements held that the furnishings and order of the residence and of the public rooms were to be among the chief influences exercised by the settlement."¹⁹

¹⁷ Allen Davis, *Spearheads for Reform: The Social Settlements and the Progressive Movement, 1890-1914* (New Brunswick, N. J.: Rutgers University Press, 1984), 43.

¹⁸ Gwendolyn Wright, *Moralism and the Model Home: Domestic Architecture and Cultural Conflict in Chicago, 1873-1913* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), 106.

¹⁹ Kennedy and Farra, *Social Settlements in New York City*, 185. Note: Despite Kennedy and Farra's claims that the interiors of the settlement houses were one of the primary ways in which the settlement houses exercised influence, the extent to which these interiors influenced their neighbors is open to

Unlike Toynbee Hall, which was new construction, the overall trend in the American Settlement House Movement was to establish settlement houses in preexisting structures. Many settlement houses were adapted from existing neighborhood homes.²⁰ Some settlement leaders saw a social value in the adaptive reuse of these neighborhood houses. When Lillian Wald moved the Henry Street Settlement to three federal style townhouses in the Lower East Side she claimed that the preservation of these houses helped New York, a city of “rapid changes” to maintain an important, stabilizing, link with its past.²¹ Preserving these buildings allowed the settlement founders a way in which to temper what they saw as the current societal crisis with “historic memory.”²²

The architecture of the buildings they adapted, as well as their additions to these structures, reflected the same interest in pre-industrial styles that Toynbee Hall showcased through its purpose-built architecture. The Henry Street Settlement in New

debate. Although, “settlement workers hoped that community patrons would incorporate the styles” demonstrated by the settlement houses and their workshops into their “own homes,” the extent to which these styles were incorporated varied. In her book *Neighbors All*, Esther Barrows, a resident of Boston’s South End Settlement House describes how a neighborhood club girl, who had previously appeared to have agreed with the settlement’s ideas on home decoration, after her marriage invited the residents over and “fearfully” revealed her “small living room” that was “overfilled by the inevitable ‘parlor set,’ while plush curtains hung at the windows and on either side of the door.” As illustrated in this example, instead of polished wood floors, bare walls, and simple wood furniture, tenement apartments often displayed a preference for heavy draperies, carpeting, wallpaper and ornate upholstered and stuffed furniture. In her article “Embellishing a Life of Labor,” Lizbeth Cohen outlines that the same objects that were labeled vulgar by Simkhovitch were often considered “signs of taste and status” by her tenement neighbors. See: Esther G. Barrows, *Neighbors All: A Settlement Notebook* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1929), 40-41; Lizbeth Cohen, “Embellishing a Life of Labor: An Interpretation of the Material Culture of American Working-Class Homes, 1885-1915,” *Journal of American Culture* 3 (7 June 2004): 752-775.

²⁰ Kennedy and Farra, *Social Settlements in New York City*, 184.

²¹ Lillian Wald, *The House on Henry Street* (New York: H. Holt and Co., 1915), 169

²² Randall Mason, *The Once and Future New York: Historic Preservation and the Modern City* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press), 243.

York occupied two early nineteenth century federal style townhouses.²³ And, as the Henry Street Settlement grew, it expanded into a number of similar period-styles homes throughout the Lower East Side. The Hull House Settlement in Chicago was originally founded in an 1856 Italiante Victorian style mansion, which predated the Civil War. And as the Hull House Settlement expanded additions were added to the original mansion in the Tudor style.

While the exteriors of the Hull House and Henry Street settlements evoked the past, their home-like interiors exhibited an interesting mix of historical references and new advances in home economics that promoted the ideals of cleanliness, light and air. At the time of the founding of the Settlement House Movement, the middle class home was undergoing a transformation. The overstuffed rooms, wall-to-wall carpeting, heavy draperies, papered walls and ornate furniture that marked Gilded Age interiors were being thrown over in favor of polished wood floors, painted walls, simple wood furniture and window treatments, and “open, flexible spaces.”²⁴ This change in aesthetics was tied to education and social developments, such as the emerging home economics field, new theories that germs were transmitted through air and dirt, and the Progressive reform emphasis on the environment and its influence on character formation. Although the degree to which individual settlement homes adopted these new views on home

²³ The Federal Style was popular in the first few decades after United States gained its independence from England. Like the Colonial Revival style, the Federal style was felt to represent a distinctly American type of architecture as well as reflect a simpler, more agrarian past. See John Poppeliers and Allen Chambers, Jr., *What Style is It: A Guide to American Architecture* (New Jersey, John Wiley & Sons, 2003).

²⁴ Cohen, “Embellishing a Life of Labor,” 754.

design varied, most settlement houses emphasized simplicity and functionality in the design of their spaces.²⁵

The Early Settlement House Movement and Women

In contrast to the example of Toynbee Hall, which was occupied by college men, educated middle-class women largely spearheaded the Settlement House Movement within the United States.²⁶ Roughly seventy percent of the heads of settlement houses were women.²⁷ At the time the Settlement House Movement was making its advent into America, women were beginning to earn college degrees but had few if any opportunities to enter the workforce.²⁸ Institutions, like settlement houses, provided ambitious upper and middle class women with college educations a unique opportunity to put their education to work.

Settlement houses were attractive to these college educated women for the life of activity and worldly connection that they offered. Many of these women felt that their education and privileged upbringing had isolated them from society. In *Twenty Years at Hull House*, Addams describes the pitfalls of a college education, where women “had taken their learning too quickly, had departed too suddenly from the active, emotional life led by their grandmothers and great-grandmothers.”²⁹ The problem with “contemporary education of young women,” Addams declared, was that it distanced

²⁵ See: Cohen, “Embellishing a Life of Labor,” 752-775; Wright, *Moralism and the Model Home*, 118-148.

²⁶ See: Carson, *Settlement Folk*, 49-50; Davis, *Spearheads for Reform*, 26-39.

²⁷ Robert Archey Woods and Albert J Kennedy, *The Settlement Horizon*, with foreword by Judith Trolander (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers, 1990), viii.

²⁸ Robert Archey Woods and Albert J. Kennedy, *The Settlement Horizon: A National Estimate* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1922), 53-54.

²⁹ Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull House*, 71.

women from the world and “somewhere in the process of 'being educated'” women “had lost that simple and almost automatic response to the human appeal.”³⁰ The life of these college women, with no required industry or obstacles and all the “difficulties removed,” was “like eating a sweet dessert the first thing in the morning.”³¹ With this lifestyle came the “assumption that the sheltered, educated girl has nothing to do with the bitter poverty and the social maladjustment which is all about her.”³² However, Addams continued, it was impossible to conceal this oppression “for it breaks through poetry and literature in a burning tide which overwhelms her; it peers at her in the form of heavy-laden market women and underpaid street laborers, gibing her with a sense of her uselessness.”³³ As Addams illustrates, these college women keenly felt their own impotence and disconnect from the world. Settlement houses provided these college women a path back to a connection with the world.

These women cast settlement work and its attentiveness to cleanliness and orderliness in the city as a natural extension of women’s responsibility in the home.³⁴ Scholars discuss this public role for women—the idea that women were “natural leaders” when it came to the physical and social well being of the city—as Municipal Housekeeping.³⁵ These expectations of gender shaped how settlement houses were organized and what they looked like. Settlement leaders referred to the settlement

³⁰ Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull House*, 71.

³¹ Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull House*, 73.

³² Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull House*, 73.

³³ Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull House*, 73.

³⁴ Spain, *How Women Saved the City*, 9.

³⁵ Alison Isenberg, *Downtown America: A History of the Place and the People who Made It* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004), 16.

residents as families and their settlement houses as homes.³⁶ And, they decorated these settlement houses to look home-like.³⁷ However, as the settlements' expanded, their claims to domestic status grew tenuous. Retaining decorative elements, like a hearth, domestic furnishings and spaces such as parlors and dining rooms helped these settlements maintain a claim to a home-like atmosphere, even as they took on an increasingly public role.

A Home-Like Environment

Creating a home-like environment was essential to the mostly female American founders of the Settlement House Movement. In his 1922 book *The Settlement Idea*, architect and planner Arthur C. Holden upheld that “a Settlement is first of all a Home.”³⁸ And, “at every American settlement there was a jealous watchfulness to keep the house as far as possible like a middle class family residence and to prevent institutional developments from embarrassing any overture made by those who had come above all to be neighbors among other neighbors.”³⁹ The letters that Jane Addams wrote to her family when she founded the Hull House back this claim, and reveal the excitement of a new homeowner. To her sister Alice she writes, “I was perfectly delighted with the house, it is coming out beautifully and I know of no prettier rooms anywhere.”⁴⁰ Years later in her autobiography, *Twenty Years at Hull House*, she states “Probably no young

³⁶ Robyn Muncy, *Creating a Female Dominion in American Reform 1890-1935* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 3-37.

³⁷ Spain, *How Women Saved the City*, 118.

³⁸ Arthur Cort Holden, *The Settlement Idea: A Vision of Social Justice* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1922), 183.

³⁹ Woods and Kennedy, *The Settlement Horizon*, 53.

⁴⁰ Jane Addams, letter to Alice Halderman, April 1889, Jane Addams Papers, Reel 2, University of Illinois at Chicago Special Collections

matron ever placed her own things in her own house with more pleasure than that with which we first furnished Hull-House.” Likewise in a *House on Henry Street*, Wald describes with pleasure how she and Mary Brewster decorated the sitting-room, small dining room and kitchen that “constituted our home.”⁴¹

These settlement women based their moral authority on this home-like environment. The concept of the home, and domesticity, was critical to their approach to social reform. Influenced by a Progressive emphasis on the environment, the Settlement House Movement looked to domestic space as one of the more powerful environments for influencing character.⁴² One of the explanations for the poverty and vice in the tenement neighborhoods were that the occupants were not exposed to a proper home environment. Settlement leaders felt that the lack of cleanliness, the free mixing of sexes and the prevalence of home-industries in their neighbors’ tenement apartments contributed to the spread of disease, delinquency and licentiousness.⁴³

The design of the interiors of the settlement houses reflected a unique type of Americanization. By teaching their immigrant neighbors how to create proper homes, settlement leaders hoped to combat poverty and vice. And, through the example of their home-like interiors environments, they hoped to facilitate the enculturation of their immigrant neighbors into the right type of American culture and society. To aid the immigrants, they sought to establish the “settlement as a center for best taste.”⁴⁴ In

⁴¹ Wald, *The House on Henry Street*, 11.

⁴² See: Sarah Deutsch, *Women and the City: Gender, Space, and Power in Boston, 1870-1940*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 3-24. Gwendolyn Wright, *Moralism and the Model Home*, 105-149.

⁴³ Robert Hunter, *Tenement Conditions in Chicago* (Chicago: City Homes Association, 1901), 144.

⁴⁴ Kennedy and Farra, *Social Settlements in New York City*, 181.

order to promote good taste, Mary Simkhovitch, founder of New York's Greenwich Settlement House, extolled the virtues of a "simply and rather sparsely furnished" settlement house that was "free from second rate and fussy decoration."⁴⁵ "Nothing is too good for the neighbors," Simkhovitch asserted, "their own good standards based on the old and tried are often spoiled by American vulgarity that can live but a day. They warm up to good taste."⁴⁶

Although settlement houses were homelike, there were some important differences between settlement houses and traditional middle class homes.⁴⁷ Settlement houses were both homes for the residents as well as workplaces. They were both private and public places. They also established a collective living environment that closely reflected college dormitories.⁴⁸ Settlement residents were mostly college graduates and the individual sleeping quarters and public dining hall and parlor of the settlement houses echoed the layout of college dormitories. As well, the creation of a Head Resident to oversee the other residents' activities reflected the role of college dormitory "housemother" who acted as a "supervisor," a "counselor" and a "friend" to the college girls.⁴⁹

Whether or not settlements actually constituted homes in the traditional sense; the metaphor of family and home was an important one. The home-like environment of

⁴⁵ Mary Simkhovich, quoted in Kennedy and Farra, *Social Settlements in New York City*, 182.

⁴⁶ Simkhovich, quoted in Kennedy and Farra, *Social Settlements in New York City*, 182.

⁴⁷ Deutsch, *Women and the City*, 13-14.

⁴⁸ See: John P. Rousmaniere, "Cultural Hybrid in the Slums: The College Woman and the Settlement House, 1889-1894" *American Quarterly* 22. (Spring, 1970):45-66; Deutsch, *Women and the City*; Judith Trolander, *Professionalism and Social Change* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1987); Allen F. Davis, *Spearheads For Reform*.

⁴⁹ Rousmaniere, "Cultural Hybrid in the Slums, 53.

settlement houses connected them to their surrounding communities. To Simkovitch the settlement was “a family living its life with its neighbors.”⁵⁰ Settlement leaders were careful to downplay the public and communal characteristics of their settlement houses. Addams maintained that “collective living was not an essential part of the plan.”⁵¹ Instead, she highlighted the importance of the settlement home, “easily accessible and ample in space hospitable and tolerant in spirits,” as integral to the concept of the settlement and the source of its “foothold” in the neighborhood.⁵²

Maintaining the trappings of a home-like environment was also essential to the settlements’ claims to moral authority. In *The Grand Domestic Revolution*, Dolores Hayden suggests that Addams played down the collective characteristics of settlement house living “because of associations with free love or socialism that it might provoke.”⁵³ Hayden explains that despite Addams’ concern, these types of complaints were rare because initially all the Hull House settlers were female and, “by the time men came to live at Hull House, the community was far too distinguished to provoke idle gossip about free love.”⁵⁴ However, Hull House was careful to board single men and women in different buildings and, through this sexual division, tried to maintain the semblance of a middle class home that was so important to their aspirations of moral authority.

⁵⁰ Clark Chambers, *Seedtime of Reform: American Social Service and Social Action, 1918-1933* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1963), 115.

⁵¹ Jane Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull House* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1939), 90.

⁵² Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull House*, 91.

⁵³ Dolores Hayden, *The Power of Place: Urban Landscapes as Public History* (Cambridge Massachusetts: MIT Press, 1995), 173.

⁵⁴ Dolores Hayden, *The Power of Place*, 173.

Despite the Settlement House Movement's "jealous watchfulness" to keep their settlement residences family-like, as these settlement houses grew in size and prestige they lost some of their home-like qualities. For example, by 1908 the Hull House Settlement in Chicago had grown into a thirteen-building complex. The sheer size and red brick architecture of this settlement structure distinguished it from the small, wooden residences that surrounded it.⁵⁵ As well, although most of these home-like settlement houses started with one or two residents, as the twentieth century progressed the original settlement houses grew from single-building residences occupied by a handful of people into larger complexes housing large groups of people. Despite the growth of these settlement houses, the idea of the settlement house as a home remained important to the Settlement House Movement throughout the twentieth century.

Between the World Wars

There is a tentative consensus among historians that settlements did not remain at the forefront of social reform following the First World War.⁵⁶ And, their decline in influence impacted every facet of their operations, including the architecture of their settlement houses. Several explanations are offered for this decline in influence. The Red Scare's anti-communist hysteria put many of the Settlement House Movement's social reform initiatives, such as labor organization, on the defensive.⁵⁷ The pacifism of many of the settlement leaders —like Jane Addams— during the First World War had

⁵⁵ Szuberla, "Three Chicago Settlements," 119.

⁵⁶ See: Elizabeth Lasch-Quinn, *Black Neighbors: Race and the Limits of Reform in the American Settlement House Movement, 1890-1945*, (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1993); Judith Trolander, *Professionalism and Social Change*; Davis, *Spearheads for Reform*; Carson, *Settlement Folk*.

⁵⁷ Michael Fabricant and Robert Fisher, *Settlement Houses Under Siege: The Struggle to Sustain Community Organizations in New York City* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 34.

already resulted in a loss of private funding for the settlements and the Red Scare promised the loss of more funding if the settlement's did not tone down their reform rhetoric.⁵⁸

In her book, *The Second Twenty Years at Hull-House*, Addams struggled to come to grips with this decline. She would claim "Social progress during the decade from 1919 to 1929 was conditioned at every turn by the fact that we are living in the midst of post-war psychology."⁵⁹ She continues, "Any proposed change was suspect, even those efforts that had been considered praiseworthy before the war."⁶⁰ To illustrate her point, Addams outlined the attempts of Hull House to advocate a Child Labor Amendment to the Federal constitution and how business interests tried to block the amendment by calling it a "Trojan horse concealing Bolshevists, Communists, Socialists and that traitorous and destructive brood."⁶¹

The declining influence of the settlements is also attributed to the inability of the movement to deal with issues of race, particularly the presence of African American neighbors.⁶² As immigration from Europe waned during the war, the Great Migration brought waves of new African American residents to Chicago and New York. These newcomers transformed the demographics of urban centers and reconstituted the

⁵⁸ Fabricant and Fisher, *Settlement Houses Under Siege*, 49.

⁵⁹ Addams, *The Second Twenty Years at Hull-House*, 153.

⁶⁰ Addams, *The Second Twenty Years at Hull-House*, 154.

⁶¹ Addams, *The Second Twenty Years at Hull-House*, 158.

⁶² See: Elisabeth Lash-Quinn, *Black Neighbors: Race and the limits of Reform in the American Settlement House Movement 1880-1945* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993).

populations that settlement houses served.⁶³ However, the Settlement House Movement was slow to gear its activities towards its new neighbors, which allowed other organizations to take the lead on race related reform activities thereby effectively sidelining the movement.⁶⁴ As well, the inability of settlements to respond to the needs of these neighbors would disconnect them from their neighborhoods, undermining their claim to the title of neighborhood homes and centers. Some settlements tried to follow their traditional “constituents” when they “fled the slums.”⁶⁵ In *Seedtime of Reform*, Clarke Chambers documents a settlement in Cleveland that moved four times within a decade in order to stay centered around its traditional neighbors.⁶⁶

Settlements that stayed in their historic neighborhoods and looked to incorporate their new African American neighbors often found it hard to attract new residents to their settlements houses as well as funding. They also risked alienating the neighbors they already served, who often refused to participate in settlement programs alongside their new African American neighbors.⁶⁷ As well, in the 1930s African American residents moved into some of the more inclusive settlements and this was an issue for the families of prospective white residents. For example, at the Henry Street Settlement, a mother refused to consent to her daughter residing at the settlement because there were African Americans’ residing there. “There is one feature of the opportunity offered her at the Henry Street Settlement which I cannot approve,” the mother wrote to the

⁶³ James Grossman, *Land of Hope: Chicago, Black Southerners, and the Great Migration* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989).

⁶⁴ Lash-Quinn, *Black Neighbors*; 9-46.

⁶⁵ Chambers, *Seedtime of Reform*, 120.

⁶⁶ Chambers, *Seedtime of Reform*, 120.

⁶⁷ Chambers, *Seedtime of Reform*, 120.

Head Resident at Henry Street, “that is residence in the same house, on equal footing with and meals with a colored worker.” “In our city, our family has always stood for fair treatment of the colored race,” she asserted, “but it is on a totally different plane from that of social equality.”⁶⁸ It is possible that the settlement’s operation as a home exacerbated the mother’s anxieties about interracial mixing.

Settlement scholars have also pointed to funding shortages as a cause for the Settlement House Movement’s decline in influence.⁶⁹ The development of community chests and problems associated with deficit funding precipitated the decline of settlements’ reform activities. During the Depression, settlements had to develop different ways to deal with funding shortages. In most cities a community chest system developed to deal with this funding shortage. With the community chest system, instead of each settlement or charity fundraising on its own, multiple organizations banded together in one large funding drive. Although this resulted in more secure funding the settlements were no longer “financially independent.”⁷⁰ The “community-wide supervisory agency,” which oversaw the raised funds, could dictate what the funds were spent on.⁷¹ Involvement of settlement houses in labor disputes and consumer advocacy could make fundraising more difficult for the supervisory agency and often the settlements were threatened with reduced budgets if they participated in this type of

⁶⁸ Deborah A. Douglas, letter to Helen Hall, 23 September 1938, Henry Street Settlement Records, Box 38, Folder 8, Social Welfare History Archives.

⁶⁹ See: Fabricant and Fisher, *Settlement Houses Under Siege*; Trolander, *Settlement Houses and the Great Depression*; Davis, *Spearheads of Reform*.

⁷⁰ Trolander, *Settlement Houses and the Great Depression*, 27.

⁷¹ Trolander, *Settlement Houses and the Great Depression*, 27.

activity.⁷² Notably, settlement houses in New York and Chicago did not adopt the community trust system. Instead, they participated in a “deficit fund system.” With this system, the settlement only received a “small proportion of its budget from a privately raised central fund” and “since this proportion was a stated percentage” the settlements, and particularly their Boards of Trustees, were left in a better position to call their own shots.⁷³

However, in many cases the Board of Trustees also limited settlement reform activities. By the 1930s most American settlement houses had developed Boards of Trustees to oversee fundraising and finances. In New York and Chicago, the deficit fund system did not seriously impinge on the power of these Boards; however, like the community chest, a board “could set the tone of the individual settlement.”⁷⁴ Boards were most often composed of wealthy donors, such as “lawyers, business men, bankers and brokers, physicians, educators and women of leisure,” and wielded a great deal of influence over settlement houses.⁷⁵ Depending on the stance of a Board, it could either be a liberal or a conservative influence. With the Hull House and Henry Street settlements, Addams and Wald were the Presidents of the Settlements Board of Trustees as well as Head Residents, which allowed them to pursue their reform activities unencumbered.⁷⁶ However, when the leadership of these settlements passed to new Head Residents the presidency of the Board of Trustees and the Head Resident

⁷² Trolander, *Settlement Houses and the Great Depression*, 61.

⁷³ Trolander, *Settlement Houses and the Great Depression*, 61.

⁷⁴ Trolander, *Settlement Houses and the Great Depression*, 57.

⁷⁵ Kennedy & Farra, *Social Settlements in New York City*, 487.

⁷⁶ Trolander, *Settlement Houses and the Great Depression*, 51.

position were not passed on to the same person and the new Head Residents were often not able to continue their reform activities if they conflicted with the Board's fundraising goals.

Significantly, the deaths of some of the more influential settlement founders, like Jane Addams and Lillian Wald, also impacted the momentum of reform activities. When these dynamic founders passed away, the settlement movement was not always able to replace them with equally vibrant personalities.⁷⁷ The reputation of the Henry Street and Hull House settlements were closely tied to the reputation of their founders. And, these founders were able to capitalize on their reputations in order to promote their activities and raise funds. A friend of Lillian Wald joked that it "cost five thousand dollars to sit next to her at dinner."⁷⁸ When Helen Hall took over from Lillian Wald in 1933, her friend teasingly asked her "How much is it going to cost me to sit next to you at dinner?" After the deaths of the original founders, the new Head Residents would have to continually negotiate between the legacy of the founders and current reform activities. And, often the vision of the founders got in the way of current reform activities and limited change.

The increased professionalization of the movement often led to a de-emphasis of the social reform aspect of the settlements. Settlement founders, like Wald and Addams, volunteered their services to their settlement houses. However, the generation that replaced these founders were often trained professionals who expected to draw a salary. The change of the "Head Resident" title reflected this increased institutionalization. When Helen Hall replaced Wald as "Head Resident" of the Henry

⁷⁷ Carson, *Settlement Folk*, 196.

⁷⁸ Fabricant and Fisher, *Settlement Houses Under Siege*, 31.

Street Settlement in 1933, she changed this title to “Head Director.” Similarly, when Charlotte Carr became the new head resident at Hull House in 1938 she changed the title from “Head Resident” to “Director.” She also accepted a paid salary for what had previously been a volunteer position, financed by wealthy patrons. Moreover, Carr replaced many of the volunteer workers at Hull House with paid workers, instigating a more business-like approach to settlement work.⁷⁹

In the 1930s the federal government largely took over reform and aid work. The government’s movement into social services was a dual edged sword for the Settlement House Movement. The movement now had to compete with newly formed government agencies that did the same work, but it also benefitted from an influx of federal funding. Before the 1930s, settlement houses were mostly reliant on private funding. However, with the New Deal, settlements benefitted from an influx of federal funding. With federal funding most settlements were able to increase their staff “nearly tenfold,” making what had previously been a private reform initiative more dependent on the federal government.⁸⁰ However, this dependence became a problem during World War II when federal funding was reshuffled towards the war cause. By 1940 the number of government-paid staff diminished substantially, and by 1943 it was down to nothing.”⁸¹ The withdrawal of government funding left these settlements in the lurch. Without federal funding many settlements were financially overextended and had to scale back

⁷⁹ Trolander, *Professionalism and Social Change*.

⁸⁰ Fabricant and Fisher, *Settlement House Under Siege*, 47.

⁸¹ Fabricant and Fisher, *Settlement House Under Siege*, 47.

on staff and reform activities.⁸² Attracting residents to replace these workers became an increasingly difficult issue.

This post World War I environment did not immediately curtail the expansion of settlement houses. The late 1920s was a fruitful and innovative time for settlement architecture, witnessing the construction of some of the largest, purpose-made settlement houses. These included the construction of a new building for New York's Lenox Hill Neighborhood and Christodora Houses, New Orleans' Kingsley House, and Minneapolis' Phyllis Wheatley Settlement House. Built in 1928, the Lenox Hill Neighborhood House was billed as "one of the largest settlement houses in the world."⁸³ The building included two gymnasiums, a swimming pool, a theatre, workshops, a cooking school, "lodge rooms, a nursery and a clinic. Also large in scale, Minneapolis' Phyllis Wheatley Settlement House was constructed in 1929 to serve the needs of a growing African American community. One of the interesting things to note about this house was its inclusion of "transient bedrooms" in its design to accommodate visiting African Americans who were barred from local hotels and boarding houses.⁸⁴

New Orleans' Kingsley House, which opened in 1925, showcased an innovative approach to its settlement architecture. Like traditional settlement houses, Kingsley House modified several existing buildings to create its new home; however, instead of using residential structures as its base structure, the settlement utilized industrial buildings, old cotton press buildings, as the structural backbone of its complex. The

⁸² Fabricant and Fisher, *Settlement House Under Siege*, 47.

⁸³ "New Lenox Hill House is Opened," *New York Times*, 15 November 1928, 22.

⁸⁴ Howard Jacob Karger, "Phyllis Wheatley House: A History of the Minneapolis Black Settlement House, 1924 to 1940," *Phylon* 47 (1st Qtr., 1986): 82.

settlement then expanded these industrial buildings with the addition of several two-story brick buildings. Notably, with their two-story gallery spaces these additions reflected regional New Orleans architectural styles rather than the English manor style that was prevalent in settlement architecture at the turn of the twentieth century.⁸⁵

Located on the Lower East Side of New York City, the Christodora House showcased the most radical change in architectural form. In 1928 the Christodora House shifted from its historic settlement house into a newly constructed settlement building. Sixteen stories high, the new Christodora House became the Settlement House Movement's first "skyscraper" settlement. Unlike many of the earlier adapted settlement structures, the new Christodora House "dominated" rather than blended into its surrounding neighborhood.⁸⁶ However, this modern architectural shell contrasted with its more traditional interiors, which remained similar to other settlement dwellings, showcasing antique furniture and wood paneling. Part of the intent of this interior design was to retain some tenuous connection to a home-like feeling in an institutional style structure.

The Christodora House also demonstrated a new approach to residency. The first five floors of the skyscraper housed the settlement activities, while the remaining floors of the skyscraper were for residency. However, the people residing in the upper stories of this settlement house were not required to engage in settlement activities and the income generated from these apartments helped to sustain the house's budget. A separate entrance and a dining room that was located on the top floor of the skyscraper

⁸⁵ Carolyn Kolb, *Kingsley House 1896-1996: A Brief History*, (New Orleans, Kingsley House, n.d.), 6-7.

⁸⁶ Alison Blunt, "The 'Skyscraper Settlement': Home and Residence at Christodora House," *Environment and Planning A* 40 (October 2006): 558.

further separated these residents from settlement activities and the surrounding neighborhoods.⁸⁷ This change in residency patterns, characterized by the example of the Christodora House, reflected a broader trend in the Settlement House Movement. Although the amount of people in residence remained consistent throughout the 1930s, these residents' relationships to the settlement changed.

In the early days of the Settlement House Movement, "the heart of residency was volunteer service to the settlement."⁸⁸ Alongside work for the settlements, a certain amount of time fraternizing with the other settlement residents was expected, such as dining with the other house members, attending periodic meetings and taking on settlement household chores. However, these requirements were less strictly enforced as settlements began to have a harder time finding residents. Rooms were often rented out for profit, without the expectation of service to the settlement, and resident meetings fell by the wayside. By the late 1930s, many settlement workers no longer lived in settlement houses. But, they still remained in close vicinity to the houses. An "average 57 percent of settlement house participants lived within one-quarter mile of the house" and "79 percent within one-half mile."⁸⁹ In many cases, communal dinners in the settlements' dining rooms were one of the last vestiges of the traditional residence concept. The consequence of this dislocation of settlement work from residency requirements was that "residence in the settlement was often little different from

⁸⁷ Another interesting aspect of the Christodora House is that it did not segregate male and female residents in separate buildings; instead, it placed male and female residents under the same roof on single sex floors. See: Blunt, "The 'Skyscraper Settlement,'" 562.

⁸⁸ Trolander, *Settlement Houses and the Great Depression*, 44.

⁸⁹ Fabricant and Fisher, *Settlement House Under Siege*, 51.

residence in a small dormitory or rooming house.”⁹⁰ It was found that this new style of residency led to the frequent conception of the Settlement house as a “plant to be managed” rather than a settlement home.⁹¹ The idea of the settlement house residents as a family and the settlement house as a home was slowly eroding.

As their status as home became more precarious, settlements clung to the material vestige of a home-like environment. Christodora’s attempts to maintain a home-like atmosphere within a more institutional setting was echoed throughout the settlement movement. For example, the Henry Street Settlement handed out memos to its residents with suggestions on how to maintain this atmosphere. “Verboten” was the “wearing of hats in the dining-room” by members of the “family,” or their guests, which was felt to invoke the atmosphere of a “restaurant” rather than a home.⁹²

As the Depression grew deeper, the innovative settlement structures built in the late 1920s quickly fizzled out. Financial difficulties in the late 1930s and 1940s made it impossible for the Christodora House to retain its skyscraper building and in the late 1940s the settlement sold this building and moved into a public housing project. Christodora’s shift into public housing facilities was, again, indicative of larger trends to come in the Settlement House Movement.

After World War II

After World War II, full time residence in settlement houses largely disappeared, settlements became progressively more institutionalized, and men gradually replaced

⁹⁰ Tolander, *Settlement Houses and the Great Depression*, 46.

⁹¹ Blunt, “The ‘Skyscraper Settlement,’” 564.

⁹² “Suggestions for Residents,” 3 December 1927, Henry Street Settlement Records, Box 37, Folder 8, Social Welfare History Archives.

women as the heads of settlement houses.⁹³ The social reform agenda of the Settlement House Movement was also undergoing a change. Despite the cut-backs of the interwar period, settlement houses managed to sustain many of their “social action efforts from the mid to the late 1940s, specifically around “public housing,” “citizen participation” and “health insurance.”⁹⁴ But in the 1950s an increasingly conservative political climate, similar to that after the First World War, made the continuance of these reform activities difficult. McCarthyism quelled social reform initiatives and also led many settlements to withdraw from “public visibility.”⁹⁵ For instance, Head Director of the Henry Street Settlement, Helen Hall, came under fire for advocating “rent control and milk cooperatives.”⁹⁶

In order to continue their reform initiatives, settlements had to be innovative. The Henry Street Settlement hired a Public Relations representative to raise funds for the settlement while Hull House rented out rooms in its vast complex.⁹⁷ And, in order to draw more workers the Hull House further relaxed its residency requirements: people working for the settlement no longer had to reside at the house or in the neighborhood. However, this relaxation of residency requirements did not extend to Hull House’s Head

⁹³ Robert Archey Woods and Albert J Kennedy, *The Settlement Horizon*, with foreword by Judith Trolander (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers, 1990), xxii.

⁹⁴ Fabricant and Fisher, *Settlement House Under Siege*, 47-48.

⁹⁵ Fabricant, *Settlement House Under Siege*, 48.

⁹⁶ Fabricant, *Settlement House Under Siege*, 49.

⁹⁷ Henry Street Settlement Records, Box 35: Public Relations, Social Welfare History Archives.

Residents. When the Head Director of Hull House, Russell Ballard, asked to move out of the Hull House settlement in 1947 the board threatened to have him dismissed.⁹⁸

By the early 1960s there was a growing uneasiness within the Settlement House Movement concerning the “trend away from congregate living” and the impact this trend could have on the movement’s approach to social reform and their role as neighborhood institutions. In 1957 the Chicago Commons’ building was sold in response to a highway demolition project, which eradicated the neighborhood that it served. The settlement relocated to a new neighborhood. The new Commons’ building was an old dairy, and as the Head Director of the commons, Lea Taylor wrote, “it was attractive and modern.”⁹⁹ However, when the Chicago Commons moved into this building they did away with a “real residence and a common dining room.” Taylor felt that “residence became a burden at the old house, and it was difficult to keep it going in any constructive way.”¹⁰⁰ However, she regretted this development and looked back to the early decades, when the settlement workers resided in the settlement houses nostalgically as “those exciting decades when the settlements had their feet on the ground and really knew what was going on in the lives of their neighbors and could help them express their own problems better than anyone could interpret them.”¹⁰¹

⁹⁸ Mary Lynn McCree Bryan and Allen Freeman Davis, *100 Years at Hull House* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), 213.

⁹⁹ Lea Taylor, letter to Helen Hall, 10 December 1957, Helen Hall Papers, Reel 13, Folder 9 Social Welfare History Archives.

¹⁰⁰ Lea Taylor, letter to Helen Hall, 16 February 1959, Helen Hall Papers, Reel 13, Folder 9 Social Welfare History Archives.

¹⁰¹ Lea Taylor, letter to Helen, 4 August 1969, Helen Hall Papers, Reel 13, Folder 9, Social Welfare History Archives.

Residency was also a concern for the Henry Street Settlement. In response to the plight of Chicago Commons, Helen Hall confided to Taylor that the “residence business is a problem” but she could not think of “some modern solution which would have some of the important values.”¹⁰² And in the late 1960s Henry Street Settlement’s Board of Trustees met to discuss their future approach to its residency program.¹⁰³ The board discussed the importance that the idea of residency held “to the founders of the settlement movement,” and how this emphasis on residency had changed over the years to the point that many of the Directors of Settlements had moved out of the settlements and into “other neighborhoods” and “even into the suburbs.”¹⁰⁴ With “few exceptions, of which Henry Street has been one,” the board determined, settlements were increasingly “drawing away from residence in the sense of a central dining room, with rooms for a staff and resident group.”¹⁰⁵ However, in terms of their own approach to residency, the board determined that they would be “reluctant” to abandon it.

For the Henry Street Settlement, the residency program represented an important tradition that had brought together a “wide variety of brilliant and distinguished people.”¹⁰⁶ And, the settlement’s Board felt that aspects of the residency program, such as the dining room, were important as a “catalyst” for change. The dining room, they asserted, provided the “opportunity to extend hospitality to guests of all kinds.” It was

¹⁰² Helen Hall, letter to Lea Taylor, 17 March 1959, Helen Hall Papers, Reel 13, Folder 9, Social Welfare History Archives.

¹⁰³ Board of Directors Meeting, “Residents at the Settlement and in the Neighborhood,” 1 September 1967, Henry Street Settlement Records, Box 37, Folder 13, Social Welfare History Archives.

¹⁰⁴ Board of Directors Meeting, “Residents at the Settlement and in the Neighborhood.”

¹⁰⁵ Board of Directors Meeting, “Residents at the Settlement and in the Neighborhood.”

¹⁰⁶ Board of Directors Meeting, “Residents at the Settlement and in the Neighborhood.”

also an important meeting space for staff members who did not live in the settlement, and, finally, dinners in the dining room were often used as a “stepping stone to further interest in the Settlement.”¹⁰⁷

Public housing further impacted the Settlement House Movement’s relationship to its architecture. Many settlements who had their “old neighbors swept away in urban-renewal plans” ended up moving from their historic buildings to be closer to their “old neighbors.”¹⁰⁸ Other settlements found their own buildings in the path of urban renewal and had to move. Some of these settlement houses chose to move into the very public housing projects that had replaced their buildings and neighborhood, as a way in which to save money and remain close to their clients. Others choose to move into public housing projects because of the deteriorating condition of their historic buildings. Settlement houses that were able to weather the storm of urban renewal with their historic buildings intact found themselves in a transformed setting. Remarking on the extent to which the world around settlements had changed, a *New York Times* article remarked in 1959, “Where the settlement house once stood in near-grandeur among the old-law tenements, now it often sits in shabby gentility amidst the antiseptic eighteen-story housing projects.”¹⁰⁹

Increasingly settlement houses choose to decentralize and become “nonprofit multiservice centers.”¹¹⁰ Without residents, the historic settlement houses had become

¹⁰⁷ Board of Directors Meeting, “Residents at the Settlement and in the Neighborhood.”

¹⁰⁸ Judith Ann Trolander, “Settlement House Movement,” in *Encyclopedia of American Urban History*, ed. David R. Goldfield (London: SAGE Publications, 2006), 714.

¹⁰⁹ Emma Harrison, “Needy Still Aided By Settlements,” *New York Times*, 26 April 1959, 82.

¹¹⁰ Trolander, *Professionalism and Social Change*, 15.

largely irrelevant and not cost effective. This decentralization often removed the ties of settlements to a particular neighborhood context, undercutting their traditional neighborhood focus. When the Hull House Settlement contemplated moving out of its historic buildings in the 1960s and decentralizing, its director at the time, Paul Jans, summarized their rationale for this shift away from a neighborhood focus, stating that the Hull House was an idea and not “bound” to a “set of buildings” or a “neighborhood.”¹¹¹

Reflecting the Settlement House Movement’s shift away from residency, the National Federation of Settlements had become the National Federation of Settlements and Neighborhood Centers in 1947 and in 1979 became the United Neighborhood Centers of America.¹¹² The word settlement was removed entirely from the title of the movements’ national organization because settling had largely disappeared. In 1978 Walt Smart director of the National Federation of Settlements was asked to comment on the movement’s dwindling emphasis on residency. “I won’t knock it where it exists,” he remarked, “but by in large you won’t get professional staffs to do that.”¹¹³

Despite this movement away from residency, an emphasis on creating aesthetically pleasing environments, and an aversion to the institutional form, continued to mark the Settlement House Movement. In 1963, the Henry Street Settlement tore down three of its old buildings and replaced them with a new modern building, called the Guttman Building. Helen Hall, who replaced Lillian Wald as Henry Street’s Head

¹¹¹ “Walls Must Not Confine It,” *Telegraph*, 16 September 1961, Hull House Collection, Box 9, Folder 51, University of Illinois Special Collections.

¹¹² Fabricant and Fisher, *Settlement Houses Under Siege*, 50.

¹¹³ Rogers Worthington, “Hardy Survivors of Settlement Era,” *Chicago Tribune*, 14 August 1978, A1.

Resident, did not want the Guttman building to “look institutional” as a result of needing to “use up every bit of ground” and because of its very “modern style.”¹¹⁴ She felt that institutional styles were “for the most part ugly” and that it was important “to keep in mind that space without a touch of style or beauty is not necessarily the best expression of respect for the people we serve.”¹¹⁵ To beautify the architecture and remove the institutional feel, Hall prevailed upon neighborhood children who, facilitated by the settlement’s art department, decorated the building with a seventy-foot tile mural, depicting a visit to the zoo.

However, by the late 1960s, the aesthetic importance of the space came to be viewed as a somewhat archaic concept. Bertram Beck who succeeded Helen Hall as Head Director of the Henry Street Settlement reflected on the “charming” way the Henry Street was furnished when he first moved in. These elegant rooms, Hall had related to him, were maintained so the neighbors could “come and see how the finer life was to be lived, now, or how life could be lived, or should be lived.” Now, Beck asserted, “the concept that you would have furnished things, let’s say with a certain elegance in order that the neighbors would be able to experience this particular kind of living ... would be viewed as somewhat patronizing, you see (almost paternalistic).”¹¹⁶

Notably, Lasch-Quinn outlines that as men took control over Settlement Houses the movement lost its “maternalist impulse.”¹¹⁷ And, there was a shift away from an

¹¹⁴ “Buildings,” n. d., 1967, Henry Street Settlement Collection, Box 13, Folder 2, Social Welfare History Archives.

¹¹⁵ “Buildings,” n. d., 1967.

¹¹⁶ Bertram Beck, interview by Greg Raynor, 14 November 1991, transcript, Henry Street Settlement Records, Box 152, Folder 4, Social Welfare History Archives.

¹¹⁷ Lasch-Quinn, *Black Neighbors*, 161.

emphasis on the settlement house as a home. Both Russell Ballard, who became Head Director of the Hull House Settlement in 1943, and Bertram Beck, who became Head Director of the Henry Street Settlement in 1967, were ambivalent about their settlements' residency requirements. Ballard petitioned to live outside of Hull House while Bertram Beck indicated when he took over at Henry Street that at some point he might want to move out the settlement.

By the 1970s residency in settlement houses had largely disappeared. The Henry Street Settlement was one of the few settlements to maintain some form of residency. But, its approach to residency was also changing. In 1970 the Henry Street Settlement began to call itself the Henry Street Urban Life Centre because the word "settlement" in the original title "was derived from the fact that the settlement pioneers moved into the poor community and settled there." And, this "settlement" was rapidly becoming extinct.¹¹⁸ By 1973 Henry Street converted part of its resident apartments into a home for teenagers without a place to live.¹¹⁹

Despite its dwindling residency, the Henry Street Settlement still claimed to draw its strength from its residency tradition. The settlement maintained that this "important settlement tradition" had "gained new vitality through the use of personnel who live in the neighborhood which helps to bridge the gap between service providers and potential consumers."¹²⁰ By the late twentieth century, the Henry Street Settlement remained an important link to the past and testament of the work that remained in the Lower East

¹¹⁸ Urban Life Center Newsletter, Spring 1973, Henry Street Settlement Records, Box 135, Folder 1, Social Welfare History Archives.

¹¹⁹ Urban Life Center Newsletter, Spring 1973.

¹²⁰ Henry Street Settlement Urban Life Center: A Guide, 1977, Henry Street Settlement Records, Box 36, Folder 4, Social Welfare History Archives, 22.

Side, drawing particular attention when visited by the likes of Betty Ford, Princess Dianna and Bill Clinton.¹²¹ It was one of the few remaining settlement houses to retain its historic buildings, some form of residency and key elements of its home-like environment, such as its dining room – the principle ingredients that were at the center of the American Settlement House Movement – and it emerged at the end of the Twentieth-First century as one of America’s most prominent settlements.

Conclusion

The Settlement House Movement’s relationship to its architecture shifted over time. Settlement houses started as compact homes, with usually two or more people occupying the same structure. The home-like environments of settlement houses were essential to their claims to moral authority as well as the status of neighbors. By the early twentieth century the settlement houses’ classification as homes grew more complex as they underwent multiple renovations and were “settled” by a large community of residents. However, the importance of maintaining a home-like atmosphere remained important.

After World War I the Settlement House Movement no longer stood at the forefront of social reform. This decline in influence was echoed in the movement’s gradual shift away from an emphasis on a home-like environment and residency. Settlements increasingly eschewed their original home-like structures in favor of institutional style buildings or public housing projects. By the 1970s residency, which was one of the most unique characteristics of the Settlement House Movement, for the

¹²¹ See: Lucinda Franks, “Mrs. Ford Dedicates Arts Center Here,” *New York Times*, 11 October 1975; John, Goldman, “A Humble Home – But Fit for a Princess,” *Los Angeles Times*, 3 February 1989, 14; Mitchell Locin, “N.Y. Gives Clinton a 2nd Chance,” *Chicago Tribune*, 14 July 1992, 10.

most part had disappeared. Without residency, the movement largely severed its connection to a home-like environment and the idea of the settlement house as a neighborhood home. Interestingly, the idea of the settlement as a home would become an issue again as historic settlement houses, such as the Hull House and Henry Street settlements, started to be considered for preservation. These preservation efforts would demonstrate that despite the movement of settlement houses away from an emphasis on architecture and place, for some stakeholders the architecture of the settlement houses, as well as their home-like environments, remained integral to the memory of the movement.

This overview of the Settlement House Movement is not a comprehensive history, but instead seeks to capture the evolving relationship between the social goals of the settlement houses and their built form. It demonstrates that the ideals of the movement were often reflected in the interior space and architecture of its settlement houses. And, it tells the story of a movement that steadily scaled back its reform agenda over the twentieth century and became increasingly disassociated with its ties to the physical structure of the settlement house. In the late 20th century, the settlement house, although it still constituted a set of activities and social concepts, was no longer tied directly to a space or object. For the most part the architecture that encased these activities held little special meaning to the movement as a whole. However, the degree to which settlements' reform agendas declined during the twentieth century, as well as the degree to which the interiors and architecture of historic settlement houses became less relevant, varies. This variation is evident in the next two chapters, which provide an

in-depth look at the Hull House and Henry Street settlements, their relationship with their architecture and their eventual preservation.

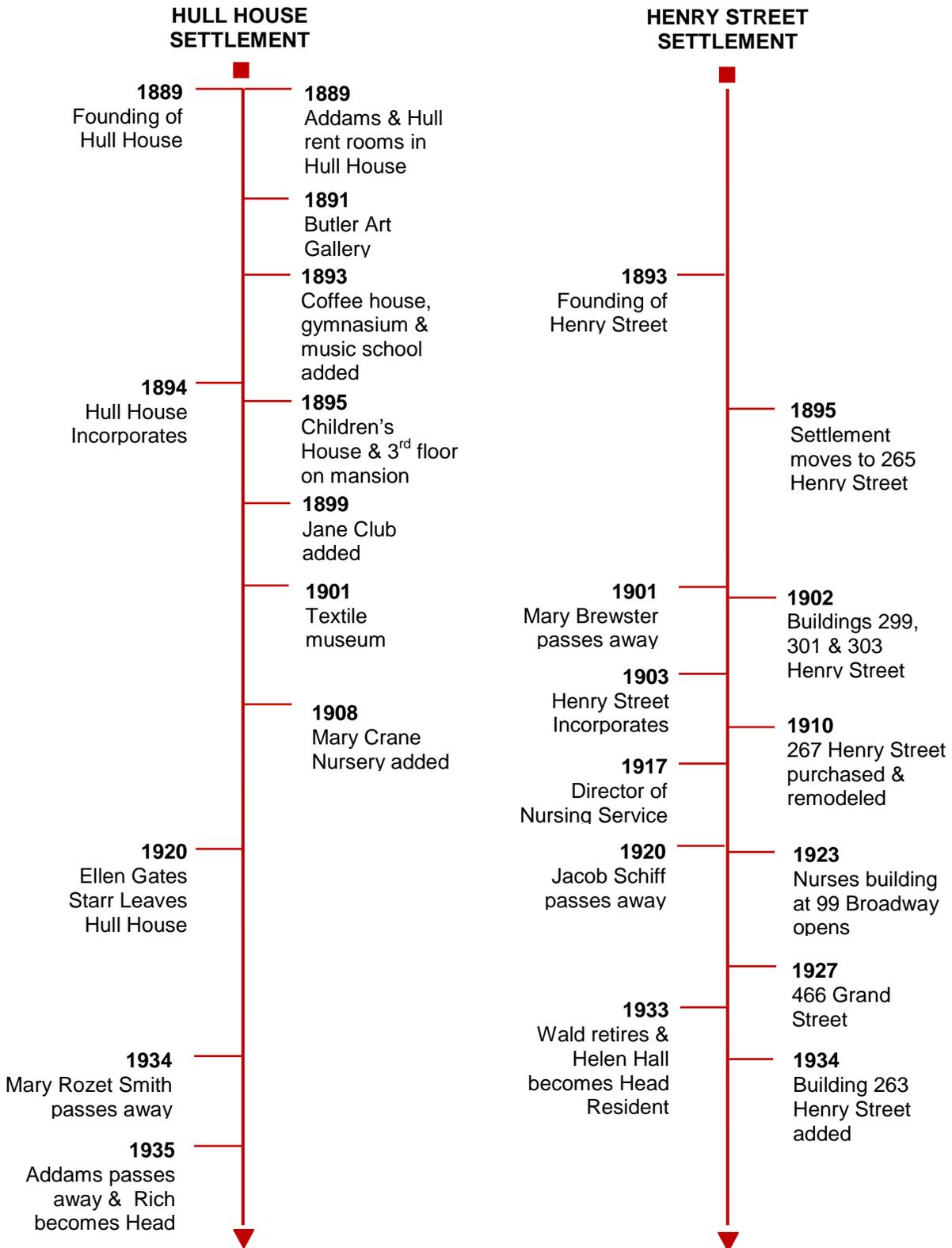


Figure 3-1. Hull House and Henry Street Settlement timelines

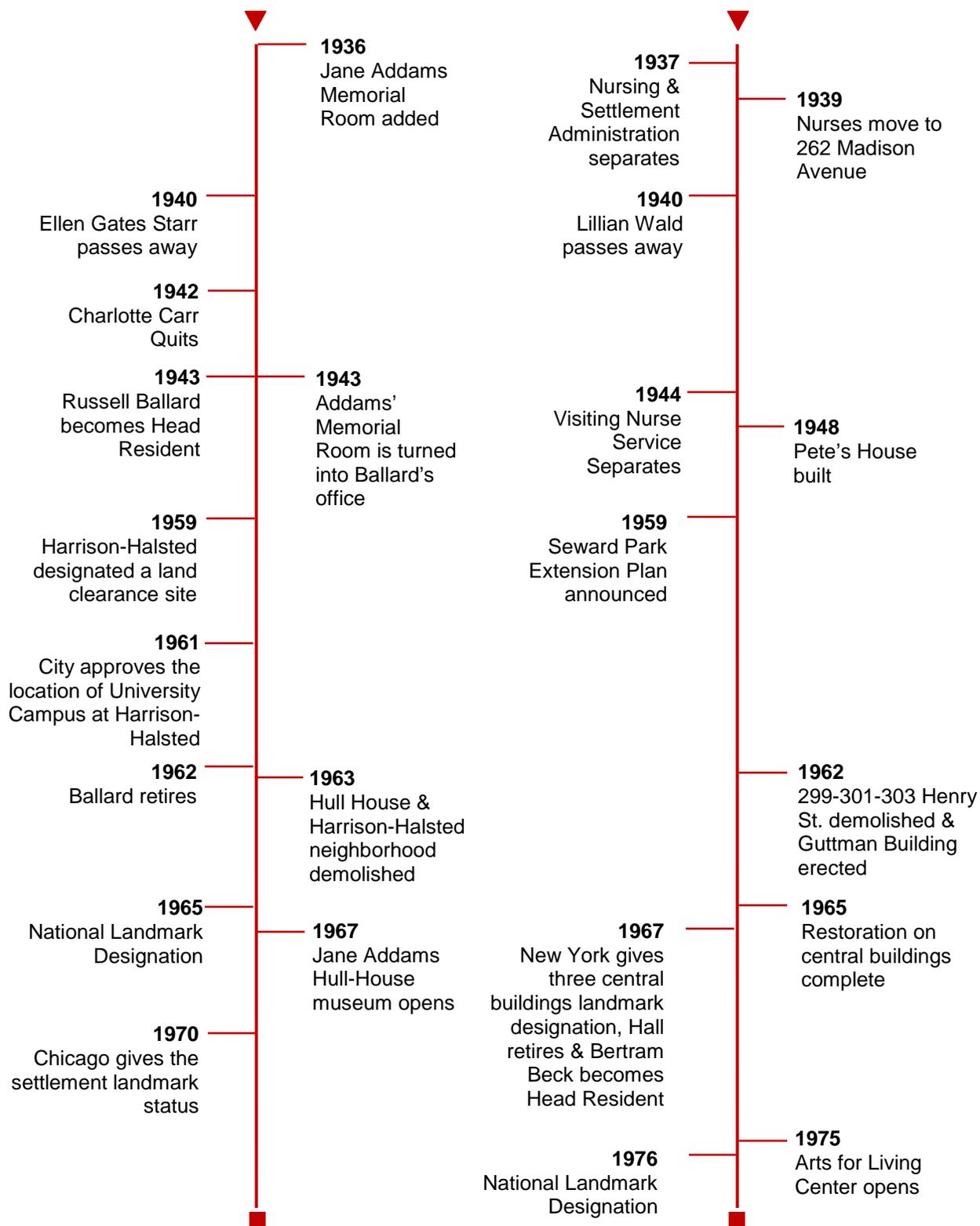


Figure 3-1. Continued

CHAPTER 4 HULL HOUSE CASE STUDY

Critical Juncture 1: Founding of Hull House

The founding of the Hull House Settlement reflected the culmination of years of friendship, a long illness and an eventful trip to Europe. Hull House's founders Jane Addams and Ellen Gates Starr first met and became good friends at Rockford Female Seminary in Illinois in 1877. However, due to financial constraints, Starr quit the institution after a year and became a school teacher in Chicago. Addams stayed on at Rockford, completing her bachelor's degree in 1882. After graduating, she briefly attended the Women's Medical College of Philadelphia, but left within a year due to a serious illness, which kept her house bound for an extended period of time. The two friends remained close, writing each other frequently about their lives, their faith and their relationship.¹ And in 1887 they toured Europe together. Inspired by their visit to Europe, which included a tour of Toynbee Hall, Addams' came up with a "scheme" to start a settlement house in Chicago.²

Addams and Starr returned to Chicago in early 1889, took an apartment and began to lay the groundwork for the opening of a new settlement house. Over the winter, they scoured the city looking for a suitable neighborhood. Starr was interested in locating the settlement house where there was a "good many Germans and French so as to utilize the French and German which girls learn [ed] in school," and Addams was

¹ Eleanor Stebner, *The Women of Hull House: A Study in Spirituality, Vocation, and Friendship* (New York: Albany State University of New York Press, 1997), 73.

² Mary Lynn Mc Cree Bryan and Allen F. Davis, eds., *100 years at Hull House* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), 1-9.

interested in locating near the “Italians in the city who have no mission.”³ The Halsted neighborhood, which they eventually settled on, was somewhat of a compromise. This neighborhood was predominantly Italian, but it also had a significant Irish, Jewish German and French Canadian population.⁴ Throughout 1889, Addams and Starr attended receptions and social events trying to generate interest in their “scheme” and recruit female college graduates to come reside with them.⁵ In a letter to her stepmother, Addams wrote that their idea had “become something of a fashionable ‘fad,’” and that for the most part wealthy, educated college women embraced the settlement idea.⁶ But she was unsure of the viability of the settlement concept, whether interest would last or actually translate into people wanting to reside in, or contribute to, their settlement.

In the spring Addams and Starr found a house to rent on the South Side of Chicago. The house was a run-down Italianate Victorian mansion, which predated the Chicago fire of 1871. Recounting her first look at the Hull House, Addams described it as “a fine old house standing well back from the street, surrounded on three sides by a broad piazza which was supported by wooden pillars of exceptionally pure Corinthian design and proportion.”⁷ An 1877 *Chicago Times* article referred to the design of the mansion as “quite imposing, being of bold Corinthian design, with a massive portico, of

³ Ellen Gates Starr, letter to her sister, 23 February 1889, Ellen Gates Starr Papers, Box 8, Folder 2, Sophia Smith Collection, Smith College.

⁴ Mary Lynn Bryan, “The First Year of Hull House, 1889-1890,” *Chicago History* 1 (1970): 100-114.

⁵ Jane Addams, letter to Anna Haldeman Addams, 9 May 1889, Jane Addams Papers, reel 2, University of Illinois at Chicago Special Collections.

⁶ Addams to Haldeman, 9 May 1889.

⁷ Jane Addams *Twenty Years at Hull House* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1939), 92.

the same order, extending on all sides.”⁸ An undertaker’s parlor and a saloon flanked each side of the Hull House.

Charles J. Hull, a wealthy Chicago real estate developer, constructed the mansion in 1856 on the outskirts of Chicago in what he speculated was to become a upscale suburb. The financial crisis of 1857 put an end to these hopes, and following the death of his son in 1866, Hull moved out of the mansion.⁹ The neighborhood surrounding the Hull House mansion soon became one of the densest immigrant neighborhoods in Chicago. After Hull vacated the mansion it became, successively, a hospital, a saloon, a tenement, a home for the elderly run by the Little Sisters of the Poor, and a finally a desk factory.¹⁰ In 1889 Charles Hull passed away, leaving his estate to his cousin Helen Culver.¹¹ Culver had helped Hull raise his children after his wife passed away in 1860 and, in addition to running his house, also ran his Chicago business office.¹²

Hull was a philanthropist who maintained a prevailing interest in the connection between poverty and vice.¹³ He donated liberally to the University of Chicago, was a founder of the Washingtonian Home, which provided a home for people suffering from

⁸ “The Little Sisters of the Poor,” *Chicago Times*, 26 August 1877, 8.

⁹ Eleanor Stebner, *The Women of Hull House*, 154.

¹⁰ See: Ellen Skerrett, “The Irish of Chicago’s Hull-House Neighborhood,” in *New Perspectives on the Irish Diaspora*, ed. Charles Fanning (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2000), 189-222.

¹¹ See: “A Millionaire’s Money: The Expected Ripple of Excitement on the Reading of Charles J. Hull’s Will,” *Chicago Inter-Ocean*, 12 February 12 1889, 3; “A Lucky Housekeeper,” *Chicago Daily News*, 20 February 1889, 1.

¹² Eleanor Stebner, *The Women of Hull House*, 152-153.

¹³ See: Charles Hull, *Reflections from a Busy Life* (Chicago: Knight & Leonard, Printers, 1881).

alcoholism, and visited the Baltimore penitentiary weekly to talk to the inmates.¹⁴ An article covering his death wrote, “the elevation of the working class was paramount” to Hull and he intended that “his fortune [be] used for their advantage.” “He did not believe in charity,” the article continued, arguing instead that “the home,” was the “only place for the elevation of mankind.”¹⁵ Whether or not Culver was abiding by Hull’s wishes when she rented the Hull House to Addams and Starr, Charles Hull’s fortune was to be used as he wished, not for charity but to create a home for elevating the working classes.

Addams and Starr did not initially have the run of the Hull House mansion, but instead rented the top floor of the house as well as the large drawing room on the north side of the main floor. The other occupant of the house was the Sherwood Desk Factory, which occupied the two parlors to the south of the mansion. As a woman of independent means, Addams took a leading role in renting Hull House and furnishing it. Over the course of the summer she had the house repaired and repainted, had her family silver and furniture moved into the mansion, and supplemented these pieces with discrete furniture purchases.¹⁶ Within the year Addams and Starr were able to occupy the entire house rent free from Miss Culver. In return Addams and Starr decided to call their house Hull-House because, as Starr wrote her sister, it was growing very inconvenient not to have a name” and “it is very convenient to have four years rent.”¹⁷

¹⁴ “C. J. Hull is Dead,” *Chicago Tribune* 14 February 1889, 1.

¹⁵ “A Millionaire's Money,” 3.

¹⁶ Jane Addams, letter to her sister, 13 September 1889, Jane Addams Papers, reel 2, University of Illinois Special Collections.

¹⁷ Ellen Gates Starr, letter to Mary Blaisdell, 18 May, 1890, Ellen Gates Starr Papers, Box 8, Folder 2, Sophia Smith Collection, Smith College; Ellen Gates Starr, letter to Mary Blaisdell, 22 May 1890, Ellen Gates Starr Papers, Box 8, Folder 2 Sophia Smith Collection, Smith College.

In September 1889, Addams and Starr moved into the Hull House mansion with their housekeeper, Mary Keyser. They were able to live in relative seclusion until the spring of 1890 when a series of Chicago newspapers picked up on their story.¹⁸ Addams and Starr wanted to distinguish themselves from other charitable organizations as well as missionary groups. As a result, their treatment in newspapers was a constant source of concern.¹⁹ Three narratives capture the voices of the newspapers, of Addams and of Starr as they related to the meaning of Hull House, the two women's roles within the settlement and the importance of creating a home-like environment.

Newspapers: "Work of Two Women"²⁰

The *Chicago Tribune* and the *Chicago Times* both reflected the response of the larger Chicago community to the founding of the Hull House Settlement. This response was overwhelmingly positive with articles focusing predominantly on Addams and Starr's homemaking activities.

"Popular error is to suppose that Chicago is too young to contain any historic homes," Eva Bright declared in a *Chicago Times* article.²¹ "For example," she continued, "look at the old Hull house." Thirty years ago it had been a "fashionable abode" in a neighborhood that was suppose to blossom into a "rendezvous of the crème de la crème." However, "as time pranced on," the family of this large house "fled in disgust before the flood of immigration that invaded the neighborhood." Occupied in turn by a lodging house, a dance hall and a "manufacturing concern," the house was "hopelessly vulgarized" and almost "robbed of all semblance to an habitation." However, two ladies appeared like "good genii[s]" and rescued the house. These ladies – "young, wealthy, cultured and refined" – went to work repairing this historic home. They hung newly varnished doors,

¹⁸ Jane Addams, letter to Alice Addams, April 1889, Jane Addams Papers, reel 2, University of Illinois at Chicago.

¹⁹ Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull House*, 15.

²⁰ Eva Bright, "Work of Two Women: Philanthropic Feminine Efforts in the Way of West-Side Moral Elevation," *Chicago Times*, 8 July 1890, 23-24.

²¹ Bright, "Work of Two Women," 23-24.

replaced the windows, threw down oriental rugs on newly polished floors, painted the hallways in a shade of terracotta and the reception room in ivory and gold. When these renovations were completed “a cord of quiet, almost severe, elegance had been struck, and the whole house joined in its harmony.” The purpose of repairing and establishing themselves in this “home” was simple – to live a “social life” among both native and foreign neighbors. There was no need to add, Bright declared, “that infinite tact and patience are required to blend such elements harmoniously.”²²

In the *Chicago Tribune*, columnist Nora Marks wrote “there was a social gathering at No. 335 South Halsted Street Saturday night that was not chronicled by the society reporter.”²³ It was a “concerto musicale” hosted by the Hull House for its Italian neighbors. The whole affair was “pretty free and easy,” with singing, conversation and lots of children named “Rosina.” Marks had never seen “anything quite like it.” Addams and Starr had invited “simple emigrant people” to their house to “spend a social evening with cultivated Americans.” It was all part of their “plan,” to settle on Halsted Street and live “in touch with the uncultivated.” Carrying out this plan had involved renting “a dilapidated old house” and putting it “in order.” Addams and Starr painted the walls shades of ivory and gold like Louis Sullivan’s Auditorium Theater in downtown Chicago, they decorated the rooms with statues of Venus and Madonna, threw down “art rugs” and brought in “porcelain-lined baths.” And in this space with its “beautiful walls” they shared “their books, pictures, learning, gentle manner, [and] esthetic taste” with the Halsted neighborhood. Already, a kindergarten was run out of the reception room as well as clubs and classes. And these two “young women” also had plans to create an art gallery, a dance hall and a space for college lectures. This “new movement,” Marks declared, “is to be greater than any charity.”²⁴

Ellen Gates Starr: A “Perfect Counterpart”²⁵

The following narrative captures the strong voice of Ellen Gates Starr as she responds to the newspaper’s portrayal of Hull-House and relates, in contrast, her vision of the purpose of Hull House.

“The article in the *Tribune* was disgustingly vulgar & horrid,” Starr wrote to her sister in May. “I suppose the ‘salon’ the gold & white walls & porcelain

²² Bright, “Work of Two Women,” 23-24.

²³ Nora Marks, “Two Women’s Work,” *Chicago Tribune*, 19 May 1890.

²⁴ Marks, “Two Women’s Work,” *Chicago Tribune*.

²⁵ Leila Bedell, “A Chicago Toynbee Hall,” *Women’s Journal* 20, 25 May 1889.

bath tubs will go for what it is worth if people have any sense,” she continued but, “Why she wanted to slap it in the face by comparing it with charity, I can’t grasp.”²⁶ To have the settlement perceived as a charity, or an institution, and herself and Jane cast as “society people” disbursing goods to the poor was the last thing Starr wanted. She had explained to the *Tribune* reporter that “We are all society people,” Halsted neighbors and settlement people alike.²⁷ Thus, settling in the Halsted neighborhood was not “queer & extraordinary,” but natural. And, Jane and she were not “sisters giving up the world or society,” or “any such sentimental nonsense.” The article could have been worse, Starr conceded, there was some solace in that Marks did not “call the neighborhood ‘slums.’”²⁸

The intent behind the settlement was simple, Starr wrote her sister earlier that year. She and Jane would rent a house, “i.e. Jane takes it & furnishes it prettily,” and we “live there naturellement.” Besides their own bedrooms they intended to “have several others” where they “desire[ed] and hope[ed] that certain young ladies” would “from time to time wish to come & abide.” After living in the houses long enough for people to “see that we don’t catch diseased & that vicious people do not destroy us or our property,” Starr hoped that there would be other “girls in the city” who would “be glad to come & stay for a while & learn to know the people & understand them and their ways of life.” “I pity girls so,” Starr wrote her sister, “Especially rich girls who have nothing in the world to do.” These women are “sick & tired of society” and “doing something for her less fortunate sisters” would be more for her “benefit” than “the other class.” Although she embraced the settlement idea, Starr was “unwilling to let people suppose” that she “would have ever worked it out.”²⁹ Jane had “done the thinking” on her own, the ideas rising “out of her own experience and ill health.” But, Starr wrote, “she resents my putting myself out of it in any way.”³⁰

Jane Addams: “The Moving Spirit in this Novel”³¹

The idea for Hull House grew out Addams’ personal experiences and it provided her, individually, with a way to be productive and connect with the world around her. This

²⁶ Starr to Blaisdell, 18 May 1890.

²⁷ Marks, “Two Women’s Work.”

²⁸ Ellen Gates Starr, letter to Mary Blaisdell, 1 April 1889, Ellen Gates Starr Papers, Box 8, Folder 2, The Sophia Smith Collection, Smith College.

²⁹ Starr to Blaisdell, 1 April 1889.

³⁰ Starr to Blaisdell, 1 April 1889.

³¹ Leila Bedell, “A Chicago Toynbee Hall,” *Women’s Journal* 20, 25 May 1889.

next narrative shifts over time from a spotlight on the development of her “scheme” to its manifestation in the Hull House.

“I positively feel my callers peering into my face to detect ‘spirituality,’” Addams complained to Ellen after the spate of articles had been released.³² One newspaper had written that a person “cannot spend much time in her presence without wondering by what processes she has attained to such remarkable growth of the soul.”³³ Addams knew too well the process that had led her to the founding of Hull House and spirituality had little to do with it. She had floundered for years after graduating from Rockport. A “spinal difficulty” had kept her from pursuing her studies in medicine and left her “bound to a bed” for six months. For two years after this home rest, she had traveled Europe, but illness continued to drain her energy and a “deep depression” as well as a “sense of failure” and “futility” followed her. Back in America this “nervous depression” and “sense of maladjustment” grew worse as Jane struggled to adjust herself to society life, with its accompanying “leisure and idleness.” In 1887 she embarked on a second trip to Europe where she encountered London’s Toynbee Hall. The classes and libraries of Toynbee Hall seemed “perfectly ideal” with their freedom from “professional doing good” and “unaffected” productivity. Resolved to start a similar “scheme” in Chicago, Addams had solicited the help of Ellen. Her interlude of “passive receptivity had come to an end.”³⁴

It was hard to believe that here, a year later, her “scheme” was “progressing at an astonishing rate.” She and Ellen had found a house on the south side of Chicago. The house was “a charming old thing” and they were “very fond of it.”³⁵ They had placed pictures from their European travels on the walls, and carefully chosen furniture for its “enduring quality.”³⁶ “Our pictures look very nice,” she wrote her sister, “and what furniture I bought was all handsome.” To her step-mother she related Ellen’s mother’s visit to the house, “We were so amused this morning by her wistful sighs that she did wish this beautiful old house was in a better neighborhood, without reflecting that if it were we would not be in it.”³⁷ From this “hospitable old

³² Jane Addams, letter to Ellen Gates Starr, 3 May 1889, Jane Addams Papers, Reel 2, University of Illinois at Chicago Special Collections.

³³ Bedell, “A Chicago Toynbee Hall,” *Women’s Journal*, 162.

³⁴ Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull House*, 88.

³⁵ Jane Addams, letter to her sister, April 1889, Jane Addams Papers, Reel 2, University of Illinois at Chicago Special Collections.

³⁶ Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull House*, 94.

³⁷ Jane Addams, letter to her Stepmother, June 1890, Jane Addams Papers, Reel 2, University of Illinois at Chicago Special Collections.

house,” they started a boy’s and a girl’s club, a drawing class and a daycare. The past winter was “of course ... more or less experimental,” she wrote, but the coming year, with the run of the entire house, they would be “ready to do things more extensively.”³⁸ Already they had started to make contact with the shop girls in the neighborhood.

Afterwards: “A Home on Halsted Street”

These founding narratives demonstrate a number of important issues that would mark the development of the Hull House Settlement over the next several decades. First, although the founding of the settlement was the “work of two women,” Addams had personal ownership over the settlement “scheme” and Starr clearly recognized this. In the years following the founding Addams would increasingly take a leadership position in the running of the settlement. Second, Starr and Addams were very image conscious. They had a clear vision of what they did and did not want to look like and be perceived as. And, there was sometimes a disjuncture between how they perceived themselves and how they were cast in the newspapers. Finally, the home-like environments of Hull House were crucial to the mission of the settlement.

Addams and Starr created interiors that reflected their service in the Halsted neighborhood. Intent on living in the neighborhood in the same manner that they would live anywhere else in the city, they furnished Hull House as a middle-class home. They did not intend to cut themselves off from the things of the flesh,” but, rather to “live there & get acquainted with the people.”³⁹ Local newspapers quickly picked up on this connection between the home-like interiors of the house and its social message.

Chicago Times reporter, Eva Bright saw parallels between the “harmonious interiors” of

³⁸ Jane Addams, letter to her Stepbrother, 24 November 1889, Jane Addams Papers, Reel 2, University of Illinois at Chicago Special Collections.

³⁹ Starr to Blaisdell, 1 April 1889.

Hull House and the “harmonious relations” the women were trying to create between the classes.⁴⁰ And, Chicago Tribune reporter Nora Marks drew parallels between Addams and Starr’s cultivation of the Hull House Mansion and their cultivation of the Halsted neighborhood.

Great care went into the furnishing and decorating of the interior of the Hull House mansion to make it home-like. Addams and Starr painted the walls of the upstairs dining room in a “strong terra cotta” color while the ceiling was painted in a lighter tint of the same color. The terracotta wall color was also used to paint a border around the perimeter of the room’s wood floors. In the center of this room the women placed a Wilton rug, which was a woven wool carpet produced in Britain. An old oak sideboard was placed against one wall and an oak table was centered on the rug. In the other rooms of the house Addams and Starr scraped “ugly paint off the mellow white marble fireplaces” and “off the rope-like carving around the tall doors and windows.”⁴¹ Writing to her sister, Addams referred to the dining room as “one of the prettiest I ever saw” and the other rooms of the mansion as “just as distinguished looking and artistic as can be.”⁴²

In *Twenty Years at Hull House*, Addams states that with Starr, she “furnished the house as we would have furnished it were it in another part of the city.”⁴³ And from the descriptions of the interiors, they were in accordance with contemporary approaches to

⁴⁰ Bright, “Work of Two Women.”

⁴¹ Winifred Wise, “Jane Addams of Hull House,” in *These Wonderful People: Intimate Moments in Their Lives*, ed. Marjorie Barrows (Chicago: Consolidated Book Publishers, 1947), 282-283.

⁴² Jane Addams, letter to sister, n.d., Jane Addams Papers, Reel 2, University of Illinois at Chicago Special Collections.

⁴³ Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull House*, 94.

the design of interiors, particularly the Colonial Revival and Arts and Crafts styles, which had become increasingly popular since appearing in Philadelphia's Centennial Exhibition in 1876. These two styles emphasized the importance of "simplification over excess, honesty over fakery, and handcrafted objects over mass-produced."⁴⁴ And, they both referenced what was believed to be a simpler more democratic past, before industrialization, urbanization and mass immigration.⁴⁵ Addams and Starr's use of simple mission-style furniture, such as the oak sideboard and table, referenced the clean, moral living that the Colonial style promoted. And, the women's stripping of the fireplaces and woodwork referenced the Arts and Crafts style and its emphasis on honesty of materials. The easy-to-clean floor treatment, which eschewed wall-to-wall carpeting in favor of a painted floor border and Wilton rug, also reflected the reform agenda of these styles. This agenda was echoed in the use of simple white curtains rather than ornate, heavy window treatments, which harbored dirt and were hard to clean.⁴⁶

For Addams and Starr, the Hull House mansion was their home and the settlement's growing group of residents was their family. By 1894 the Hull House family had fifteen members, including two male residents who lived across the street and by 1895 there were twenty residents. The early settlement residents were predominantly college educated single white females.⁴⁷ Julia Lathrop was one of the first women to

⁴⁴ Gail Winkler and Roger W. Moss, *Victorian Interior Decoration* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1986), 183.

⁴⁵ Cohen, 754.

⁴⁶ Winkler and Moss, *Victorian Interior Decoration*, 164.

⁴⁷ Eleanor Stebner, *The Women of Hull House*, 107-108.

move in with Addams and Starr. Lathrop was a graduate from Rockford Seminary and would reside at the settlement for twenty years. Florence Kelly, a graduate of Cornell, moved into the settlement in 1891. She lived at the settlement for eight years before transferring to the Henry Street Settlement in 1899. Alice Hamilton joined the Hull House Settlement in 1897 and lived there for more than twenty years. She had a medical degree from the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. Grace Abbot and Edith Abbot were two more notable Hull House residents. These two sisters, graduates of the University of Nebraska, moved into Hull House in 1908. Edith Abbot would live at the settlement for more than eighteen years while Grace Abbot resided at the settlement for nine years.⁴⁸

A long-term community of associates and patrons also formed around the Hull House Settlement. Helen Culver, who had donated the Hull House mansion to Addams and Starr, remained closely involved with the financing and running of the settlement over the course of her lifetime. Mary Rozet Smith, a wealthy socialite, became involved with the settlements' club work in 1890, when she was in her early twenties. She also used her family connections to help raise money for the settlement. Smith remained a part of settlement life at Hull House until her death in 1934. Wealthy philanthropist Louise De Koven Bowen became associated with the Hull House in 1893. Like Smith, she not only helped finance the settlement, but played a major role in its club work. Bowen remained a part of the settlement for over forty years. Notably, none of these women ever resided at the settlement house.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ See: Stebner, *The Women of Hull House*, 105-144; Bryan and Davis, eds., *100 Years at Hull House*, 124.

⁴⁹ Stebner, *The Women of Hull House*, 145-182.

Although Addams and Starr wanted to keep their settlement informal, autonomous and home-like as opposed to appearing like an institution, the settlement incorporated in 1895. Culver instigated the settlement's incorporation. She offered Addams the free use of the land the settlement stood on for twenty years if Addams incorporated. The Hull House Settlement incorporated and formed a Board of Trustees. Culver, Smith and Alan Pond, the settlement's architect, were on this Board of Trustees. And Bowen joined the board in 1896. Addams was the president of the board and would remain so until her death in 1935. No other Hull House residents, including Starr, were represented on the board. The board also had no neighborhood representation.⁵⁰

Unlike Toynbee Hall, "which retained its original form as a kind of exemplary gentleman's house" long after its founding, the Hull House quickly outgrew its original proportions.⁵¹ Addams and Starr's compact Italianate house expanded rapidly in the first twenty years after the founding of the settlement and its label as a 'home' became more precarious as it grew. The mansion started as a two level single-family home, showcasing a simple hall plan layout where a central hall divided four rooms on the first floor. By 1907 the Hull House Settlement had multiplied into a mixed use 13-building complex that enveloped the original building, and covered half a city block, including a nearby playground. Among its accomplishments, the Hull House complex brought to the neighborhood the first public baths, a public playground, a public kitchen, college extension courses, a public swimming pool, and a public gymnasium.

⁵⁰ See: Muncy, *Creating a Female Dominion in American Reform 1890-1935*, 14; Stebner, *The Women of Hull House*, 147.

⁵¹ Szuberla, "Three Chicago Settlements," 118.

Headed by two brothers who regularly lectured at Hull House, the architecture firm Pond and Pond built the additions to Hull House.⁵² In place of the saloon and funeral home, the architects erected the Butler Art Gallery in 1891 and a coffee house, gymnasium and music studio in 1893.⁵³ In 1895 the architects added a Children's House and in 1899 they built a more "elaborate" coffee house and gymnasium as well as the Jane Club for women.⁵⁴ They added a textile museum and shop in 1901 and, finally, the Mary Crane Nursery in 1908. These "brick and mortar" buildings, Addams claimed, "made visible to the world" the goals of the Hull House Settlement. They "stated to Chicago that education and recreation ought to be extended to the immigrants."⁵⁵

In 1895 a third story was also added to the original Hull House mansion to provide more "chambers" for female residents. This set off a series of renovations on the interior of the mansion. The second floor dining room was converted into a library for the residents and the kitchen and backstairs area became the new dining room. This new dining room could be accessed, and served from, the coffee house, which joined up to the back of the Hull House mansion. The wall separating the staircase from the original reception/drawing room on the first floor of the mansion was almost entirely removed, creating a large reception hall, which provided access to the Auditorium and Children's House located on the north side of the Hull House mansion. The rooms on

⁵² Szuberla, "Three Chicago Settlements."

⁵³ Note: The Butler Art Gallery had revolving exhibits, which showcased the "best" paintings that Chicago could "afford". These included paintings of "Dutch interiors" and "European country scenes," including the art work of French realist Jean-Baptist-Camille Corot and English Victorian painter George Frederick Watts. See: Jane Addams, "Hull House Chicago: An Effort Toward Social Democracy," *The Forum* 14 (September, 1892): 14.

⁵⁴ The Jane Club was a cooperative living residence for working women.

⁵⁵ Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull House*, 150.

the south side of the mansion's first floor contained a parlor, library and office.⁵⁶ After touring the Hull House Settlement in 1898 social activist Beatrice Webb described the main floor of the Hull House mansion as "one continuous passage leading nowhere in particular."⁵⁷

The architecture of the exterior of these buildings showcased "tripartite windows, fan-lights, cupolas (above Tudor gabling), bricked-in quoins, and pedimented doorways and dormers," which referenced Toyndee Hall and its use of the English manner style. Similar to Toyndee Hall's quadrangle layout Hull House also had a courtyard. However, unlike Toyndee's inverted courtyard, Hull House's courtyard opened up onto the streets and the neighborhood.⁵⁸ In 1897 Dorothea Moore described the Hull House mansion as "almost submerged."⁵⁹ Flanked by the new Children's building, and a lecture hall, and topped off with a third floor addition, only "the long windows and wide doorway" hinted at the Hull House's original "aspect."⁶⁰ Moore pointed to the settlement's "few fortunate open spaces," as the only thing keeping the Hull House from "the dread likeness to an institution."⁶¹ The idea of Hull House, hinted through its sizable proportions, as an institution was compounded in 1895 with its incorporation as the Hull House Association.

⁵⁶ Allen B. Pond, "The 'Settlement House,'" *The Brickbuilder* 11 (September 1902): 178-185.

⁵⁷ Beatrice Webb, *Beatrice Webb's American Diary*, 1898, ed. David A. Shannon (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1963), 107-109.

⁵⁸ Szuberlia, "Three Chicago Settlements," 120.

⁵⁹ Dorothea Moore, "A Day at Hull-House," *American Journal of Sociology* 2 (March 1897): 629-42.

⁶⁰ Moore, "A Day at Hull-House," 629-42.

⁶¹ Moore, "A Day at Hull-House," 629-42.

Notably, the home-like interiors of these additions capitalized on the craftsman style referenced in Addams and Starr's original furnishing of the Hull House mansion. Especially evident was an emphasis on maintaining a truth to materials. The interior walls of the coffee house and Auditorium were "a dull-red pressed brick" and "the ceiling of the coffee room" was "formed by the actual tile arches that support[ed] the second floor."⁶² These tiles, which were "washed and treated to a single coat of boiled oil," Allen Pond claimed, showcased "the possibilities of the material now universally hidden by plaster."⁶³ With these rooms, Pond asserted, the interior quality was derived from "the fact that the room is structurally what it seems to be, and that for the most part all charm of color and of texture proceeds directly from the actual structural material."⁶⁴

"Noble Woman who Founded and Manages Hull House"⁶⁵

Addams very quickly became the leader of the Hull House Settlement. A great part of this had to do with her personal wealth. When Starr and she first started the settlement, Addams used her income to not only fund the leasing of the house, but to support the work of the first few Hull House residents. When the settlement incorporated, she became President of the Board of Trustees and was the residents'

⁶²George M. R. Twose, "The Coffee-Room at Hull House," *The House Beautiful* VII (January 1900): 107-9.

⁶³ Twose, "The Coffee-Room at Hull House," 107-9.

⁶⁴Twose, "The Coffee-Room at Hull House," 107-9.

⁶⁵ Woman and Home: Noble Woman Who Founded and Manages Hull House," reprint of a *Chicago Tribune* article from the Binghamton, New York Republican, 7[?] October, 1895, Hull-House Association Records, Hull-House Scrapbook 3, Folder 508, University of Illinois at Chicago Special Collections.

sole representative on the Board. Addams also presided over the household meals and the divvying up of settlement tasks.⁶⁶

As the Hull House Settlement grew the figure of Addams became more connected with the image of the settlement, until it was almost impossible to associate one without the other. As early as the late 1890s, Hull House was no longer looked upon as “Two Women’s Work,” but, instead represented the work of Addams. In 1895 a newspaper article stated that “the great work of Hull House is the result of the gradual development of a great purpose in the mind of Miss Addams.” “She alone, the article claimed, “is the soul and guiding spirit of this social settlement.”⁶⁷ Addams was commonly referred to as the “Angel of Hull House” or “Saint Jane,” and neighbors and friends began to refer to Hull House as the place “where Miss Addams lives.”⁶⁸ In 1898, upon encountering Hull House, socialist Beatrice Webb wrote that it was Addams who had “made Hull House” and “created whatever spirit of reform exists in Chicago.”⁶⁹ And, Hull House resident Francis Hackett wrote of Hull House’s abundant “quality of goodness, of intelligence, of decent conscience,” which “renewed itself constantly from Miss Addams as a fountain is renewed.”⁷⁰ The publishing of Addams’ book, *Twenty*

⁶⁶ As the settlement expanded, Addams could not carry the burden of all the costs herself and she recruited wealthy donors to take over this task. See: Muncy, *Creating a Female Dominion in American Reform 1890-1935*, 17-18.

⁶⁷ “Woman and Home: Noble Woman Who Founded and Manages Hull House,” 7 October, 1895.

⁶⁸ See: Dorthea Moore, “A Day at Hull-House.”; and Judith Bloom Fradin & Dennis B. Fradin, *Jane Addams: Champion of Democracy* (New York: Clarion Books, 2006), 95.

⁶⁹ Beatrice Webb, *Beatrice Webb’s American Diary, 1898*, ed. Davide A. Shannon (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1963), 107-109.

⁷⁰ Francis Hackett, “Hull House,” *Survey Magazine*, June 1925.

Years at Hull House, in 1910 also served to conflate this connection between her and the settlement.

Starr was a more divisive figure. Hamilton wrote to her sister of Starr's sometimes-difficult personality: "Miss Starr is picketing and passionately longing to be arrested. I do hope it will be over when I get there, Miss Starr is so difficult when she is striking."⁷¹ Mary Kenney, another Hull House resident, recounted that when she first met Starr, she felt like she was mocking her so she gave her a "cold stare" and, afterwards, tried to "ignore" her.⁷² Kenney soon "learned to love" Starr despite this first impression. Although, she mentions that Starr often "took" her "in hand" and "wasn't afraid to tell" her "just what she thought."⁷³

Over the first three decades of Hull House's founding Starr became increasingly disassociated with Hull House. She was not financially independent like Addams and struggled to support herself with teaching and lecturing, which often took her away from the settlement house. She was also more eccentric in dress and person than Addams. For instance, she went through a phase where she only wore lilac and was frequently seen wearing a raincoat she inherited from a neighborhood man.⁷⁴ Starr was also outspoken in her social beliefs and as early as the 1890s she actively supported labor unions. Where Addams was commonly referred to as the "Angel of Hull House," Starr became known as the "Angel of the Strikers." She was not afraid to walk the picket line

⁷¹ Alice Hamilton, Letter to Agnes Hamilton, 1 March 1914, quoted in Barbara Sicherman, *Alice Hamilton, a Life in Letters* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984), 174.

⁷² Mary Kenney quoted in Bryan and Davis, eds., *100 Years at Hull-House*, 22.

⁷³ Mary Kenney quoted in Bryan and Davis, eds., *100 Years at Hull-House*, 22.

⁷⁴ Ellen Gates Starr, Mary Jo Deegan and Ana-Maria Wahl, *On Art, Labor, and Religion* (New Brunswick: USA Transaction Publishers, 2003), 10.

and was arrested several times for picketing in the early 1900s.⁷⁵ In 1916 Starr officially joined the Socialist Labor Party.

Alongside her interest in labor issues, Starr was also drawn to religion and flirted with converting with Catholicism. In the early 1900s she started to attend Catholic Churches in the Hull House neighborhood. Her open endorsement of socialism and interest in Catholicism did not endear her to the other settlement residents.⁷⁶ As well, these activities broadened a widening gap between Starr and Addams. The two women had already started to drift apart in the first decade of the founding of the settlement largely due to the formation of a close relation between Addams and one of the settlement's patrons, Mary Rozet Smith.⁷⁷

In 1920 Starr converted to Catholicism and, after more than three decades of residency, she moved out of Hull House. Subsequently, she joined a convent and was later accepted into the Benedictine religious order of nuns.⁷⁸ She regularly visited the Hull House Settlement until 1928 when a serious surgical operation severely limited her movements.⁷⁹ She passed away in 1940 alone, in seclusion and poverty. Her death went virtually unnoticed by the Chicago public.

In *Twenty Years at Hull House*, Addams expresses her desire that Hull House be “swallowed up and digested – to disappear into the bulk of people.”⁸⁰ This desire was

⁷⁵ Starr, Deegan & Wahl, *On Art, Labor & Religion*, 2.

⁷⁶ Stebnor, *The Women of Hull House*, 92.

⁷⁷ Stebnor, *The Women of Hull House*, 158.

⁷⁸ Stebnor, *The Women of Hull House*, 91-92.

⁷⁹ Starr, Deegan & Wahl, *On Art, Labor & Religion*, 16.

⁸⁰ Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull House*, 309.

never fulfilled. At the end of twenty years Hull House stood out against its tenement neighborhood, much more than it ever had as a mansion. As one resident commented, “By their size and contrast to the neighborhood, the buildings declared Hull-House to be separate from the Community.”⁸¹ Addams’ reputation had grown alongside the mansion and it stood out not only in Chicago but also on a national and international stage. And when Addams passed away in 1935, her death did not go unnoticed but was publicized across the world. “She is not a part of Hull House,” stated a resident, “she is Hull House” and that is why “Hull House has never been an institution” but “something more personal.”⁸²

Within the first twenty years of the founding of the Hull House Settlement, both its architecture and its mission became inseparable from the figure of Jane Addams. Although she resided at the settlement for roughly three decades and outlived Addams, popular interpretation of the site quickly marginalized the role of Ellen Gates Starr. This marginalization started with the founding of the settlement, and Starr, herself, played a role in it. She lionized Addams and from the settlement’s earliest days placed the founding of the settlement at Addams feet. Also, from the very beginning Starr’s, financial status placed her in the background while Addams’ wealth placed her in a leadership role. This played out in the physical environment of the settlement home. Addams’ heirloom silverware and furniture decorated the home, and she supplemented these items with furniture purchases out of her own pocket. By virtue of its material culture, Addams physical occupation of the space was more complete than Starr’s;

⁸¹ Szuberlia, “Three Chicago Settlements,” 123.

⁸² “Life at Hull House Goes Peacefully on as Founder Passes,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 22 May 1935, 4.

Addams was mistress of the Hull House. She made the settlement a home, presiding over the dinners and residency. She also was the president of the settlement as an institution. The success of the settlement—as a home and an institution—hinged on the work and reputation of Jane Addams. In fact, when Addams passed in 1935, it was unclear if the settlement would survive without her. Before moving to this next section, it is interesting to note that in many ways Starr fulfilled the mission of the settlement much more than Addams. She was able to “disappear within the bulk of people.” She truly became a part of the neighborhood, attending the same churches and walking the same picket lines as her neighbors. The next critical juncture will explore the confusion that followed in the wake of Addams’ death in greater detail.

Critical Junction 2: Transition to New Head Resident

On May 21st 1935, Jane Addams passed away from surgical complications. The next day her body laid in wake in the Hull House Settlements’ dining room. Tearful Hull House residents kept vigil that evening, and on May 23rd the settlement held funeral rites for Addams in Hull House’s courtyard. Halsted neighbors shrouded their businesses in purple ribbons and thousands of people lined the streets to hear the amplified services. The mood was somber. “She gave so much. We will never see her like again,” one man stated to the *Chicago Tribune*.⁸³ On May 31st, 1935 the directors of the Hull House Settlement announced the establishment of the Jane Addams Memorial Fund to help the settlement “carry on the work on its present scale.”⁸⁴ This fund was to be a living memorial to Addams. Instead of erecting a monument to

⁸³ “Thongs Mourn Jane Addams at Hull House,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 23 May 1935, 9

⁸⁴ “Jane Addams Fund to Aid Hull-House,” *New York Times*, 31 May 1935, 13.

commemorate Addams, "The trustees decided that no more fitting memorial could be raised than Hull House itself."⁸⁵

Until her death Addams held the position of Head Resident of Hull House as well as President of its Board of Trustees. Her death left these positions vacant. And, Addams had not named anyone to succeed her. After Addams' death, Louise deKoven Bowen took over as president of the Board of Trustees in 1935. However, the position of Head Resident was not so easily filled. Prior to her death Addams had separately approached Hull House residents, Alice Hamilton, Grace Abbot and Adena Rich about the possibility of any of them taking over in the event of her death. All three of these women had turned her down.

After Addams' death forty-seven of Hull House's residents petitioned the Board to have Alice Hamilton take over Addams' position as Head Resident. But, Hamilton turned down the position. To Grace Abbot she wrote, "I am too old ... and I have not the moral courage."⁸⁶ To her cousin Agnes Hamilton she wrote, "The residents are lost and panicky and want one of the old guard whom they can trust to cling to old ways and do nothing new and so they turn to me because that is just the sort of person I am, but it is not what Hull-House needs and I will not."⁸⁷ Personally, Hamilton wanted Grace Abbot to take over the position of head resident and she had written Abbot in this vein before Addams' death:

You are the only person I can think of in this wide world who could do it ...
Hull-House must not be left to evaporate into a tasteless colorless

⁸⁵ "Jane Addams Fund to Aid Hull-House," 13.

⁸⁶ Barbara Sicherman, *Alice Hamilton: A Life in Letters* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2003), 353-354.

⁸⁷ Sicherman, *Alice Hamilton*, 355.

institution, going on more and more slowly as its moving power dies away. You could make it grow, change with the changing times, not keep on doing things because that is the way Miss Addams always did. Nothing is more contrary to her ideas than that, “the dead hand,” she would call it.⁸⁸

The choice of Head Resident also absorbed the larger Settlement Community. Lea Taylor, head of the Chicago Commons and an active member of the Chicago Federation of Settlements, thought that Colorado labor activist and businesswomen Josephine Roche was a good fit. “Nothing definitely has happened about Hull House,” she wrote Henry Street’s Head Director Helen Hall, “We are hoping Hull House can ride along with committee management for a bit ... what do you think of Josephine Roche eventually?” In response, Helen Hall proposed Frank McCullough because “a man might have a better time than a woman stepping into that situation.”⁸⁹

But, the Board did not go with either of these suggestions and instead, bowed to a petition of the Hull House residents to have Adena Rich elected as Head Resident. Rich had lived on and off at Hull House for 15 years and the Hull House residents’ felt that she would “represent Hull-House with dignity and effectiveness in public, and in the intimate domestic relations of this family” and “carry on the fine traditions of Miss Addams in maintaining harmony and cooperation among the residents, in making Hull-House a pleasant and inspiring place to live.”⁹⁰ Rich accepted the position and became Head Resident of Hull House on October 1, 1935. However, tensions soon arose between Rich and the President of the Board of Trustees, Louise Bowen.

⁸⁸ Sicherman, *Alice Hamilton*, 353-354.

⁸⁹ Helen Hall, letter to Lea Taylor, 8 July 1935, Helen Hall Helen Hall Papers, Box 13, Folder 9, Social Welfare History Archives.

⁹⁰ Bryan and Davis, eds., *100 Years at Hull House*, 216.

Addams' death fractured the leadership of Hull House. Where there was previously one woman at the helm for the better part of five decades, now there were two women. And, unlike Addams and Starr who at the founding of the Hull House Settlement shared complimentary ideas of its purpose, these two women had different ideas of what the Hull House had been, and where, based on this past, the House should go next. Both Bowen and Rich called upon on the memory of Addams to validate their vision for Hull House. In 1935 Bowen wrote Rich that "Miss Addams death had changed everything."⁹¹ And, Rich responded that "none of us wish to face the changes" that Addams absence would bring.⁹² In this moment of civility, Bowen and Rich struck on a truism – Addams' death was something that no one wanted to face, and over the next eight years this refusal would lead to, somewhat desperate, attempts to grasp onto and preserve the memory of Addams in the running of the Settlement and its house. Three women were at the forefront of this struggle: Louise deKoven Bowen, Adena Rich, and Rich's replacement, Charlotte Carr.

Louise deKoven Bowen: An "Intimate Friend" and Business Woman

Bowen struggled to steer Hull House after Addams' passing. The following narrative captures her concern about the future direction of the settlement both as an intimate friend of the settlement and one of its long term benefactors.

"I just feel as if Hull-House had been dumped on my lap," Bowen wrote Ellen Gates Starr in 1935.⁹³ Addams' had passed away two weeks earlier and Bowen was elected President of Hull Houses' Board of Trustees. "Jane

⁹¹ Louise deKoven Bowen, Letter to Adena Rich, 28 June 1935, Adena Rich Papers, Box 1, Folder 6, University of Illinois at Chicago Special Collections.

⁹² Adena Rich Miller, letter to Louise deKoven Bowen, 9 June 1935, Adena Miller Rich Papers, Box 1, Folder 6, University of Illinois Special Collections.

⁹³ Louise deKoven Bowen quoted in Bryan and Davis, eds., *100 Years at Hull-House*, 216.

had her finger so on all the details,” she continued, “so much so that many of us did not even know what was going on.”⁹⁴ Now as President of the Board of Trustees everyone looked to her for guidance. An upper-class Chicagoan, Bowen was a benefactress of the Hull House Settlement for three decades. However, her relationship with Hull House was much more involved than that of a patron. Alongside donating funds, she had acted as president of Hull House Women’s Club and treasurer of the settlement for many years prior to Addams’ death. Bowen was also Addams’ “intimate friend for many years” and Addams had lived at Bowen’s house for five years prior to her death. From these years of friendship, Bowen felt she had developed a pretty clear picture of what Hull House meant to Addams. “Among all Miss Addams’s far-flung interests, Bowen upheld “Hull House was closest to her heart and she was the heart of Hull House.”⁹⁵ Now Hull House had lost Miss Addams and it had fallen onto her to keep the settlement going in the wake of this loss. When the residents petitioned the Board to have long term resident Adena Miller Rich named Head Resident, Bowen had her reservations. She and Rich had already discussed Hull House’s future over Addams’ deathbed. At this time Rich indicated the need to grow the settlement and perhaps make it a center for the city’s social agencies. But, Bowen felt that the work of the house may need to be “curtailed’ instead. The settlement needed “to be economical and take great care to husband out its resources.”⁹⁶ She was “not unmindful’ that there “must be some changes,” but she was “very anxious to maintain the House” as it was – “a neighborhood center, a place where the poor and the troubled and the sick may get advice and be comforted.” And, not conducting Hull House “in this manner” could appear as if “we were not playing fair to the contributors to the Jane Addams Memorial Fund.”⁹⁷ Despite her reservations, Bowen wrote to Rich to entreat her to take this position. “I’m afraid that if you and Mr. Rich leave us,” she wrote, “some of the other residents may feel some of the prestige of the House is departing ... If a large number of residents desert it our income would be cut very materially.”⁹⁸

⁹⁴ Bowen quoted in Bryan and Davis, eds., *100 Years at Hull-House*, 216.

⁹⁵ “Jane Addams Fund To Aid Hull-House,” *New York Times*, 31 May 1935, 13.

⁹⁶ Bowen to Rich, 28 June 1935.

⁹⁷ Bowen to Rich, 28 June 1935.

⁹⁸ Bowen to Rich, 28 June 1935.

Adena Rich: A “Hull House Summons”⁹⁹

A “Hull House Summons” portrays the voice of Rich as she steps into Addams’ position. It moves from her initial response to the request of the Hull House residents that she become the next Head Resident to her reaction three years later to the continued interference of Bowen and the Board with her leadership over the settlement.

Adena Rich had taken over the position of Head Resident of Hull House reluctantly. Addams’ had asked her to take this position several times before her death and Rich had always refused, citing family obligations and her commitment to the Immigrants Protective League. After Addams’ death, she and her husband planned to move away from Hull House. Aside from family and work commitments, she did not want to face the “changes” that she supposed must “come in the life of the Settlement.” However, the remaining Hull House residents had petitioned the Board of Trustees to put her in the position of Head Residency and in response to the way the residents had gathered around her “with new courage and morale” she had reconsidered.¹⁰⁰ She wrote to the residents, “it would be a very cold heart that did not respond to such a vote of confidence.”¹⁰¹ Although “I have come to my decision with considerable reluctance,” she related in a letter to Louise deKoven Bowen, “I can see that these are days in which we must all stand together.”¹⁰² Rich questioned her ability to take on such so “large an undertaking” as succeeding from Addams, but felt that, perhaps, with the help of the residents, they could endeavor to make “Hull-House worthy of Miss Addams’ memory.”¹⁰³

Less than three years later Rich was ready to step out of the Head Resident position. In these three years, she felt, much progress was made. When she had taken over there “were many vacancies in the Resident group.” Now, after “many communications with the ‘outside’ world,” the House was full. The Coffee House, which had faced closure due to a lack of funds, was running smoothly and the Dining room, which was the soul of the Hull House settlement, had taken on a new life. “The more Residents dine together here,” Rich upheld, “the more successful will their joint efforts in

⁹⁹ Adena Miller Rich, letter to Hull House Residents, 6 July 1935, Adena Miller Rich Papers, Folder 39, University of Illinois Special Collections.

¹⁰⁰ Bowen to Rich, 28 June 1935.

¹⁰¹ Rich to Hull House Residents, 6 July 1935.

¹⁰² Rich to Bowen, 9 June 1935.

¹⁰³ Rich to Hull House Residents, 6 July 1935; Rich to Bowen, 9 June 1935.

the Settlement become.” She also rebuilt the Art School program, redecorating it and putting the looms to work again. This blossoming of the arts was important, Rich maintained, because the arts held the “key” to the “whole purpose and aim of the Settlement.”¹⁰⁴

However, she had not expected “so many unnecessary difficulties,” especially in relation to the board and, Mrs. Bowen. It seemed to “rankle” the “president’s mind” that she would not “subscribe” to full time work and a salary. However, she had not taken the position for “personal financial gain,” and she was concerned about how drawing a wage would look to the other residents. These residents considered Hull House their “home” and, in the wake of Miss Addams death, they could easily lose their “morale” if the Settlement became “institutionalized and commercialized.” The Settlement, “as is indicated by its very name,” Adena asserted, was “more than an office or an agency.” It was also more than a home and a residence.” It was “a way of life” and you cannot “run” a “way of life.”¹⁰⁵

Afterwards: Creating a Hull House Worthy of Miss Addams’ Memory”¹⁰⁶

In her three years of leadership, Rich had tried to follow Addams’ “idea that the house be conducted on a family basis rather than institutional,” but this led to friction with the Board and Bowen.¹⁰⁷ As head of a household, like Addams, Rich refused to take a wage for her work. She also refused to consider her role at the settlement as a full-time job, but maintained other social interests and engagements, such as her position as director of the Immigrant Protective League. When Rich resigned from the Head Resident position in 1937 it was largely to do with salary issues. The board had repeatedly pushed for Rich to take on a full-time salaried position as head resident.¹⁰⁸

However, Rich’s resignation also had to do with a personal struggle for control between her and Bowen. Bowen remained active in the daily administration of the

¹⁰⁴ Rich, “Head Resident’s Work During Transition.”

¹⁰⁵ Rich, “Head Resident’s Work During Transition.”

¹⁰⁶ Rich to Bowen, 9 June 1935.

¹⁰⁷ Rich, “Head Resident’s Work During Transition.”

¹⁰⁸ Bryan and Davis, *100 Years at Hull House*, 207-210.

Settlement and maintained a physical presence at the Settlement House. She arrived at Hull House at 10:30 a.m. every day and would spend three hours going over settlement business. She also controlled the selection of staff members.¹⁰⁹ These actions undermined Rich's position as Head Resident and played a role in her resignation. Bowen's claim to authority and her physical presence at the settlement would also become a source of contention with Rich's successor.

Despite their disagreements, Bowen and Rich were both interested in maintaining the House "as it was." However, their vision over what this house was differed. Both Bowen and Rich reaffirmed the settlement's ties to place. Its connection to its neighborhood was foremost in Bowen's mind, while Rich reaffirmed the importance of common meals in the dining hall and residency in the House as integral to the Hull House program. Interestingly, Rich looked to the Board's break in residency requirements as one of the reasons for the friction between her and the Board. The residents no longer had representation on the Settlement's Board of Trustees. In a report written to the board outlining her grievances, Rich directs the Board to an article of Addams' Hull-House By-Laws, which states that "at least one of the members of the Board of Trustees shall reside at Hull-House."¹¹⁰ And, she, suggested in light of the difficulties between her and Bowen, this practice should be reinstated.

Although both Bowen and Rich referred to the 13-building complex that composed the Hull House Settlement as a House, for Rich this complex represented a home while for Bowen it symbolized a "neighborhood center." Bowen's institutional

¹⁰⁹ Judith Ann Trolander, *Settlement Houses and the Great Depression* (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1975), 52-53.

¹¹⁰ Rich, "Head Resident's Work During Transition."

emphasis was clear in her push to move Hull House towards a more business-like model and get Rich to take a salary and work fulltime, while Rich's emphasis on the importance of Hull House as a home is behind her refusal of both these conditions. Unfortunately, the disjuncture between Bowen and Rich's views on the running of Hull House grew greater over the term of Rich's head residency. In March 1937 Rich resigned as Head Resident of Hull House and Bowen was increasingly able to move Hull House towards a more institutionalized form.

Rich's resignation only received small mention in the local newspaper, and she would quickly pass out of the memory of Hull House. The same would not be said of her successor. After Rich resigned, the Board, under the direction of Bowen, picked Charlotte Carr to take over the position of Head Resident. Carr had an impressive resume: graduate from Vassar college, Executive Director of New York City's emergency relief, past Director of Governor Herbert Lehman's commission on unemployment relief, and head of the Pennsylvania Department of Labor.¹¹¹ Like Jane Addams, Charlotte Carr was an educated woman from an upper-middle class family. However, that is where the resemblance ended. In many ways Carr was the antithesis of Addams. She was loud and boisterous, enjoyed drinking and smoking and referred to herself as a "fat Irishwomen."¹¹² After attending Vassar she had worked as a policewoman in Brooklyn and was working as assistant director of home relief for New York City when she was invited to become Hull House's next Head Resident. Of her own admission she knew very little of Jane Addams and the settlement movement.¹¹³

¹¹¹ "Charlotte Carr will Head Hull House on Oct.1," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 16 July 1937, 20.

¹¹² Milton Mayer, "Charlotte Carr – Settlement Lady," *Atlantic Monthly* (December 1938): 741-748.

¹¹³ "Social Service: Carr to Hull House," *Times*, 11 October 1937.

However, the board felt that she would be able to revitalize the Hull House institution, which a newspaper article claimed was “as dead as Austria.”¹¹⁴

Carr was named Head Resident of Hull House in July 1937. She accepted this position on a full time, salaried basis. And, in keeping with Bowen’s approach to the settlement, Carr started to move Hull House towards a more business-like model. This approach involved replacing volunteer workers with paid workers and changing her title from Head Resident to Head Director.¹¹⁵ Milton Mayer of the *Atlantic Monthly* wrote an impassioned article heralding her move into Hull House. The Hull House, Milton declared, had become “a museum, a shrine to Jane Addams” and Charlotte Carr “who offers her guests a drink and can cuss in a crisis” was just the person to shatter the shrine’s “mossy memories.”¹¹⁶ With Carr, Milton felt, the Hull House might have a chance to be a “living agency” again. She was already creating upheaval by moving her office furniture into Addams’ bedroom and changing the revered Jane Club into classrooms.¹¹⁷ And, she had already introduced new reform initiatives, making the first real effort to integrate Hull House by bringing in Hull House’s first black residents. And, she successfully campaigned for the Jane Addams Homes, one of Chicago’s first public housing projects, to be integrated. However, Milton predicted that Carr’s biggest obstacle to resuscitating Hull House “was the dead hand of her predecessor.”¹¹⁸ This statement would prove to show good foresight.

¹¹⁴ Mayer, “Charlotte Carr – Settlement Lady,” 741-748.

¹¹⁵ Trolander, *Settlement Houses and the Great Depression*, 48.

¹¹⁶ Mayer, “Charlotte Carr – Settlement Lady,” 741-748.

¹¹⁷ Bryan and Davis, *100 Years at Hull House*, 225

¹¹⁸ Bryan and Davis, *100 Years at Hull House*, 226.

Carr's politics soon became a source of conflict between her and Bowen. She was a strong supporter of labor rights and unionization. And she introduced a Workers Education Department into the Hull House settlement curriculum, which provided classes to the settlement's neighbors on union leadership, labor laws and labor conflict.¹¹⁹ This department was formed out of the settlement's Naturalization and Citizenship Department that, under Addams, previously provided new immigrants with English and citizenship classes. Carr was also a member of the left wing Union for Democratic Action. By calling her "Scarlett" Carr and referring to her politics as "pink," critics of her labor activism attempted to demean her. To which she responded, "Pink and red? That's too silly... Some one's got their colors mixed."¹²⁰ But, these politics concerned Bowen, who feared they might jeopardize support and funding for the settlement.¹²¹

Tension between the Board and Carr boiled over in December 1942 when Mary Wing, a board member and Carr supporter, offered funding to the settlement on the condition that they allow Carr to follow her program for Hull House unimpeded. The Board accepted the funding, but not the condition that Carr would have free reign. In response, on December 17, 1942 Carr resigned from the position of Head Resident of Hull House. The board accepted her resignation after Bowen declared that she could not continue as president of the Board if Wing's funding conditions were accepted.¹²²

¹¹⁹ Trolander, *Settlement Houses and the Great Depression*, 115.

¹²⁰ "Carr Quit in Political Rift," *Chicago Herald American*, 24 December 1942, 71.

¹²¹ See: Bryan and Davis, *100 Years at Hull House*, 207-215.

¹²² Amelia Sears, "Minutes of a Special Executive Meeting of the Board of Trustees of Hull House Association, 29 December 1942, Hull House Association Records, Folder 6, University of Illinois at Chicago Special Collections; Mary C. Wing, Letter to Louise Bowen and the Hull-House Board of

When Carr's resignation became public, speculation in the newspapers over the cause swirled. "Friends of Hull House," who wished to remain anonymous, reported to the *American* that they felt that the difference centered on habits, particularly "Carr's liberality in such things as smoking and cocktails." Carr, "much to the disapproval of the old guard," had "even served cocktails at parties at Hull House." Addams had "abhorred smoking and was an ardent prohibitionist."¹²³ The *Chicago Tribune* speculated that it might have to do with Carr's affiliation with socialist organizations.¹²⁴ And, the *Chicago Daily News* alluded that the issue had to do with conflicting politics between Bowen and Carr; Carr had supported Franklin Roosevelt in the presidential elections, while Bowen supported Wendell Wilkie.¹²⁵ Although the causes were debated, the battle between Carr and Bowen, similar to the conflict with Rich, would become a battle over what Hull House meant.¹²⁶ The next two narratives explore this conflict through the divergent perspectives of Bowen and Carr.

Trustees, 11 December 1942, Hull House Collections, Box 1, Folder 6, University of Illinois at Chicago Special Collections.

¹²³ "Jane Addams Spirit' in Carr Background," *American*, 26 December 1943.

¹²⁴ One anonymous Board member reported to the *Chicago Daily Tribune* "There were many garbled conversations among the board members concerning Miss Carr's affiliation with the Union for Democratic Action," but he declared, "I do not believe that alone was responsible, however, for the acceptance of the resignation." See: "Charlotte Carr Resigns as Head of Hull House," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 24 December 1942, 12.

¹²⁵ Sydney J. Harris "Resigns as Head After Disputes on Cost, Policy" (n.d), Hull House Collection, Box 1, Folder 543, University of Illinois at Chicago Special Collections.

¹²⁶ "Charlotte Carr Resigns as Head of Hull House," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 24 December 1942, 12.

Charlotte Carr: “A Big-time Operator with a Flair for the Spectacular”¹²⁷

This narrative spotlights Carr’s reaction to the Board’s acceptance of her letter of resignation, which she submitted after the board refused to grant her full independence in the running off Hull House.

“Hell, I was fired!” Carr exclaimed to a *Time Magazine* journalist in January 1943. It had been less than a month since Carr had sent her letter of resignation as Head Resident to Hull House’s Board of Trustees. It was clear to her that her “outspoken political activity” and “her affiliation with the Union for Democratic Action” were at the bottom of her clash with the Board and Bowen.¹²⁸ But to not be active in “these issues where they relate to the lives and welfare of the people in this neighborhood,” Carr felt, “would be to fail the Hull House in the very contribution which has given it its national significance.”¹²⁹ “I am a very poor selection for directorship of Hull House,” Carr had related to the board when she resigned months earlier, “if it’s without any real opportunity to work to change the conditions that have made our neighborhood what it is.”¹³⁰ Carr was baffled as to why the board would pay her such a large salary if they wanted the Hull House’s program to be limited to “that of a friendly community center.”¹³¹ Hull House should not be limited to a “friendly community center,” Carr asserted, but, instead, it should be building its “national significance.”¹³²

Someone had once asked her in reference to Hull House, “Isn’t it wonderful to have 50 years of tradition behind you.” “Yes,” Carr had answered, “but not 50 years of plumbing problems.”¹³³ Hull House “traditionalists” wanted to keep Hull House on a fixed course, but this course was problematic.¹³⁴ The traditional function of the settlement house, to show the Halsted neighbors a way out of the slums, was “outworn.” Now, Carr exclaimed, the “slum generation ... handles its own affairs.”¹³⁵ And that was how it should

¹²⁷ “Haunted Hull House,” *Time Magazine*, 11 January 1943.

¹²⁸ “Haunted Hull House,” 11 January 1943.

¹²⁹ “Quit Hull House Due to Politics Says Miss Carr,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 6 January 1943, 13.

¹³⁰ “Quit Hull House Due to Politics Says Miss Carr, 13.

¹³¹ Charlotte Carr, Letter of Resignation, 17 December 1942, Hull House Collection, Box 1, Folder 6, University of Illinois at Chicago Special Collections.

¹³² “Quit Hull House Due to Politics Says Miss Carr, 13.

¹³³ June Provines, “Charlotte Carr,” *Chicago Sun*, 25 July 1942.

¹³⁴ “Haunted Hull House,” 11 January 1943.

¹³⁵ “Next Fifty Years Are Mapped by Charlotte Carr,” *The Herald Tribune*, 18 March 1940.

be. “The very job of the settlement,” was to “keep putting itself out of business.” Then “the settlement writes the past off the books and moves on to new frontiers.”¹³⁶ Instead of becoming a “shrine”, Hull House needed to “take its position as pacemaker in a modern settlement movement.”¹³⁷

Louise deKoven Bowen: Maintaining the Hull House “Ideal”

Although she had originally recruited Carr, the prospect of Carr—whose personality and practice was so different from that of Addams— having full control over Hull House was too much for Bowen.

When Rich resigned Bowen saw an opportunity to replace her with someone who could revitalize Hull House in the manner of Jane Addams – a “practical idealist.” And, Bowen thought she found her idealist in Charlotte Carr. She had appealed to the board to have Carr appointed, asking if “Hull House was going to stand still and go on making tams, taffies, and tidies,” or was it going to try something new.¹³⁸ However now, five years later, it was clear that “this experiment” had not worked. Carr had taken Hull House in a direction Jane Addams would never have approved of and that Bowen “personally very much disapproved of.” She “was letting politics intrude into the running of Hull House, which was “dangerous.” Politics could “divide people rather than bring them together” and Hull House could not afford to be divisive. Jane had “never interfered with politics.” She was the “ideal of Hull House” and Bowen, as her friend and “successor,” was charged with the task of carrying on “all her ideas in the settlement house, social work, and all that would help Hull House.” It was time to find someone new for the position of head resident. And this time it would be someone with “knowledge of how to organize social matters in settlement work as an administrator.”¹³⁹

Afterwards: “Haunted Hull House”¹⁴⁰

Hamilton and Milton’s fear of the “dead hand” of the past appeared well founded in light of both Rich’s and Carr’s resignation. Notably, many of the articles covering

¹³⁶ Milton Mayer, “Charlotte Carr – Settlement Lady.”

¹³⁷ Charlotte Carr, Letter of Resignation, 17 December 1942. Hull-House Collection, Box 1, Folder 6, University of Illinois at Chicago Special Collections.

¹³⁸ Bowen quoted in Bryan and Davis, eds., *100 Years at Hull-House*, 226.

¹³⁹ “‘Jane Addams Spirit’ in Carr Background,” *American*, 26 December, 1942, 74.

¹⁴⁰ “Haunted Hull House,” 11 January 1943.

Carr's resignation referenced the specter of Addams as the underlying cause of the breakdown in communication between Carr and the Board. A *Times* article about Carr's resignation was titled "Haunted Hull House." And an *American* article titled "'Jane Addams' Spirit' in Carr Background" claimed that it was apparent that the "the spirit of the late Jane Addams still exerts a powerful influence upon Hull House."¹⁴¹

The Settlement seemed frozen at an important time of transition. Hull House, both as a settlement and a house, was slowly becoming a static monument to Addams. In 1936, the octagon-shaped room on the south side of the original Hull House mansion was redesigned as a memorial room for Jane Addams. This mentality slowly permeated other spaces within the house. When she moved into Hull House, Carr had angered residents by making Jane Addams' bedroom, which the resident's had left untouched since her death, into her office. The Hull House Settlement had also become somewhat of an insular community, focused on its immediate community as well as the self-contained living environment of the Settlement. Rich alluded to this insular quality when she outlined that she had to contact the outside world in order to draw residents into Hull House. Carr strove to break the Hull House out of this cocoon. Rather than socializing entirely with the Hull House residents or board members, Carr preferred talking about labor issues in the saloons with the neighborhood men.¹⁴² Also, unlike Addams who liked to draw people into Hull House, Carr appeared at gatherings that were held outside of the settlement. And, instead of having "labor and other forces come to Hull House," Carr went to them.¹⁴³

¹⁴¹ "'Jane Addams Spirit' in Carr Background," 71.

¹⁴² Bryan and Davis, *100 Years at Hull-House*, 212.

¹⁴³ "'Jane Addams Spirit' in Carr Background," 71.

Although the Board of Trustees was happy to see Carr go, many of Hull House's neighbors were sorry to see her leave.¹⁴⁴ In response to Carr's resignation, a member of the West Side Community Committee declared, "The fundamental point is: who shall formulate the policies of Hull House? Does Hull House belong to the people it serves, or to the trustees? Shall it be an 'agency' superimposed from above; or shall it be an instrument of the people themselves?"¹⁴⁵ The man continued, "Only by involving the people significantly in the management of Hull House can it ever become a real part of the attitudes, sentiments and thinking of the people."¹⁴⁶ Carr saw Hull House as an agency of the people and her resignation was seen as an "irreparable loss" to the community.¹⁴⁷ Notably, by attempting to make Hull House a "real part" of the people, Carr was perhaps closer to Addams' founding goals than either Rich or Bowen.

The struggle over the leadership of Hull House was echoed in a breakdown of the settlement's relationship with its neighbors as well as the disintegration of the physical structure of the settlement. On July 23, 1943 Jessie Binford, a long-time Hull House resident wrote to Bowen, "A New Director here faces a disorganized Hull House."¹⁴⁸ Before hiring a new head director, Binford asserted, "we must be clear as to what we want to do – what programs we are to have." Hull House, she continued faces "almost complete change and dis-organization in its services; in its personnel; in its

¹⁴⁴ Note: Carr's departure from Hull House did not hurt her career. On March 1, 1943, President Roosevelt nominated her as a member of the war manpower commission, charged with formulating policies to address labor shortages as a result of the war

¹⁴⁵ Howard Vincent O'Brien, "All Things Considered," *Chicago Daily News*, January 1943.

¹⁴⁶ O'Brien, "All Things Considered."

¹⁴⁷ O'Brien, "All Things Considered."

¹⁴⁸ Jessie Binford, letter to Bowen, 23 July 1943, Russell W. Ballard Papers, Folder 35, Jane Addams Memorial Collection, University of Illinois at Chicago campus.

influence in the neighborhood and the attitude of our neighbors to us.”¹⁴⁹ There were many issues that needed to be attended to. And, the physical state of the “House” echoed this disorganization. In a letter to the director of Hull House’s summer camp, Ada Hicks, Bowen bemoaned Hull House’s state of disrepair. In mild weather the house was using “enough coal for ten below zero.” The windows were rotting, the radiators did not work, and areas of the structure were in danger of falling down or blowing away in a “strong wind.” Attracting people to the Hull House in these “circumstances” would be difficult, and in Bowen’s case, she could not “get out too soon.”¹⁵⁰

However, despite these difficulties, the settlement found a new director and on July 28th 1943, “tradition was broken at historic Hull House settlement,” when the Board named Russell W. Ballard head resident of Hull House.¹⁵¹ True to Bowen’s words, the Board was more cautious in their selection of this next head resident. Initially, Bowen did not favor having a man elected to Jane Addams’ position but Ballard’s impressive track record in social work and the pressure of the rest of the Board convinced her. A graduate of the Chicago School of Social Service Administration, Ballard previously taught at several institutions, headed Indiana’s Lake County Board of Public Welfare and served as superintendent of the Illinois State Training School for Boys.¹⁵² In response to the appointment of Ballard, Bowen stated, “At present, it is wise to have the

¹⁴⁹ Jessie Binford to Bowen, 23 July 1943, Russell W. Ballard Papers, Folder 35, Jane Addams Memorial Collection, University of Illinois at Chicago campus.

¹⁵⁰ Louise deKoven Bowen, letter to Ada Hicks, 27 November 1943, Louise deKoven Bowen Papers, Box 1, Folder 5, University of Illinois at Chicago Special Collections.

¹⁵¹ “R.W. Ballard Named Head of Hull House,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 29 July 1943, 12.

¹⁵² McCree and Davis, *100 Years at Hull-House*, 212.

settlement headed by a man as few women can follow in the footsteps of Jane Addams, one of the greatest women who ever lived.”¹⁵³

On September 15, 1943, Hull House opened “its doors to the first male head resident in its history.”¹⁵⁴ To the *Chicago Tribune* Ballard reported that he was “somewhat sobered by the responsibility it presents, but at the same time I am challenged by the spirit of Jane Addams, who made Hull House an institution of national prominence.”¹⁵⁵ Unlike Carr, Ballard emphasized that he was interested in avoiding partisan politics. And, he reaffirmed the settlement as “a neighborhood house for the use of neighbors.”¹⁵⁶ “I am moving into Hull House as a neighbor and I hope that I will be accepted as such.”¹⁵⁷ When asked if he felt like he was “encroaching on feminine territory, he responded “that the founder of the internationally renowned settlement house, Jane Addams, and her successor, Charlotte Carr, were ‘unusual women who handled a man sized job.’”¹⁵⁸

When Ballard became head resident he turned Jane Addams Memorial Room into his office.¹⁵⁹ Bowen objected to this use of the memorial room; but, she was at the end of her tenure at Hull House, and Ballard was able to move forward unimpeded. In 1944,

¹⁵³ “R.W. Ballard Named Head of Hull House,” 12.

¹⁵⁴ “R. W. Ballard Takes Over as New Head of Hull House Today,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 15 September 1943, 23.

¹⁵⁵ “R.W. Ballard Named Head of Hull House,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 29 July 1943, 12.

¹⁵⁶ Betty Prosser, “Russell Ballard Reverses Trend; Replaces Woman as Hull House Director,” *The Milwaukee Journal*, 2 November 1943.

¹⁵⁷ “R. W. Ballard Takes Over as New Head of Hull House Today,” 23.

¹⁵⁸ Prosser, “Russell Ballard Reverses Trend.”

¹⁵⁹ Rima Lunin Schultz and Adele Hast, *Women Building Chicago 1790-1990* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001), 105.

at the age of 85, Bowen retired to become honorary president of the Board of Trustees.¹⁶⁰ With the removal of Bowen, the appointment of a male Head Resident and the revitalization of the octagon room, it appeared like Hull House might finally move beyond the specter of Jane Addams.

As Rich highlighted, the settlement had become quite insular towards the end of Addams' tenure and Ballard was interested in reconnecting the settlement house with its Halsted neighborhood. Although this was a "man sized job," in 1945 Ballard hired Elaine Switzer as program director to aid him in bringing the Hull House back into active use. Switzer went to work revitalizing the Hull House, its residency program and its connection to its neighbors. She actively recruited new staff members and instigated weekly staff meetings and orientation sessions to "maintain cohesiveness."¹⁶¹ Inside the house she closed off the rooms that "were too badly in need of decoration and repair" and "hung curtains wherever appropriate" in the rest of the building, trying to make it "as clean and homelike as possible."¹⁶² Switzer also set up house rules, "such as places to smoke," "no spitting on the floor," and "hats off for men and boys."¹⁶³

As well, she introduced new uses for the settlement's courtyard where "on hot summer mornings" the staff "sprinkled the children with a hose in the Halsted Street courtyard."¹⁶⁴ This activity, Switzer outlined in a settlement report, "shocked old residents who had never seen the courtyard so used before but delighted

¹⁶⁰ Bryan and Davis, *100 Years at Hull House*, 212.

¹⁶¹ Elaine Switzer, quoted in Bryan and Davis, *100 Years at Hull House*, 246.

¹⁶² Switzer, quoted in Bryan and Davis, *100 Years at Hull House*, 246.

¹⁶³ Switzer, quoted in Bryan and Davis, *100 Years at Hull House*, 246.

¹⁶⁴ Switzer, quoted in Bryan and Davis, *100 Years at Hull House*, 246.

passerby[s].”¹⁶⁵ As well, the staff held story-telling sessions with the children in the “resident courtyard, where the only neighborhood grass is seen, to the horror of some [Hull House Residents] who thought ‘all would be destroyed,’ but it never was.”¹⁶⁶ And when, Switzer moved the weaving, “by sheer luck,” back into the “old “weaving room”” this move delighted older neighborhood residents who exclaimed, “This is like the old Hull-House.”¹⁶⁷

In a report of her activities to the Hull House Board of Trustees, Switzer painted the image of a Hull House that had gone to seed. The house was in a state of disrepair and its rooms were underutilized. The residents had formed an inward looking community, rendering certain settlement spaces off limits to the neighbors. To rejuvenate the settlement, Switzer reinstated a home-like atmosphere. Much in the same manner as Addams and Starr’s approach to the Hull House when they first moved in, she hung curtains and brought spaces back to use. She also invited the neighborhood back into the Hull House space, even into the residents’ private courtyard. The Hull House, as a home for both the residents and the neighbors, was finally back in use.

For his part, over the roughly two decades that he was Head Resident, Ballard revitalized the neighborhood focus of the settlement. He worked hard to diversify his settlement staff to better represent the diversity of the settlements neighbors and vigorously campaigned for better housing in the neighborhood. He helped to establish the Near West Side Planning Board, a neighborhood organization that looked to

¹⁶⁵ Switzer, quoted in Bryan and Davis, *100 Years at Hull House*, 246.

¹⁶⁶ Switzer, quoted in Bryan and Davis, *100 Years at Hull House*, 246.

¹⁶⁷ Switzer, quoted in Bryan and Davis, *100 Years at Hull House*, 246.

rehabilitate and develop the Harrison-Halsted neighborhood.¹⁶⁸ This forward momentum came to a crashing halt in 1961 when the Hull House Settlement and its neighborhood were slated for demolition to make room for the new University of Illinois at Chicago campus. At this point, the Jane Addams Memorial Fund, which established the octagon room as a memorial room to Addams, was used to transform the Hull House Settlement into a museum commemorating Jane Addams. The demolition and restoration of the Hull House Settlement is explored in the next section.

Critical Juncture 3: Hull House Preservation

In 1967, Jane Addams Hull-House museum opened on the new University of Illinois campus in Chicago. Designed to commemorate Hull House founder Jane Addams, the museum encompassed two structures, a mansion originally built in 1856 and a brick dining hall built in 1906. The museum was constructed from the remnants of the historic Hull House Settlement, which six years earlier, in 1961, had spanned an entire city block. At this time the Hull House mansion was the cornerstone of a complex containing twelve other structures.¹⁶⁹

Between 1961 and 1967 a number of competing groups, including the University of Illinois, its students, the Harrison-Halsted neighborhood and the Hull House Settlement shaped the reconstitution of the Hull House Settlement into a museum. The conflict began when the City of Chicago offered the Settlement's Harrison-Halsted neighborhood, roughly 130 acres, as the site for the new University of Illinois campus in 1960. The City had designated the Harrison-Halsted site a land clearance site in 1959.

¹⁶⁸ Bryan and Davis, *100 Years at Hull House*, 213.

¹⁶⁹ Peter Fish Studios, "Photographs of Hull House Interiors," Hull House Museum Archival Records, Box 8, Preservation of Hull House Folder, University of Illinois at Chicago Special Collections.

The Hull House Settlement endorsed this designation as a way in which to generate funding and initiative for neighborhood revitalization.¹⁷⁰ Among these initiatives a new Catholic church and school were constructed for \$600,000. If the University accepted this site, the majority of the Halsted neighborhood, including the Hull House Settlement and the new Church and school, would be torn down. Members of the local community and the Hull House Settlement mobilized almost immediately against the proposed campus, initiating a protest to save Hull House and the Halsted neighborhood that would reach national proportions.

From April 14th to April 17th 1961, the City Council Planning and Housing Committee held an intensive three-day public hearing on the proposed location of the University of Illinois campus at the Harrison-Halsted site. Interested parties from the University, the Hull House Settlement and the Halsted neighborhood spoke on behalf of their various interests. Following the debate, on May 11, 1961 the City Council voted to approve the Harrison-Halsted site for the new University of Illinois at Chicago campus.¹⁷¹

Russell Ballard: “A Political Double Cross”¹⁷²

Russell Ballard, Head Resident of Hull House, represented the voice of the Hull House residents at the public hearing. He spoke against the demolition of the settlement and its neighborhood.

¹⁷⁰ Sharon Haar, “Location, Location, Location: Gender and the Archaeology of Urban Settlement,” *Journal of Architectural Education* 55 (February 2002): 154.

¹⁷¹ See: “Council Group Opens U.I. Site Hearing Today,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 13 April 1961, D7; Suzanne Avery, “Plan Final Fight Over U. of I. Site,” *Chicago Tribune*, 13 April 1961, W1; Edward Schreiber, “Council Unit Nears Vote on Campus Site,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 18 April 1961, 18.; “Council OK’s W. Side U. of I. Site, 41 to 3,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 11 May 1961, 3; “U.I. Decision Stands After New Disorders,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 20 April 1961, 3.

¹⁷² “Still the Right Place,” *Chicago American*, 24 March 1961.

On April 13th, 1961 Russell Ballard addressed the Planning Commission on behalf of the Hull House Settlement. Since the announcement of the Harrison-Halsted site in February, Ballard actively campaigned against the proposed demolition of the Hull House Settlement and the neighborhood that surrounded it. "There's something here of real value," he had stated to a *Chicago Daily News* reporter in February, "We don't tear down Lincoln's home."¹⁷³ He elaborated, "The name of Jane Addams and her work are known throughout the world," and although the Hull House was not her birthplace it was a "birthplace of another kind." The "good will generated by Jane Addams still abides in the rooms and corridors of the physical setting where she labored to improve the lot of her neglected neighbors. She still lives and her spirit is reflected in the continuing service today."¹⁷⁴ Ballard's concern extended beyond the boundaries of the Hull House Settlement structure to include the neighborhood it served. And, when he gave his statement to the Planning and Housing Committee he affirmed that "those of us who live and work at Hull-House are supporting our neighbors in their protest." "A promise has been broken," Ballard declared. In 1958 the neighborhood had accepted the designation of a land clearance project on the understanding that this would help them obtain funds for neighborhood redevelopment. Now the city was using the land cleared in this neighborhood as a rationale for changing the area from a residential neighborhood into a campus.¹⁷⁵ "Even the children in these families with whom we work know that a promise has not been kept," Ballard asserted, "How can we instill in these children a respect for law and government?" In regards to the proposed demolition of the Hull House settlement for a new university for the "greater good" of the community, Ballard asked, "WHO can judge what is the "GREATER GOOD?." He outlined that the American Institute of Architects' Committee on Preservation of Historic Buildings had voted to preserve Hull-House as "perhaps Chicago's most important historic structure." And, referencing a letter from the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America as well as Senator Paul H. Douglas, Ballard outlined that this opinion was widely shared. "Yes, a national protest is mounting," he concluded "and the multitude of friends of Hull-House are not going to be satisfied with a bronze plaque mounted on a brand new modern building and reading "JANE ADDAMS SLEPT HERE."¹⁷⁶

¹⁷³ "Standing in the Way of Land Clearance: Progress Threatens Hull House," *Chicago Daily News*, 4 February 1961.

¹⁷⁴ "Standing in the Way of Land Clearance: Progress Threatens Hull House."

¹⁷⁵ Russell Ballard, Statement of Russell W. Ballard to the Committee on Housing & Planning, 13 April 1961, Russell Ballard Papers, Box 2, Folder 20, University of Illinois at Chicago Special Collections.

¹⁷⁶ Ballard, Statement of Russell W. Ballard to the Committee on Housing & Planning, 13 April 1961.

University Narrative: “The End of a Makeshift Education”¹⁷⁷

The University defended the choice of the Halsted neighborhood at the public hearing.

The following narrative captures the University’s position.

Between April 13th and April 17th a number of University Officials appeared before the City’s Planning and Housing Committee to be questioned concerning their choice of the Harrison-Halsted site as the new campus for the University of Illinois. For around thirty years, the University’s Board of Trustees had negotiated with the City of Chicago for a urban-based campus for the University of Illinois. Negotiations escalated in 1958 when Mayor Daley announced his plan to redevelop Chicago, key to his plans was finding a new campus for the University of Illinois. This was welcome news for the University, which housed its Chicago students in a temporary campus in the industrial Navy Pier area of Chicago. This site was noisy, run-down and no longer had the capacity to meet the needs of a growing student body. And, the need to address this “overtaxed” site ahead of the incoming influx of post-war babies was pertinent.¹⁷⁸ The University had already petitioned the City for the use of four different sites: a golf course near North Riverside, Megis field on Northerly island, a south loop railway site and Garfield park. The first two sites were unavailable, the railway site could not be developed in time for the University’s fall 1964 opening deadline, and Garfield Park, which was the University’s preferred site, posed time consuming legal issues, like “reversion clauses” in donated tracts that complicated the acquisition of this site. As an alternative site the City proposed the Harrison-Halsted neighborhood on June 28, 1960.¹⁷⁹ Eager to begin building, and conscious of the “plus factors of availability [and] accessibility,” the University agreed upon this site. The “flat and now treeless neighborhood,” was not the type of setting that the University had envisioned building its new campus. “It hurt us to give up the natural beauties of Garfield Park and start from scratch,” Charles Havens, director of the University’s physical plant had reported to the Chicago Daily News in February, but this area can become “a campus the people of Chicago can

¹⁷⁷ “A Neighborhood will Change and So Will A Way of Education,” n.d., University Archives, Box 8, Folder 89, University of Illinois at Chicago Special Collections.

¹⁷⁸ “UI Selects Halsted Site,” *Chicago Daily News*, 10 February 1961, 14A; Joseph Ator, “Rise in Student Tide a Challenge to State,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 25 June 1961, B5; “U.I to Study S. Loop Site, Henry States,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 10 December 1959, A10.

¹⁷⁹ “Time line of the University’s Choice of the Harrison-Halsted Site,” n.d., Hull House Collection, Box 9, Folder 51, University of Illinois at Chicago Special Collections.

be proud of.¹⁸⁰ And, if we don't get this site, Haven warned at the public hearing, "we might be forced to choose a suburban location."¹⁸¹

Community Narrative: "A Neighborhood Will Change"¹⁸²

Although many people spoke on behalf of the Halsted community over the three-day hearings, the majority of the community members stood on the sidelines while their fate was debated. The next narrative spotlights the reaction of Halsted community members to the City Council's decision in favor of the University at the conclusion of the three-day hearing.

Over the course of three days, the Harrison-Halsted community group had listened patiently to arguments for and against the Harrison-Halsted site.¹⁸³ There was a great deal at stake for these community members. If the council voted in favor of the Harrison-Halsted site, these Chicago residents faced the loss of their community and their homes. "They are taking away our heritage," one concerned resident had stated.¹⁸⁴ "The rich always take from the poor," asserted another.¹⁸⁵ On April 18th the Chicago City Council approved the demolition of the Harrison-Halsted neighborhood and the Hull House settlement to make way for the new University of Illinois' Chicago campus. Incensed Halsted community members paid a visit to City Hall. A three-member committee of Halsted area residents met with Mayor Daley to request that another site be found for the University while forty more neighborhood residents waited patiently in the lobby of City Hall. The meeting with Daley was a disappointment; he reaffirmed the City and the University's decision to use the Harrison-Halsted site. Faced with Daley's intransigence the community group representatives reported to the gathering in the lobby "There is no use trying to see him again, He just simply isn't going to satisfy us."¹⁸⁶ As the group began to leave City Hall

¹⁸⁰ "U. of I. Aides Promise Beautiful Campus Here," *Chicago Daily News*, 11 February 1961.

¹⁸¹ Thomas Buck, "It's West Side or Suburb: U. of I. Aid Quizzed at Public Hearing," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 15 April 1961, 1.

¹⁸² "A Neighborhood will Change and So Will A Way of Education," n.d.

¹⁸³ The Harrison-Halsted Community group was mostly composed of women. Many of the neighborhood men worked for the City and feared repercussions if they joined the protests.

¹⁸⁴ Jack Mabley, "City's Little People were Sold Out," *Daily News*, n.d. 1961.

¹⁸⁵ "Angry Women sit in Daley's Office 3 Hrs," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 19 April 1961, 1.

¹⁸⁶ "U. of I. Trustees Stand Pat," *Chicago Sun Times*, 20 April 1961, 24.

they encountered a crowd of students demonstrating in support of the Mayor's decision. Facing the possibility of losing their homes and relocation, the community group found the students' counter-picketing offensive. When the "mothers" began to object to the signs, some student's "pushed the women around".¹⁸⁷ This angered the neighborhood residents who asked themselves what right this "bunch of dumb kids" had to "fight [for the site] anyway? they [sic] won't even be in the campus! By the time that thing is built – they'll be gone."¹⁸⁸

Student Narrative: "Big 'Hurrah' From Navy Pier"¹⁸⁹

The students at the University of Illinois' Navy Pier Site had no official voice at the public hearing, but at the conclusion of the hearings they rallied in support of the Council's decision, providing an alternative prospective to the protests of the Halsted Community.

Many students were excited about securing a permanent site for the University. Over the past few years "many tempting locations" had been "paraded before" them and "in succession each one" had been "overruled."¹⁹⁰ When City officials finally announced its approval of the Halsted site, a group of students assembled at City Hall to demonstrate their "approval and support."¹⁹¹ Upon entering City Hall, they encountered a group of "irate citizens" protesting the Halsted location.¹⁹² This group of "screaming, crying, hysterical women converged" on the students.¹⁹³ They "pushed and jostled" the students and at one point a "student's sign was ripped out of his hands and torn up."¹⁹⁴ The "mob" yelled "Youse kids ain't educated," exclaiming that they were "selfish for taking their homes from them."¹⁹⁵ Some students' scoffed at the "horde[']s" claims to a neighborhood pointing out that anyone who took a "tour through the Harrison-Halsted neighborhood" could see that it was only a "slum district."

¹⁸⁷ Florence Scala, interview by Robert H. Young, (n.d.), transcript, Florence Scala Collection, Box 1, Folder 10, University of Illinois at Chicago Special Collections, 24.

¹⁸⁸ Scala, interview by Young, (n.d.).

¹⁸⁹ Helen Fleming, "UI Selects Halsted Site," *Chicago Daily News*, 10 February 10 1961, C6.

¹⁹⁰ Diana Harbinson, "From Navy Pier," *Chicago Sunday Tribune*, 23 April 1961, CB.

¹⁹¹ Harbinson, "From Navy Pier," CB.

¹⁹² Harbinson, "From Navy Pier," CB.

¹⁹³ Harbinson, "From Navy Pier," CB.

¹⁹⁴ "U. of I. Trustees Stand Pat," *Chicago Sun Times*, 20 April 1961.

¹⁹⁵ Harbinson, "From Navy Pier," CB.

The women's calls to save Hull House generated a more mixed response. Some students felt that Hull House should be maintained as a "library" or a "shrine" to Jane Addams.¹⁹⁶ Others felt that the calls to save Hull House were "nonsense" and "Addams would have been sorry to hear that the U. of I. site was denied for the umpteenth time just to save her old recreation house."¹⁹⁷ All the students agreed that the university needed a "new site" and needed it "NOW."¹⁹⁸ The scuffle ended when the students were ushered into Mayor Daley's office where they were reassured that Daley "would not deviate in selection of the site and that the University would be built despite differences of opinion."¹⁹⁹ Although none of the current students would "benefit from the new University" they felt that their fight for the campus was not for themselves "but for the entire city of Chicago-including the Harrison-Halsted women, whose own children will receive the benefits."²⁰⁰

Afterwards: An Idea or a Set of Buildings?

Despite the City's April announcement, the Halsted-Community group, under the leadership of neighborhood resident Florence Scala, continued to fight against the demolition of their neighborhood. They persisted in staging sit-ins at City Hall, and took their battle to save the neighborhood to state and federal courts.²⁰¹ However, the broader public debate over the University's new site shifted to a discussion of the Hull House Settlement and whether the University would choose to retain and use any of its structures. In May 1961 the Save-the-Hull House Committee was formed. Acting on the "premise that the University of Illinois will build its proposed four year Chicago branch in

¹⁹⁶ Fleming, C6.

¹⁹⁷ "Letters to the Editors: The Great Site Fight Goes On – and On," *Chicago Daily News*, March 1961.

¹⁹⁸ "Same Old Story," *Per Illini*, 27 March 1961.

¹⁹⁹ "U. of I. Trustees Stand Pat," 24.

²⁰⁰ Harbinson, "From Navy Pier," CB.

²⁰¹ In the year following the City Hall meeting emotions remained high regarding the demolition of the Harrison-Halsted neighborhood and the neighborhood's obstruction of the building of the new campus. Florence Scala's home was bombed twice, forcing her to move out of her home and take up residence in the mostly vacant Hull House Settlement to avoid endangering her family and neighbors.

the Harrison-Halsted area,” the Committee focused on saving Hull House.²⁰² Many Hull House residents were on this Committee, including, soon-to- be retired, Head Director Russell Ballard and long-time resident Jessie Binford. The Committee was also composed of many prominent figures and groups, including Eleanor Roosevelt, Senator Paul Douglas, reporter Studs Terkel, the Chicago Heritage Committee, and Earl Reed, who was Chairman of the AIA Committee on Preservation of Historic Buildings.

However, the Hull House Board of Trustees did not support the Save Hull House Committee, referring to the committee as a “citizens group in no way affiliated with the administration or program of the Hull House Association.”²⁰³ Following the City Council’s approval of the Harrison-Halsted neighborhood, the Board of Trustees had largely abandoned keeping the Hull House settlement activities at the site and wanted to dissociate the settlement activities from Hull House’s historic structures. “It is a mistake to identify Hull House with a set of buildings,” stated Hull House’s new director Paul Jans, “Hull House is really an idea.”²⁰⁴ This opinion was shared by President of the Board of Trustees William Deknatel. “The great tradition of Jane Addams is not concerned with bricks and mortar,” Jans stated, and “Jane Addams’ approach was not to acquire real estate, but to serve people.”²⁰⁵ At the same time that they abandoned their home, the Board of Trustees also distanced themselves from Florence Scala and the Harrison-Halsted group’s efforts to save the Hull House neighborhood. Deknatel

²⁰² “Meeting Set by ‘Save Hull House’ Group,” *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 23 May 1961, A7.

²⁰³ William Deknatel, letter to Paul Jans, 14 September 1961, Hull House Collection, Box 9, Folder 51, University of Illinois at Chicago Special Collections.

²⁰⁴ “Walls Must not Confine It,” *Telegraph*, 16 September 1961.

²⁰⁵ Proposed Statement of Position on University of Illinois Site, 23 March 1961, Hull House Collection, Box 9, Folder 51, University of Illinois at Chicago Special Collections.

wrote in November 1961, "Our neighbors are still hoping through court action to stop the University of Illinois from building in the Hull House area, but I am afraid they are tilting at windmills."²⁰⁶

Despite, the lack of support from Hull House's Board of Trustees, the Save Hull House Committee received national attention and support. Hundreds of letters protesting the impending destruction of the Hull House Settlement were sent to Mayor Daley, Dr. David Henry, President of the University of Illinois, and Chicago area newspapers. In June 1961, under mounting public pressure, President Henry announced his intent to recommend incorporating the original Hull House mansion into the design of the new campus.²⁰⁷ Although, the Save Hull House Committee recognized Henry's "gracious gesture," they felt that it was "not enough and it is not appropriate."²⁰⁸ "The meaning of historic Hull House, they asserted, "is incorporated not in the Hull mansion alone, but in the cluster of buildings which symbolize the community of people who helped to establish America's social conscience."²⁰⁹ Preserved alone, the Committee suggested, the Hull House mansion would be no more than an enlarged monument with no functional use."²¹⁰ The Save Hull House Committee did not want Hull House to become a memorial because the settlement had always been "more than just

²⁰⁶ Deknatel, letter to Alice Hamilton, 13 November 1961, Hull House Collection, Box 32, Folder 305, University of Illinois at Chicago Special Collections.

²⁰⁷ "Visit Hull House, Committee Plea to Illini Trustees," *Chicago Sun Times*, 16 June 1961.

²⁰⁸ Save the Hull House Committee, "Statement," 12 June 1961, Hull House Collection, Box 9, Folder 51, University of Illinois at Chicago Special Collections.

²⁰⁹ Save the Hull House Committee, "Statement," 12 June 1961.

²¹⁰ Len Bishop, "Save Hull House," *Sun-Times, Chicago III*, 5 May 1962.

a building.”²¹¹ Accordingly, the committee called for the retention of six of Hull Houses’ structures that were “solid and architecturally significant.”²¹² And, they also called for the retention of some sort of settlement function within these spaces.

Regardless of the Committee’s opinions, the University announced in June that it had reached a “happy compromise” by agreeing to save the Hull House mansion. To save any more of the settlement, Dr. David Henry declared, would “render the site unusable.”²¹³ Moreover, the architects were concerned that the “smoke-stained common brick and admittedly hodge-podge buildings of the Hull House would not fit their plan for the new campus and would interfere with its construction.”²¹⁴ Upon hearing of the University’s decision, Jesse Binford, a resident of the Hull House Settlement since 1905 and representative of the Harrison-Halsted community group as well as the Save Hull House Committee, stated that she would rather see the entire Hull House “demolished” than turned into a museum and incorporated into the University.²¹⁵ For Binford, the settlement structures became meaningless once they were divested of their public service and neighborhood functions.

By 1963 the neighborhood was razed and its residents relocated. Hull House’s services were dispersed around the city and all but two of its buildings – the original Hull

²¹¹ Save the Hull-House Committee, “Statement of Principle,” 23 May 1961, Hull House Collection, Box 9, Folder 51, University of Illinois at Chicago Special Collections.

²¹² Some of the Hull House structures were renovated in the late 1950s and all of the structures were built under the supervision of Pond & Pond Architects, who were well regarded architects in Chicago. See: Save the Hull-House Committee, “Statement,” 23 May 1961.

²¹³ Helen Fleming, “U. of I. Trustees Vote to Raze Other Buildings,” *Chicago Daily News*, 22 June 1961.

²¹⁴ “Plans for New U. of I. Campus Here Doom Historic Hull House,” *Real Estate News Weekly*, 22 September 1961.

²¹⁵ “Miss Binford Raps Hull House Loss,” *Chicago American*, 7 July 1961.

House mansion and the settlement's Dining Hall - were demolished. Despite community misgivings, the University restored the Hull House mansion to what was believed to be its appearance as a mid-Victorian brick mansion. Architect Walter Netsch, from the firm Skidmore, Owings and Merrill, who headed the design of the new campus, claimed to be behind the choice to return the Hull House Mansion to its 1856 appearance. "I decided that the idea of Jane Addams should go back to the farmhouse she lived in," Netsch asserted in a 1995 interview. He also claimed to be behind the University's choice to save the Dining Hall building "because that was the building that Frank Lloyd Wright first gave his famous speech on "The Art and Craft of the Machine, in 1901."²¹⁶ Despite their call for the preservation of the Hull House settlement, there is no indication that the Chicago Heritage Committee or AIA's Committee on Preservation of Historic Buildings had any involvement in the exterior restoration of the settlement.

To oversee the exterior restoration of these two buildings, the University hired the architecture firm Frazier, Raftery, Orr, and Fairbank. They based their restoration of the mansion on an 1896 painting of the Hull House mansion, which creatively reconstructed what the house might have looked like in its original state. In this painting, the Hull House mansion is depicted with a rooftop cupola, a verandah that extends around the building and a hipped roof. To return it to this state, the architects removed a third floor from the mansion, which was added in the early twentieth century, constructed a hipped

²¹⁶ Walter Netsch, "Oral History of Walter Netsch," interview by Betty J. Blum. (Chicago: Art Institute of Chicago, 1995): 193.

roof and rooftop cupola as well as a verandah that extended around the house, and resurfaced the mansion in brick.²¹⁷

In order to fit the dining hall into the small amount of space allotted to the Hull House structures, the architect's relocated it two hundred feet northwest of its original site and rotated it to face north and south. The stucco and brick dining hall was placed on a new concrete foundation and resurfaced entirely with brick. The architects restored the interior of the Dining Hall, where Hull House residents traditionally shared meals and entertained guests to its 1910-1920s appearance. Large wood tables and bentwood chairs filled the space, whose main purpose in the museum complex was as a conference center. The first floor of the Hull House mansion housed the museum's main exhibition space, while its second floor became the Preston Bradley library, which housed archival material pertaining to Jane Addams and the Hull House Settlement.

The University formed a Hull House Committee to oversee the restoration of the Hull House mansion. This committee was composed of three subcommittees: the Sub-Committee on Memorabilia, the Sub-Committee on Restoration and the Sub-Committee on Administration and Utilization. Specifically, the Sub-Committee on Memorabilia was placed in charge of planning the interior restoration.²¹⁸ Chaired by Mark Hale Director of the University of Illinois' newly formed Jane Addams' School of Social Work, the members of the Sub-Committee on Memorabilia all worked for the University of Illinois

²¹⁷ Based on photographic and documentary evidence, this painting and the architect's restoration were historically incorrect. The roof of the mansion was likely cross gabled, the cupola may never have existed and it is unclear if the verandah ever extended around the entire house. See: Vince Michael, "Recovering the Layout of the Hull House Complex", scholarly essay and image gallery, *Urban Experience in Chicago: Hull House and its Neighborhoods, 1889-1963*, (2003).

²¹⁸ Hull House Committee, Minutes of Meeting in Illinois Center, Chicago, 27 October (n.y.) University Library Archives, Box 2, Folder 25/26, University of Illinois at Chicago Special Collections.

and consisted of Allen S. Weller, Dean of Fine and Applied Arts. Frazer G. Poole, Director of the University of Illinois Undergraduate Library, Leonard Currie, Dean of the College of Art and Architecture, and Robert B. Downs, Dean of Library Administration.²¹⁹ Other organizations helped the committee with their restoration efforts, including the Museum of Science and Industry, the Chicago Historical Society and the Faculty Wives Club.²²⁰

The decision to restore the exterior of the Hull House mansion to its 1856 appearance created a “dilemma” for the interior restoration. When Jane Addams “took possession of the House in 1889,” the Committee on Memorabilia outlined, “it was already a slum dwelling.”²²¹ And the Committee deemed, that the building’s “most significant time” was Addams’ first twenty years at Hull House, 1889-1910, and this should be reflected in the restoration. However, they felt that this was “unfortunately an ugly period in furnishings (‘mission oak,’ hanging lights, etc.)” and did not match the restored 1856 appearance of the mansion. Their solution was to restore the Hull House’s period interiors to represent the 1840-60 era, which they rationalized, would allow them to showcase Hull House’s “good” antiques and “express” Addams’ original

²¹⁹ Hull House Committee, Sub-Committee on Memorabilia – Minutes of Meeting in Urbana, 4 December 1964, University Library Archives, Box 2, Folder 25/26, University of Illinois at Chicago Special Collections.

²²⁰ The Faculty Wife Club took charge of obtaining “authentic furnishings for the Hull House Mansion.” See: C. E. Flynn, chairman of the Hull House Committee, letter to President Henry, University Library Archives, Box 2, Folder 25/26, University of Illinois at Chicago Special Collections.

²²¹ “Conclusions: Uses and Furnishings of Hull House,” Hull House Museum Archival Records, Box 8, Preservation of Hull House Folder, University of Illinois at Chicago Special Collections, 5.

intent of “gracious, cultured hospitality.”²²² Moreover, this “feeling of a home,” they determined was representative of the Hull House Settlement throughout its evolution.²²³

Before, restoration the mansion’s double parlors and reception room were a “hodgepodge” of furniture with no “specific style”; mission style chairs stood next to a Victorian sleigh sofa while Tiffany pendant lamps graced each room.²²⁴ After restoration the double parlors were staged as mid-nineteenth century period interiors.²²⁵ To restore the parlor on the southeast of the mansion to a mid-nineteenth century appearance, the committee stripped wall paper from the walls, placed a replica Persian rug on the rooms newly polished wood floors and added a bookcase desk from the 1880s. A custom made electric chandelier was also added to the room to allude to the house’s original gas lighting [See Figures 4-1 and 4-2]. In the parlor on the southwest of the mansion, which was previously used as the settlement’s library, the turn of the twentieth century bookcases were stripped away and replaced with a period sideboard. A replica Persian rug was added and the Tiffany style pendant lamp was removed and replaced with another custom chandelier [See Figures 4-3 and 4-4].

Throne’s “American Rooms” exhibit at the Art Institute of Chicago inspired the restoration and staging of these parlors. The Committee felt that two examples of 19th century parlors were particularly appropriate to their restoration efforts, the New York Parlor and the Georgia Double Parlor. Both these parlors represented the 1850s era.²²⁶

²²² “Conclusions: Uses and Furnishings of Hull House,” 5.

²²³ “Conclusions: Uses and Furnishings of Hull House,” 5.

²²⁴ “Conclusions: Uses and Furnishings of Hull House,” 5.

²²⁵ “Jane Addams’ Hull House,” 1967, University Archives, Box 57, University of Illinois at Chicago Special Collections.

²²⁶ “Conclusions: Uses and Furnishings of Hull House,” 5.

With their wall-to-wall carpeting, ornate furniture and heavy draperies these interiors characterized Gilded Age interiors much more than the Progressive style interiors that Addams and Starr established when they originally furnished the Hull House mansion. But, to justify their decision to stage these parlors as mid 19th century interiors, the Committee referenced Addams statement in *Twenty Years at Hull House*, “We were careful to keep it in character with the fine old residence.”²²⁷

What was previously the reception room to the north of the building became the museum’s main exhibit space. This transformation involved stripping the room down to its bare bones. The wood paneling, from the turn of the 20th century, was removed and the other woodwork was painted over. Display cases were added that housed photographs and maps associated with the Hull House and Jane Addams [See Figures 4-5 and 4-6]. Finally, with the restoration, the octagon room to the far south of the mansion, previously used as an office space for Russell Ballard, was converted back into a memorial room for Jane Addams. The room’s furnishings as well as the pictures of Addams and other famous Hull House residents, which covered the walls, were stripped away and a bust of Addams was placed on a pedestal in the center of the room [See Figures 4-7 and 4-8].

In 1965, the restored settlement structures were designated a National Historic Landmark.²²⁸ In keeping with the University’s restoration committee, the nomination form established the period of significance for the Hull House Settlement to be that of

²²⁷ Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull House*, 94.

²²⁸ In 1974, these remaining Hull House buildings also received landmark designation from the City of Chicago.

Jane Addams' occupancy, from 1889-1935.²²⁹ The nomination form outlined that although "the ethnic neighborhood and the nineteenth century structures which crowded around it, and were the setting for the settlement house, have all been removed and replaced with towering university structures" and, although, "the architectural character of Hull-House is a contradiction" with the exterior of the house "restored to a good example of an Italianate house of ca. 1850, while on the interior it has been restored to its appearance when Jane Addams worked there after 1890," the Hull House mansion was still worthy of preservation as an example of one of the first and best known settlement houses.²³⁰

An *Architectural Forum* article, published in 1965, described the restored Hull House mansion, which "pops up at the east edge of the [campus] site," as a "gesture to the losing side, and a substantial delay to the university's timetable."²³¹ In 1967 this "gesture to the losing side" opened as a museum. A bronze plaque was placed on the front of the newly restored Hull House mansion. It did not read "JANE ADDAMS SLEPT HERE."²³² But, instead, "Jane Addams Hull House has been designated as a registered

²²⁹The National Park Service utilizes thematic guidelines in determining and organizing national landmarks. The thematic heading that the Hull House was categorized under was "Social and Humanitarian Movements" with the subheading of "Poverty Relief and Urban and Social Reform."

²³⁰ "Jane Addams' Hull House," National Register Nomination Form, 1964. Note: This National Landmark Designation did not come with any protection from alteration or demolition. On April 23, 1970 Chicago's Landmark Commission also voted unanimously to give the Hull House mansion landmark status, the University of Illinois challenged this designation. University officials testified to the Commission that "the University must preserve the right to use the land on which Hull House stands for future expansion of Circle campus." Bowing to the University, in a precedent setting move, the Landmark Commission voted to give the Hull House mansion landmark designation in name only – the landmarking did not include a "mandatory ban on demolition." In response to this decision, one landmark commission member stated "Hull House is a bastardized reconstruction to begin with, except for its Dining Hall." See: Paul Gapp, "Decision Raises Questions," *Chicago Tribune*, 7 April 1974, 40.

²³¹ John Morris Dixon, "Campus City Chicago," *Architectural Forum* 123 (September 1965): 27.

²³² Ballard, Statement of Russell W. Ballard to the Committee on Housing & Planning, 13 April 1961.

National Historic Landmark under the provisions of the Historic Sites Act of August 21, 1935. This site possesses exceptional value in commemorating or illustrating the history of the United States.”²³³

When she was interviewed by noted reporter and author Studs Terkel in 1967 about the demolition of the Hull House Settlement, Florence Scala one of the leaders of the Harrison-Halsted community group stated:

All that was soft and beautiful was destroyed. You saw no meaning in anything anymore. There’s a college campus on the site now. It will perform a needed function in our life. Yet there is nothing quite beautiful about the thing. They’ll plant trees there, sure, but it’s walled off from the community. You can’t get in. The kids, the students, will have to make a big effort to leave the campus and walk down the streets of the areas. Another kind of walling off.²³⁴

The University replaced one institution with another. However the Hull House Settlement was a neighborhood institution and, unfortunately, the University was not. Hull House’s relationship to the neighborhood was mirrored by its open courtyard. In contrast, the University put a fence around its perimeter, which the neighborhood felt was ‘to keep people out.’ Walter Netsch, the university architect, claimed that they “put the wall in because we knew that black and white young people would be sitting on the grass together, and we were protecting them from the hostile eyes of the neighborhood.”²³⁵

Notably, in their efforts to commemorate Jane Addams, the University unwittingly wrote the community out of the preserved interiors of the Hull House structures. The

²³³ “Restored Hull House Makes June Debut: Plaque, Events to recall Jane Addams’ Legacy,” *U. of I. Chicagoan*, June 1967, 1.

²³⁴ Florence Scala, interview by Studs Terkel, in *Division Street: America*, ed. Studs Terkel (New York: Pantheon Books, 1967), 9.

²³⁵ Netsch, "Oral History of Walter Netsch," 195.

University's restoration committee cleared the reception room, which had been cluttered full of furniture to accommodate visiting neighbors. And, it turned the second floor of the Hull House, where previously neighborhood children had dressed for their drama productions, into a library.²³⁶ The octagon room, which had once displayed the pictures of many of Hull House's famous residents, now held only Jane Addams' bust. As well, the restoration bypassed the Progressive style showcased in the original Hull House interiors, one of the chief influences exercised by the settlement, in favor of purely Victorian style interiors. Although the original Hull House interiors showcased domestic characteristics, they were also a laboratory for social and political reform. The Hull House settlement was both a service institution and a home to its residents. The restoration of these interiors to a purely domestic space overlooked this past. Finally, in their efforts to commemorate Addams, the restoration largely wrote her out of the space with a physical restoration that commemorated an era that predated both Addams and the Halsted neighborhood she served. Taken, together the space that was preserved omitted the racial, class and gender dynamics of the historic settlement house and its neighborhood.

Across these Hull House junctures it is clear that the "brick and mortar" of the settlement buildings was important. Initially, Hull House's home-like interiors grounded the institution in its neighborhood and helped to maintain the idea that settlement residents were neighbors living among neighbors. However, this relationship between the settlement as home and a service institution began to fracture after Addams' death. This fracturing was echoed in the settlement's increasing dislocation from its

²³⁶ "Hull Mansion – Historic Treasure on Campus," *The Chicagoan*, June, 1967, 3.

community. Ballard and Switzer briefly revitalized this relationship and reconnected the settlement with its neighborhood. But this progress was erased when the city demolished the Hull House buildings and its community. The process of demolition and restoration transformed the meaning of the Hull House institution and the Hull House interiors. The interiors, as museum spaces, no longer served to anchor the settlement in its neighborhood. And the settlement, without its architecture, was no longer a neighborhood institution. The story of the Henry Street Settlement, which developed along a similar line of junctures, is the subject of the next chapter.



Figure 4-1. Southeast before restoration



Figure 4-2. Southeast parlor after restoration



Figure 4-3. Southwest parlor before restoration



Figure 4-4. Southwest parlor after restoration



Figure 4-5. Reception room before restoration



Figure 4-6. Reception room after restoration



Figure 4-7. Octagon room before restoration



Figure 4-8. Octagon room after restoration

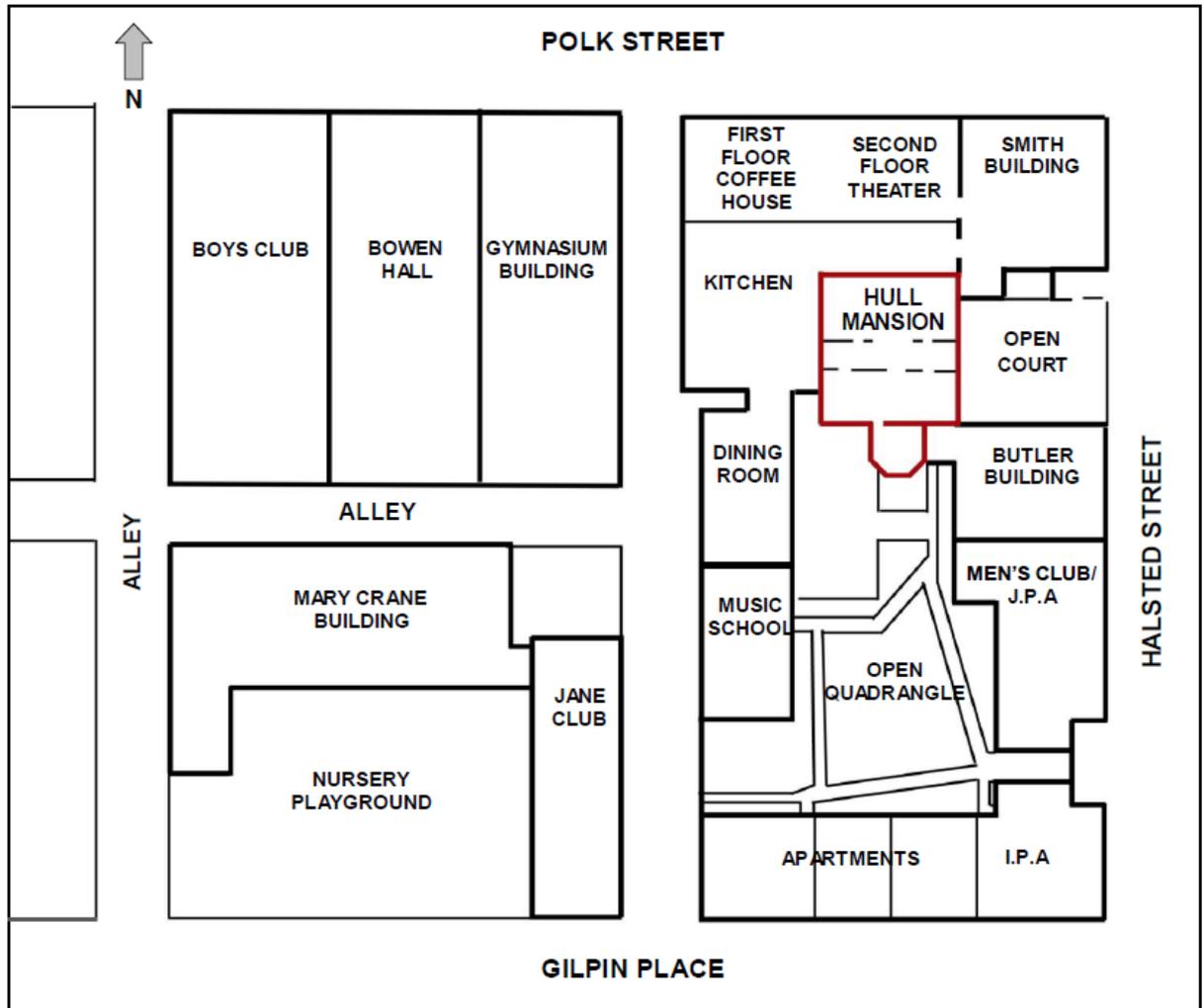


Figure 4-9. Plan of Hull House complex, 1963 [Adapted from: Bryan, M and Allen, D.,1990. 100 Years at Hull House. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), 261]

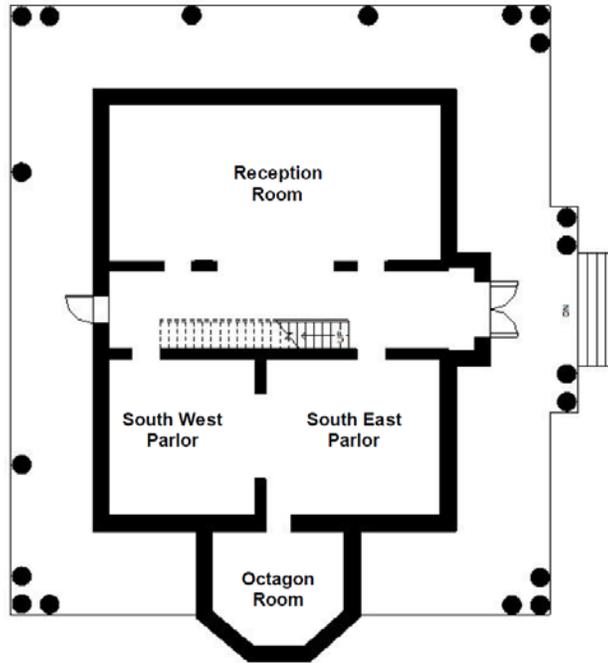


Figure 4-10. Plan of Hull House Mansion after restoration

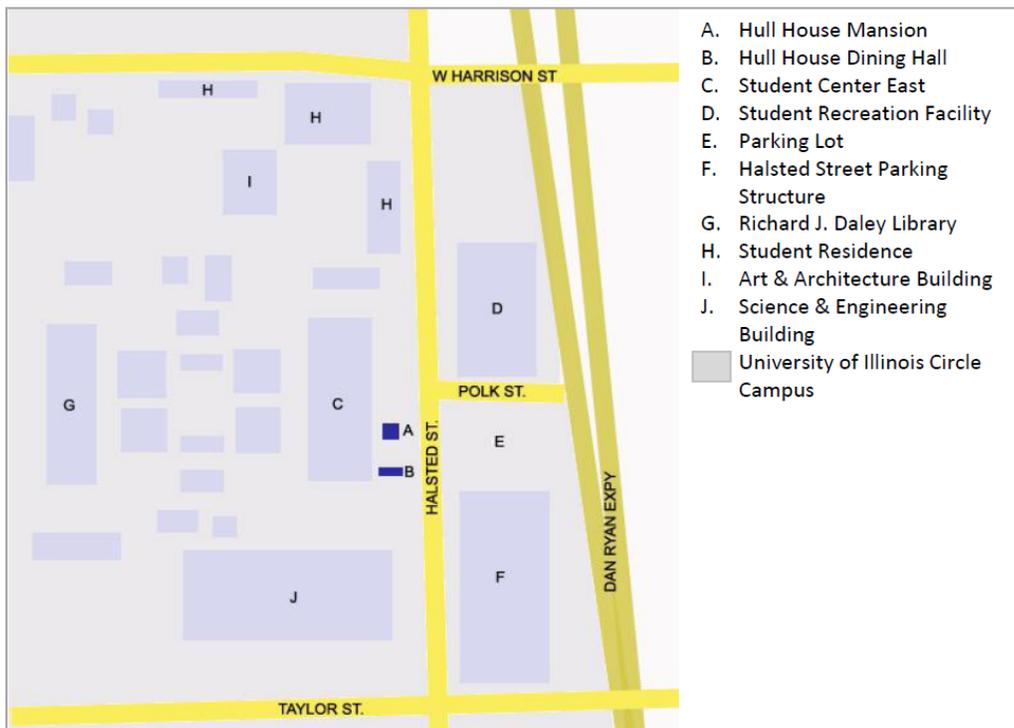


Figure 4-11. University of Illinois at Chicago campus map

CHAPTER 5 HENRY STREET CASE STUDY

Critical Juncture I: Founding of the Henry Street Settlement

Lillian Wald described nursing work as the “raison d’être” of the Henry Street Settlement, which was founded in 1893.¹ Both its founders, Wald and Mary Brewster were nurse practitioners and Wald seized upon the idea of founding a settlement house while working as a nurse in her community. Additionally, when Wald and Brewster founded the settlement on the Lower East Side of Manhattan the larger New York City community referred to it as the Nurses’ Settlement and it provided a visiting nurse service for the surrounding Irish, Italian and Eastern European Jewish immigrant population.

A daughter of German Jewish immigrant parents who managed a successful optical goods business, Wald experienced a comfortable upper-middle class upbringing. She attended an elite French and English boarding school and at sixteen applied to Vassar, but was not admitted. Dispirited she remained at home for several more years before applying to the Training School for Nurses in New York City in 1889. In her application to nursing school Wald wrote, “My life hitherto has been – I presume – a type of modern American young womanhood, days devoted to society, study and housekeeping duties, such as practical mothers consider essential to a daughter’s education.” “This does not satisfy me now,” she confessed, “I feel the need of serious, definite work.”² Nursing, in large part, gave her purpose in life. After she graduated, Wald went to work at a pediatric psychiatric institution, at that time referred to as “an

¹ Lillian D. Wald, “The Nurses’ Settlement in New York,” *The American Journal of Nursing*, 2 (May, 1902): 572.

² Wald, letter to George Ludlum, 27 May 1889, Lillian Wald Papers, Reel 1, New York Public Library.

insane asylum for children.” However, after witnessing the medical staffs’ “cold” and “indifferent” behavior to their patients, she quit in disgust.³ In 1892 Wald enrolled at the Woman’s Medical College in New York City. While she was attending the medical college philanthropist Betty Loeb asked her to teach a housing and cleanliness class at the Sabbath School for Immigrants on the Lower East Side. Wald jumped at the opportunity.

She referred to her experience at the training institution as her “baptism in fire.”⁴ One evening, after class a young girl had asked Wald to examine her mother, who was hemorrhaging after giving birth at home. Wald followed the child home. Appalled by the condition of the immigrant family’s home and their lack of access to basic resources, like medical care, Wald was struck by her responsibility for these people as “part of a society which permitted such conditions to exist.”⁵ This experience “determined” her “within half an hour,” to move to the Lower East Side and start a nursing service.⁶ Within days, she recruited her friend and fellow graduate of the Training School for Nurses, Mary Brewster, to join her in “making our home among the people.”⁷

Although Wald did not practice the Jewish faith, her background provided her with important connections to people in the German Jewish community, like Betty Loeb

³ See: Marjorie N. Feld, *Lillian Wald: A Biography* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2008), 59; Clare Coss, ed. *Lillian D. Wald: Progressive Activist* (New York: The Feminist Press, 1989), 4.

⁴ Lillian Wald, *House on Henry Street* (New York: H. Holt and Co., 1915), 7.

⁵ Wald, *House on Henry Street*, 6-7.

⁶ Wald, *House on Henry Street*, 1.

⁷ Wald, “The Nurses’ Settlement in New York,” 568. Note: There is very little information on Mary Brewster’s background. In his biography on Lillian Wald, Robert Duffus states that she was a descendent of Elder Brewster, the Pilgrim colonist leader who came over on the Mayflower. See: R. L. Duffus, *Lillian Wald: Neighbor and Crusader* (New York: Macmillian Co., 1939), 36.

the philanthropist who established Wald at the training school on Henry Street.⁸ To secure patronage for her settlement, Wald turned to Loeb, who introduced Wald to her son-in-law Jacob Schiff. This “busy banker,” Wald recounted, listened with “understanding ears” to the “despair that an inexperienced girl felt at her first acquaintance with the social condition of people living in the crowded East Side of Manhattan.”⁹ He immediately responded with his financial help and made the founding of the Henry Street Settlement possible. A “fellowship in friendship and social interest” started between Wald and Schiff, which would help to sustain the settlement for the next two decades.¹⁰

It took Wald and Brewster a while to find a permanent home for their nursing activities. While they looked, they lived at the Lower East Side’s College Settlement for two months. However, they were not interested in residing permanently at this location because the College Settlement’s work revolved mainly around club activities, such as the organization of boys’ and girls’ clubs, which differed from Wald and Brewster’s nursing focus. For a space they appealed to Schiff who initially rented them the top floor of a tenement house on Jefferson Street. For two years, these “tiny rooms” with their “clean, bare floors, six-cent white curtains and green growing plants, served as the home base for the two women’s nursing activities.”¹¹ Although their quarters were small,

⁸ Doris Daniels, *Always a Sister: The Feminism of Lillian D. Wald* (New York: Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 1989), 10.

⁹ Cyrus Adler, *Jacob. H. Schiff: His Life and His Letters*, vol. 1 (New York: Doubleday, Doran & Company, Inc., 1929), 391.

¹⁰ Adler, *Jacob. H. Schiff*, 391. Note: In the early days of the settlement, Wald wrote both Schiff and Loeb with monthly reports detailing her experiences in the Lower East Side.

¹¹ Lavina Dock, *Short Papers on Nursing Subjects* (New York: M. L. Longeway, 1900), 29; Note: One of the reasons they picked this apartment was because it was one of two apartments in the neighborhood that had a private bathroom. Wald, *House on Henry Street*, 11.

Wald asserted that “any pride in the sacrifice of material comfort which might had risen within us was effectually inhibited by the constant reminder that we two young persons occupied exactly the same space as the large families on every floor below us.”¹²

This apartment and its location among their tenement neighbors, Wald accounted, “brought undreamed – of opportunities for widening our knowledge and extending our human relationships.”¹³ However, within the first two years, Brewster’s declining health made living in the tenement apartment increasingly difficult for her, which limited her involvement in the settlement. In 1895 Schiff bought a new home for the Nurses’ Settlement. Located at 265 Henry Street, this house stood next door to the building where Wald had originally taught the nursing class that introduced her to the Lower East Side and sent her on the road to settlement work. At this new site a growing group of community-minded nurses started to gather around “the two pioneers.”¹⁴ The shift to this house on Henry Street represented a new chapter for Wald and Brewster’s settlement house. The following narratives explore the settlements’ movement into this new home and capture the significance of the Henry Street Settlement, and its new home from the perspective of a founder, Wald, a patron, Schiff, and a new Henry Street Resident, Lavinia Dock.

¹² Notably, simplicity and economy was not always the impression that the working and immigrant neighbors took away with them. A small boy, after witnessing the interior of the Henry Street settlement told his mother “them ladies live like the Queen of England and eat off solid gold plates.” See: Wald, *House on Henry Street*, 12

¹³ Lavinia Dock quoted in Robert L. Duffus, *Lillian Wald*, 39. Note: Duffus’1938 biography was written with the consent and contribution of Wald.

¹⁴ These nurses included Lavinia Dock, Ysabella Waters and Annie Goodrich. See: Ellen Davidson Baer, et al., *Enduring Issues in American Nursing* (New York: Springer Pub. Co., 2000), 283.

Lillian Wald: “An Inexperienced Girl”¹⁵

This first narrative highlights the voice of Wald. It shifts over time, charting her reaction to her first few years on Jefferson Street and her subsequent move to Henry Street.

In the first couple of years on Jefferson Street, Wald kept in close written contact with her benefactors, Loeb and Schiff. In her letters Wald vividly mapped out the starvation, horrific living conditions and many deaths that she witnessed in the neighborhood. Despite witnessing “the true inwardness of winter’s story,” Wald wrote to Schiff and Loeb, “we likewise see much loveliness of heroism and traits not apparent to the man or women, who know no neighbors as beggars and entreaters.”¹⁶ “One young Russian,” she illustrated, “who has been dangerously close to starving but who would take no charity” had finally appealed to her for 25 cents to “answer an advertisement for work.”¹⁷ Although, he did not get the job he wanted he took a position selling newspapers and, “with thanks,” returned the money to Wald and Brewster. “You see,” Wald wrote in another letter, “I will persist in telling you the nice things of these people.” She continued, “I always feel that it must be a pleasure to know this of them and that you are glad when I can find good to tell.”¹⁸ Despite these harsh conditions Wald and Brewster tried “not to be distributors of alms but to impress the people as friends.”¹⁹ Sometimes, she wrote, the tenement dwellers needed no more “relief” than that of a “womanly friend.” Wald was “sorry” that in her letters she did not always get the time to tell Schiff or Loeb what to her was “the most precious part of the work.” This aspect, Wald maintained, was “the habit the people have of coming to us before they go to their work or when they return” to have their “wounds dressed,” ask “hospital questions, or to talk about what “we’ had better do about the children.”²⁰

In 1895 Wald made plans with Schiff to move the settlement to Henry Street. She hoped that Brewster could continue to reside with her and,

¹⁵ Cyrus Adler, *Jacob. H. Schiff: His Life and His Letters*, vol. 1, (New York: Doubleday, Doran & Company, Inc., 1929), 391.

¹⁶ Lillian Wald, letter to Jacob Schiff and Solomon Loeb, n.d., Visiting Nurse Service of New York Records, Box 187, Folder 29, Health Sciences Library, Columbia University.

¹⁷ Wald to Schiff and Loeb, n.d.

¹⁸ Wald, letter to Loeb and Schiff, 1 October 1894, Visiting Nurse Service of New York Records, Box 187, Folder 26, Health Sciences Library, Columbia University.

¹⁹ Wald, letter to Schiff, 14 July 1893, Visiting Nurse Service of New York Records, Box 187, Folder 10, Health Sciences Library, Columbia University.

²⁰ Wald, letter to Loeb and Schiff, 11 November 1894. Visiting Nurse Service of New York Records, Folder 27, Box 187, Health Sciences Library, Columbia University.

together, from this location they could expand their influence in the neighborhood. "My dear Mrs. Loeb," Wald wrote in March of 1895 "you will be glad, I know, that Miss Brewster hopes to return for the summer work – the advantage of Mr. Schiff's house making the work possible for her to undertake down town again."²¹ Schiff had purchased a new home for the Nurses' Settlement on Henry Street. And this "generous purchaser" had allowed the women "freedom to repair, and alter, as our taste directed."²² The house "readily lent itself to the restorer's touch" and "provided means of increased work and workers."²³ "I fervently hope, Wald continued to Loeb "that the generosity and love" that "provided means" for the growth of the settlement "will never be disappointed in most direct and visible results."²⁴ And, "With Miss Brewster's return to the neighborhood," Wald felt sure "that we might be worth something in the influence of the vicinity."²⁵ A month later, Wald wrote Schiff and Loeb about a "nice widow and her children who took tea with us" as well as other "neighbors" who had come calling and had not left early. "I mention it," she exclaimed "to show that we have not tired of them nor they, apparently, of us."²⁶

Jacob Schiff: A Sympathetic Banker

Jacob Schiff was intimately involved with the development of the Nurses' Settlement.

This narrative highlights his perception of the settlement and the purpose he saw it fulfilling.

In November of 1894 Mary Brewster sent Schiff a note indicating that she intended to "make an effort to remain in association with Miss Wald."²⁷ This was a relief to Schiff who was searching for a new home for the settlement, partially as a way to enable Brewster's continued participation. "This is a great encouragement to me, personally," he wrote to her, "Nothing would give me greater pleasure than if you find yourself in a position to give the great cause in which you and Miss Wald labor your continued

²¹ Wald, letter to Loeb. 26 March 1895, Visiting Nurse Service of New York Records, Folder 33, Box 187, Health Sciences Library, Columbia University.

²² Wald, *House on Henry Street*, 81.

²³ Wald, *House on Henry Street*, 81.

²⁴ Wald to Loeb, 26 March 1895.

²⁵ Wald, letter to Loeb and Schiff, 10 April 1895, Visiting Nurse Service of New York Records, Folder 34, Box 187, Health Sciences Library, Columbia University.

²⁶ Wald to Loeb and Schiff, 10 April 1895.

²⁷ Jacob Schiff quoted in Adler, *Jacob Schiff His Life and Letters*, 383.

cooperation.”²⁸ Schiff hoped to find a “suitable house either in Henry or Madison Street,” which Miss Wald had indicated “to be the location where the proposed house should be preferentially located.”

A devout Jew, Schiff believed that “the word of God heard in the Synagogue becomes of value only if it is carried into everyday life.”²⁹ Wald and Brewster’s work, although non-denominational, allowed him to connect to the “dependent classes,” a large proportion of which were of the Jewish faith, and carry his religious teachings into everyday life. In response to Wald’s concern over the sickness and poverty in the Lower East side, Schiff wrote, “I am almost afraid to think of the misery which surrounds us here on all sides.”³⁰ “But I know you always feel as I do, and perhaps more so,” he consoled, “that those whose lot it has become to help their unfortunate fellow beings are more to be envied than those who have a quiet and easy life and know nothing of the misfortune which exists in this world.”³¹

The personal connection with the poorer classes, enabled through settlement work, attracted Schiff and aligned closely with his worldview. “Charity and philanthropy,” he upheld, “to be effective, should have personal supervision, for it is unlikely that others can carry into practical effect our ideas and intentions as well as we can do it ourselves.”³² And, Schiff was always available to Miss Wald and Miss Brewster to help provide this “personal supervision.” He avidly read their monthly reports, offered advice on the running of the settlement, solicited funds for the settlement and frequently dined with the settlement family. No detail was too small for Schiff - not even the decorating of the new Henry Street home. A few years after Wald moved into the house on Henry Street, Schiff sent her a painting of Joan of Arc, which he requested be placed on the parlor wall, because, as Wald was “good enough” to tell him, “there is a certain hallow around the Joan d’Arc photogravure, which ought to be maintained.”³³

²⁸ Schiff quoted in Adler, *Jacob Schiff His Life and Letters*, 383.

²⁹ Schiff quoted in Adler, *Jacob Schiff: His Life and Letters*, 355-56.

³⁰ Schiff quoted in Adler, *Jacob Schiff: His Life and Letters*, 356.

³¹ Schiff quoted in Adler, *Jacob Schiff: His Life and Letters*, 356.

³² Schiff quoted in Adler, *Jacob Schiff: His Life and Letters*, 355-56.

³³ Schiff, letter to Lillian Wald, 6 January 1902, Lillian Wald Papers, Reel 8, Folder 3, Columbia University Libraries.

Lavinia Dock: The “Settlement Family”³⁴

The previous two narratives emphasize the settlement’s move to Henry Street. This next narrative jumps forward in time five years to illustrate life at the Henry Street location and the voice of one of the settlement’s new family members, Lavinia Dock.

In 1896, at the age of 38, Lavinia Dock moved into the Henry Street Settlement. She had known Wald and Brewster for many years. And, like them, she was a nurse, having graduated from the Bellevue Training School for Nurses in 1886. Dock found the Henry Street house, with its “substantial, three story face” and “open and serene expression,” completely “charming” both “without and within.”³⁵ In an essay on the settlement she wrote, “simplicity, comfort, and beauty” characterized the decoration of the settlement, which contained “a life so full, free, and untrammelled in its cooperative independence that it is hard to know with what to compare it.” “Perhaps,” she deliberated, “it is most like the pleasantest type of family life – a family, to be sure, composed only of women, each one absorbed in busy interests, but in no sense a community or institution.”³⁶ To Dock the settlement house was at the “very heart of things.” And, life at the Settlement was entirely elastic and uncrystallized.” “It has never been hampered by any formula or code,” she continued, “There is no outside management, no committee of ladies, no board of directors.”³⁷ Instead, the work flowed naturally, under the direction of Wald, who was “endowed with all the social genius that could be required in such a life.”³⁸

“Breakfast,” Dock wrote, “is at half past seven, and unless guests are staying in the house this is often the only meal at which the members of the family find themselves alone together.” Following breakfast, the “family” put the rooms in order and Wald, the “head of the family,” distributed new nursing cases as they came in.” The remainder of the day was “spent in caring for the sick” as well as “following out the different lines of work” that developed from the nursing. Any “points of interest, knotty problems, and difficult situations,” which developed during the day “were talked over and settled in family council.”³⁹ This “settlement family” was quite a permanent

³⁴ Dock, *Short Papers on Nursing Subjects*, 31.

³⁵ Dock, *Short Papers on Nursing Subjects*, 29.

³⁶ Dock, *Short Papers on Nursing Subjects*, 29.

³⁷ Dock, *Short Papers on Nursing Subjects*, 35.

³⁸ Dock, *Short Papers on Nursing Subjects*, 33.

³⁹ Dock, *Short Papers on Nursing Subjects*, 30.

one,” and Dock asserted, “its members,” who entered “for indefinite periods,” almost never wished to leave.⁴⁰ This family of nurses also formed “real friendships” with their tenement neighbors, with the same neighbors calling “upon them in every emergency, year in and year out.”⁴¹ The settlement house also drew visitors from around New York - “young men and women of fine intellectual gifts” interested in “questions of municipal management, the schools and educational problems, industrial and economic conditions.” And, “this daily contact with the real things that are going on in the world gives an indescribable charm and fascination to life.”⁴²

Afterwards: “A House on Henry Street”⁴³

There are several important points that emerge out of these founding narratives. For Wald, like Addams, the founding of the Nurses’ Settlement grew out of her personal experiences. And she took the lead in obtaining funding for the settlement, finding a new location for the settlement house and communicating with the settlement’s patrons. Despite her leadership position, it is evident that Wald relied heavily on Brewster’s collaboration and Schiff’s financial generosity in the founding of the settlement. Schiff was much more than a financier. He was very involved in the day-to-day operation of the settlement, counseling Wald on the settlement’s administration. He also contributed to the decoration of the settlement’s new home on Henry Street. This home-like environment is taken up in Dock’s narratives. She highlights the importance of the settlement house as a home, unorganized and without any outside board or committee, and the residents as a family. And she places this home-like environment at the heart of the settlement and its relationship to its immediate neighborhood and the larger New

⁴⁰ Dock, *Short Papers on Nursing Subjects*, 31.

⁴¹ Dock, *Short Papers on Nursing Subjects*, 31.

⁴² Dock, *Short Papers on Nursing Subjects*, 35.

⁴³ Wald, *A House on Henry Street*.

York community. The settlement's relationship to its founders, financiers, family and home-like environment would develop and change over the coming decades.

In the years following the founding of the settlement both Schiff and Wald were careful to keep their names and the settlement house out of the press and in this they were initially quite successful. Schiff abhorred "public honors."⁴⁴ His philanthropy was closely tied to his religious outlook and he did not believe he was "entitled" to "special" honors just because during his life "the Almighty" had "greatly favored" him by allowing him to "render service, and be of some advantage."⁴⁵ For her part, Wald was afraid that the newspapers would sentimentalize her and undercut the "naturalness of her relationship" with her neighbors.⁴⁶ And, when reporters came to the settlement, Wald had the residents send them to speak to her asking that they not speak to the reporters on their own.⁴⁷ Only a scattering of articles exist that document the early days of the Nurses' Settlement on Henry Street, and these articles do not mention the names of the founders, the financiers, or the settlement. For example, a *New York Times* article refers to the settlement as a place "where children play," Schiff is "a man who became interested," is Wald is the "head" of the settlement.⁴⁸ Brewster is not given a moniker. Although the article mentions that two women initiated the settlement, it asserts that the

⁴⁴ Schiff quoted in quoted in Adler, *Jacob Schiff: His Life and Letters*, 352.

⁴⁵ Schiff quoted in quoted in Adler, *Jacob Schiff: His Life and Letters*, 352.

⁴⁶ Duffus, Lillian Wald, 80.

⁴⁷ Duffus, Lillian Wald, 80.

⁴⁸ "Where Children Play," *New York Times*, 26 July 1896, 21.

settlement's "existence and success is really due to one woman with the co-operation of another."⁴⁹

But, Schiff and Wald's narratives suggest that Brewster was an important support person in the establishment of the settlement. They both hoped that the new home base on Henry Street would allow Brewster to remain at the settlement. And, Wald referred to Brewster's contributions to the neighborhood nursing over her two years at the settlement as essential to the influence of the settlement in the neighborhood. Although, Brewster was able to reside briefly at the house on Henry Street, her health did not improve and she left the settlement shortly after moving in. She married around 1897 and passed away not long after that in 1901.⁵⁰ Brewster's early death sidelined her in the interpretation of the founding of the settlement.

When Brewster departed from the settlement, Wald was not left alone. The house quickly filled with a growing group of resident nurses.⁵¹ These new family members included Lavinia Dock, Lina Rogers and Jane Hitchcock, who were all trained nurses.⁵² This "family" of nurses resided at the Henry Street building for decades and significantly shaped the settlement's mission. Alongside these women, Wald also maintained a close relationship with Schiff, who provided advice and funding for the

⁴⁹ "Where Children Play," *New York Times*, 21.

⁵⁰ Note: On her marriage certificate she lists 265 Henry Street as her home address and Lillian Wald as her maid of honor. Very little information exists documenting Mary Brewster's time at the Henry Street Settlement. The Visiting Nurse Service Records at Columbia hold the greatest amount of sources, which consist of a marriage certificate, a death certificate, a picture of her home, and a letter she wrote to Jacob Schiff detailing her nursing visits among the neighbors.

⁵¹ Lillian Wald, "The Nurses' Settlement," Reprint from Transactions of Third International Congress of Nurses, Pan-American Exposition, Buffalo, September 18, 19, 20, 21, 1901, Henry Street Settlement Records, Box 33, Folder 16, Social Welfare History Archives, 5.

⁵² Lavinia Dock lived at the Henry Street Settlement for nineteen years and Jane Hitchcock lived at the settlement for twelve years.

next several decades. With his wife, Schiff dined frequently at the settlement house. And, Wald considered Schiff an integral part of the Settlement. This is clear in her long-term correspondence with Schiff. In one of her letters, she writes “I am always very grateful that from the very beginning, we had your comprehension and ardor to keep us from falling into materialistic pitfalls.”⁵³ In another letter she states, “You and Mrs. Loeb were the first believers in me, and you have always made me feel that you are a sharer in every aspiration that I had for the safeguarding.”⁵⁴ Finally in 1915 she writes Schiff that the house on Henry Street “is your house as well as my House and our House, and I know you want me to bring everything before you.”⁵⁵

Schiff, in turn, referred to Wald as the “soul” of the settlement “family.”⁵⁶ Many other people shared this sentiment. Among the neighborhood children, Wald became known as “Mother Henry.”⁵⁷ On the occasion of her birthday, one grown neighborhood boy wrote to Wald that the “the motherly, or sisterly spirit (I feel grown up) you have shown us, has made us regard you as one of our own, or rather as us all belonging to you and related to each other by ties of sincere friendship.”⁵⁸ To the individuals who resided at the settlement house Wald was the “head of the family.” Lavina Dock detailed this feeling of Wald as the center of the settlement writing, “Miss Wald’s nature seemed

⁵³ Wald, letter to Schiff, 28 November 1911, Lillian Wald Papers, Reel 8, New York Public Library.

⁵⁴ Wald, letter to Schiff, 25 November 1912, Lillian Wald Papers, Reel 8, New York Public Library

⁵⁵ Wald, letter to Schiff, 9 November 1915, Lillian Wald Papers, Reel 8, New York Public Library.

⁵⁶ Schiff, letter to Wald, 24 March 1910, Lillian Wald, Reel 8, New York Public Library.

⁵⁷ Jacob R. Patent, interview by John H. Petito, 30 October 1991, transcript. Henry Street Settlement Records, Box 152, Folder 28, Social Welfare History Archives.

⁵⁸ Joseph M. Levine, letter to Wald, 9 March 1905, Lillian Wald Papers, Reel 8, New York Public Library.

to me to surpass any other that I knew ... “like the sun, she radiated her beams on all without demands or exactions for a return.”⁵⁹

Although Wald and Schiff corresponded regularly about the day-to-day operations of the Settlement, Wald often ignored Schiff’s advice, forging ahead with the settlement’s business. Not long after moving to the Henry Street location, Wald chose to incorporate the Settlement. Schiff cautioned her against this move. Schiff contended that incorporating would place the settlement on the level of a “regular society” and the “interest of some at least, in the Settlement, its work, and its influence, may become lost, or at least diminished.”⁶⁰ He also felt that incorporating might be a disincentive to “earnest young ladies” who may wish to reside at the Settlement “just because it is a family.” A society, he surmised, “would be less of an attraction to many young women who would otherwise like to engage in the great work which unites you and the other members ‘of the family’.”⁶¹ Despite Schiff’s advice, Wald incorporated the settlement on April 1, 1903. “We were driven to it,” she stated.⁶²

Although Wald, like Schiff, was concerned that the incorporation of the settlement could compromise its home-like atmosphere, she felt it was an essential step in the growth of the settlement and its influence in the neighborhood. After incorporation she guarded the settlement’s familial environment carefully, maintaining the tradition of dining together. When Schiff visited the settlement eight years after the settlement’s

⁵⁹ Lavinia Dock, letter to Mrs. Stevens, 6 July 1932, quoted in *A Lavinia Dock Reader*, ed. Janet Wilson James (New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 1985), 25.

⁶⁰ Schiff, letter to Wald, New York, 18 June 1902, Lillian Wald Papers, Folder 3, Columbia University Libraries Special Collections.

⁶¹ Schiff to Wald, 18 June 1902.

⁶² Wald quoted in Duffus, *Lillian Wald*, 57.

incorporation, Wald remarked that it gave her “endless satisfaction” to show him that the “expansion of the work is not at the cost of the personal relationships” and that “the different staffs gather together to talk over the individual problems of their patients or of the children in the clubs or of the neighbors.”⁶³

From the earliest days of the settlement Wald highlighted the spontaneous, unrestricted and unstructured nature of the settlement work, which she felt distinguished it from an institutional feel. This was echoed in her rhetoric around the decorating of the interiors of the settlement’s first home on Jefferson Street and then the house on Henry Street. In her book *A House on Henry Street*, Wald reflected on the decoration of the Jefferson Street apartment. She described the tenement apartment as having “Painted floors with easily removed rugs, windows curtained with spotless but inexpensive scrim, a sitting-room with pictures, books, and restful chairs, a tiny bedroom which we two shared, a small dining room in which the family mahogany did not look out of place, and a kitchen.”⁶⁴ Largely, she attested, these provisions for their “material comfort” were met in order to appease the objections of their family and friends to “two young women living alone in New York.”⁶⁵

When she moved to the house on Henry Street, Wald tried to “keep the new living quarters as informal and non-institutional as the old.”⁶⁶ And many recollections speak to the spontaneous nature of Wald’s decorating. One resident recounted that shortly after moving into the house on Henry Street, Wald ripped down the building’s

⁶³ Wald, letter to Schiff, 28 November 1911, Lillian Wald Papers, Reel 8, New York Public Library.

⁶⁴ Wald, *House on Henry Street*, 11.

⁶⁵ Wald, *House on Henry Street*, 11.

⁶⁶ Duffus, “Lillian Wald,” 57.

mahogany doors and turned them into tables for her residents to gather around.⁶⁷ An 1896 newspaper article titled “Where Children Play,” provides one of the first descriptions of the settlement house.⁶⁸ It portrays the new Henry Street building as full of “artistic simplicity,” with the “cool effect of the bare polished floor, the subdued light from half-closed blinds and muslin draperies” creating a feeling of “mental refreshment” from “sights and sounds and smells” of the crowded city streets. The parlor is described as “exquisitely neat” with denim upholstered seating and folding doors that led to the dining room, which featured “dimity-hung windows” and “inexpensive oak.”⁶⁹ In this “simple” and “exquisitely neat” interior space, the author writes, “the sights and sounds and smells of the street were forgotten, and one realized that the breezes which wafted through the rooms were pure and fresh from the neighboring river, and that here in the heart of the tenement district it was possible to be as cool and comfortable as one would wish – if one only knew how.”⁷⁰

The idea of the settlement as a refuge or oasis was echoed in other descriptions of the house. Another article details “the unseen spiritual effect of a place in that noisy neighborhood where the poorest and the wretchedness may bring their troubles and receive a courteous and kindly hearing and wise help.”⁷¹ Philanthropist Alice Lewisohn described the house similarly. The door, she outlines, opened “as if by magic, to

⁶⁷ Feld, *Wald*, 53.

⁶⁸ “Where Children Play,” 21.

⁶⁹ “Where Children Play,” 21.

⁷⁰ “Where Children Play,” 21.

⁷¹ Duffus, *Lillian Wald*, 134.

fragrant hospitality in the classic simplicity of a chaste Colonial setting.”⁷² Years later a neighborhood boy would recount that the Henry Street Settlement was not a “forbidding” place; instead, “the atmosphere, the people there were more cordial.”⁷³ The Henry Street Settlement had, he described, “a warm atmosphere, it made you feel at home.”⁷⁴ To create this home-like oasis Wald looked to the past and drew on the townhouse’s colonial-style architecture. The polished wood floors, simple white drapery, and modest denim upholstered seating of the Henry Street home referenced the Colonial Revival Style, and through it an idealized past of “colonial virtue,” which reinforced the settlement’s image as a retreat from the “squalid and wretched” realities of modern city life.⁷⁵

The legend around the naming of the settlement reflected Wald’s emphasis on informality. Before moving to the Henry Street location, Wald and Brewster never officially gave their enterprise a name; the title of the nurses’ settlement was a default name. The title of the Henry Street Settlement was chosen shortly after moving to the new Henry Street location. According to legend, at a baseball game an opposing team heckled the Settlement sponsored boys athletic team with cries of “Hey noices [sic] ! Noices [sic]!”⁷⁶ In deference to their masculine dignity, Wald changed the name of the settlement. Whether or not this was the definitive reason behind the name change, the

⁷² Alice Lewisohn, quoted in Duffus, *Lillian Wald*, 136.

⁷³ Patent, interview by Petito, 30 October 1991.

⁷⁴ Patent, interview by Petito, 30 October 1991.

⁷⁵ “Where Children Play,” 21. Note: The Philadelphia Centennial in 1876 popularized the Colonial Revival style. See: Helen Sheumaker and Shirley Teresa, *Material Culture in America: Understanding Everyday Life* (Santa Barbara, Calif.: ABC-CLIO, 2008), 108.

⁷⁶ Duffus, *Lillian Wald*, 59.

new name did reflect Wald's attempts to draw neighborhood boys and men into the settlement.⁷⁷ Wald also actively recruited male residents to live in the settlement in order to make the settlement more gender inclusive.⁷⁸ But, the choice of the name also reflected the Settlement's expansion into more traditional settlement activities alongside its nursing activities. At this location, cooking and sewing classes, girl's and boy's clubs, a playground and a space for dramatic productions complimented the settlement's original function of providing visiting nursing services.

Wald wrote "The Settlement grew and grew because it seems to have been a plant that reflected the earth in us and about us."⁷⁹ To accommodate this growth, the Henry Street Settlement rented the next door building, 267 Henry Street, and acquired buildings 299, 301 and 303 Henry Street in 1902. These buildings were adapted from old residences to accommodate "residence quarters, a gymnasium, shower baths, meeting rooms, a kindergarten, and a lobby"⁸⁰ In 1910 the settlement, with the help of Jacob Schiff, purchased the building next to the settlement, 267 Henry Street. This was the building where Lillian Wald taught her first nursing class to neighborhood women. At this time, passages were cut between this building and the original Henry Street house and the "two houses" were "used as one."⁸¹ A playhouse, several blocks north on 466 Grand Street, which was built in 1915, was bequeathed to the settlement in 1927. Its purpose was to bring opportunities of dance and drama to the neighborhood children.

⁷⁷ Daniels, *Always a Sister*, 62.

⁷⁸ Daniels, *Always a Sister*, 63.

⁷⁹ Wald, *House on Henry Street*, 59.

⁸⁰ "A Short Guide for Visitors to Henry Street Settlement," April 1995. Henry Street Settlement Records. Box 35, Folder 8, Social Welfare History Archives.

⁸¹ Dock, *Short Papers on Nursing*, 29.

And in 1934 the settlement acquired a tenement building at 263 Henry Street, which butted against the headquarter buildings. Interior doors were cut through to merge this new building with 265 and 267 Henry Street.⁸² Overall, the first three decades of the Henry Street Settlement witnessed the expansion of its physical plant to eight times its original size.

Despite the appearance of haphazard growth, Wald and Schiff carefully deliberated over every detail of the expansion. Wald frequently wrote Schiff about her plans for the settlement to which he responded with financial and personal advice. To illustrate, when Wald and Brewster first started their visiting nurse service Schiff suggested that they wear badges proclaiming that they were under the auspices of the Board of Health in order to lend them authority and gain them entrance into tenement homes. In the second decade of the twentieth century Wald and Schiff, after much consultation, began to actively use city newspapers to solicit funds. As well they carefully began to grow the settlement's Board in order to help facilitate the creation of an endowment fund to ensure on-going financial security. They carefully deliberated over the composition of the board and actively looked to bring more Gentiles onto the board so as not to appear too Jewish.⁸³

Rather than fitting the entire settlement under one roof or in adjacent buildings, Wald chose to expand into a number of existing residential buildings throughout the neighborhood. These buildings were not all clustered on one block but were scattered throughout the Lower East Side. This manner of expansion was also carefully thought

⁸² "The Story of How the Henry Street Settlement Grew," (n.d) Henry Street Settlement Records, Box 36, Folder 3, Social Welfare History Archives.

⁸³ Lillian Wald Papers, Reel 8, New York Public Library.

out. By organizing “in small scattered groups rather than in large communities of workers” Wald felt that the settlement was “better able to reach naturally and intimately those with whom they seek to become acquainted.”⁸⁴ Also, Schiff discouraged the use of new construction, which he felt looked too institutional. When Wald proposed building on an adjacent property to the settlement, Schiff cautioned against it. “I fear if you have a building specially erected for the purpose you have in mind, it would tend to institutionalize, to some extent at least, your neighborhood work, which now has so much of the personal touch.”⁸⁵ However, this scattering of resources also impeded communication to a certain degree between the different functions and branches of the settlement house. To address this, Wald developed the *Settlement Journal*, with the intent of keeping the settlement worker abreast of the various settlement activities.⁸⁶ The central administration buildings, 263, 265 and 267 Henry Street, were also intended to help connect the many settlement entities.⁸⁷

By 1902 Henry Street had greatly expanded its services beyond basic nursing to foster thirty-five clubs for all ages and supply a myriad of cultural activities, like dancing classes, singing classes, theatrical services and concerts. It housed a kindergarten and reference library, and its education activities included sewing, crocheting, carving, housekeeping, civic classes, history, literature and current affairs. In terms of nursing work, in that year alone the nurses conducted 26,000 home visits and

⁸⁴ *Settlement Journal*, April 1904, Henry Street Records, Box 35, Folder 12, Social Welfare History Archives.

⁸⁵ Schiff, letter to Wald, 31 March 1916. Lillian Wald Papers, Reel 8, New York Public Library.

⁸⁶ *Settlement Journal*, April 1904.

⁸⁷ *Settlement Journal*, 31 March 1916.

treated 12, 694 cases.⁸⁸ The Henry Street Settlement also produced several branch institutions. The settlement's Uptown House was established in 1896 and a Branch in the Bronx was established in 1906. As well, in 1906 the Henry Street Settlement established the Stillman Branch for Colored People, located at 205 West 60th Street, to provide settlement programs to the African American community.

The small intimate family of nurses, which resided at the Henry Street Settlement, also grew. There were approximately nine nurses in residence in 1898, by 1900 there were fifteen and by 1906 there were twenty.⁸⁹ And, by 1909 the nursing service grew too large to be housed solely at 265 Henry Street. Also joining the nurses in residence at the headquarters were volunteers without a nursing background. The nurses referred to these new residents as the "laity" and increasingly this "laity" assumed the majority of settlement tasks.

By 1909, the nursing service had spread to eleven different houses throughout New York City.⁹⁰ To meet the needs of this growing service Wald created the position of Director of the Henry Street Visiting Nurse Service in 1917. This position was given to long time resident Annie Goodrich while Wald remained Head Resident of the settlement and President of the Board of Trustees. The service continued to expand rapidly and by 1924 employed 253 nurses. As the nursing service grew and expanded

⁸⁸ Wald, "The Nurses' Settlement," 10.

⁸⁹ Duffus, *Lillian Wald*, 69.

⁹⁰ Arlene Wynbeek Keeling, *Nursing and the Privilege of Prescription, 1893-2000*, (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2007), 8.

out of the headquarter buildings, nursing increasingly became separate from the settlement functions.⁹¹

By the late nineteen teens Wald began to cast around for a central building for the nurses. She wrote to Schiff that a central building “would stabilize the nursing service and take away the impression that we are local.”⁹² She was particularly interested in the Loeb-Schiff ancestral home on 38th street. “Even if it would not be large enough,” she wrote, “there would be valuable compensation connected with the historic position that you and your family have taken.”⁹³ The “Old Family Homestead,” was not to be had, but, on September 25, 1920 Jacob Schiff passed away and in his memory his wife donated a new central administration building to Henry Street’s Visiting Nurse Service.

The new building, located on 99 Park Avenue, opened on January 12, 1923. Like the Henry Street headquarters, the settlement merged together two historic buildings to create this new structure. Located on the main floor of the building was a conference room, a small lecture room, consultation rooms and offices. A restaurant was located on the ground floor of the building, which was open to “the nurses and social workers of the neighborhood” as well as the “general public.”⁹⁴ The building also included a suite for the Director of Nursing. Notably the building’s interiors, through its use of fine furniture, intimate spaces and a hearth, referenced the historic Henry Street headquarters in its attempts to create a home-like atmosphere.

⁹¹ Keeling, *Nursing and the Privilege of Prescription*, 8.

⁹² Wald, letter to Schiff, 6 September, 1917, Lillian Wald papers, Reel 8, New York Public Library.

⁹³ Wald to Schiff, 6 September 6, 1917, Reel 8.

⁹⁴ “Schiff Memorial Home for Nurses,” *New York Times*, 7 January 1923, X6.

On January 10, 1923 the Schiff family formally dedicated the building to the nurses' service. This opening was held in front of a warm fireplace rather than a platform. Paul D. Cravath, who spoke at the opening, called the new building a "beautiful chapel" that "enshrines the house on Henry Street." A writer from *The American Journal of Nursing*, Sallie Woods, wrote that the inside of the building had "the look of home" with its "fireplace," "soft lamplight," "bowls of roses," and "beamed ceiling."⁹⁵ It did not look "new" or "empty," but as if the "old memories of Henry Street had already trooped in and were there to welcome the friends who came that night."⁹⁶ At the "very heart of the buildings," the assembly room, an inscription written by Wald's good friend Jane Addams in dedication of the opening of the building was placed over a memorial fireplace. This inscription read, "This building is given in memory of Jacob Henry Schiff ... and is dedicated to the cause of public health nursing, which he long fostered for love of progressive education, civic righteousness and merciful administration."⁹⁷

With Schiff's death the running of the Henry Street Settlement fell solely into Wald's hands. This transfer of power was evident in the dedication of the new nursing building. Mortimer Schiff, son of Jacob Schiff, remarked at the building's opening that the building "does not mean to our mother, and to us, her children, a structure of brick and mortar It is dedicated to service, to suffering humanity, and we know, Miss Wald, that in your hands ... the ideals which it represents will be cherished and its mission

⁹⁵ Sallie Calkins Wood, "An Evening to Remember," *The American Journal of Nursing* 23 (March 1923): 456.

⁹⁶ Wood, "An Evening to Remember," 453.

⁹⁷ "Schiff Memorial Home for Nurses," X6.

fulfilled.”⁹⁸ Although the new building was not on Henry Street, a *New York Times* article declared, Henry Street was still the “heart of the service” and “fortunately Miss WALD” was “here to see that this new centre of a larger service, whatever its physical location” was “still, in spirit, in ‘Henry Street’.”⁹⁹ Sanctioned by Wald, the new nurses’ building retained a connection to the settlement despite its Park Avenue location. Now, more than ever, Wald was the “soul” of the Henry Street Settlement and over the next decade her mystique would grow. When she retired in 1933 the Henry Street residents removed the painting of Joan of Arc that Schiff had given to her many years before and replaced it with a portrait of Wald. A new saint graced the wall of the Henry Street Settlement.

Although the settlement was established by a number of people and personalities, Wald became the dominant personality of the Henry Street Settlement. Like Addams, her ascendancy grew over time. Neither Wald nor Brewster took the lead in furnishing the settlement’s original home on Jefferson Street. However, with the settlement’s shift to Henry Street, Wald took ownership of the space. She provided Schiff with the preferred location for the home and when the two women moved into the space, Wald took down the settlement’s doors and made them into dining room tables for the residents to gather around. These tables became the center of the settlement life. It was here that the women gathered in the morning to discuss nursing assignments and again in the evening to discuss the day. And, the settlement used these dining room tables as the setting for the majority of their fundraising campaigns. And, at these dining room tables, Wald reigned supreme. She was the women at the head of the table,

⁹⁸ Wood, “An Evening to Remember,” 456.

⁹⁹ “Henry Street,” *New York Times*, 10 January 1923, 22.

presiding over the meals and the running of the settlement alike.¹⁰⁰ Brewster's short tenure at the new settlement house facilitated Wald's claim to the space. And, the nurses who followed her into the settlement did not challenge this claim. The dining room and Wald became the center of the settlement. Wald's central role at the Henry Street Settlement would prove to be a challenge to her successor, Helen Hall.

Critical Juncture II: Transition to a New Head Resident

After a serious operation in 1930, Wald retired as Henry Street's Head Resident. But, before retiring, Wald chose her successor—Helen Hall—who she described as “extremely attractive” with a “splendid head on her shoulders.”¹⁰¹ Possessing an impressive resume in social work, Hall had trained at the New York School of Philanthropy, which later became Columbia University's School of Social Work. Subsequently, she had worked at the Westchester Department of Child Welfare and with the Red Cross during World War I. After the war Hall became Head Resident at the University House in Philadelphia. In 1933, Hall took over the position of Head Resident at the Henry Street settlement.¹⁰² Notably, compared to the experience of Adena Rich and Charlotte Carr at Hull House, Hall transitioned into this position with relative ease. This transition was facilitated by a liberal board, which remained under the directorship of Lillian Wald until 1937.¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰ Feld, *Lillian Wald*, 51-53.

¹⁰¹ Wald, letter to Elsa Herrman, 19 June 1935, Henry Street Settlement Records, Box 33, Folder 7, Social Welfare History Archives.

¹⁰² Helen Hall, *Unfinished Business in Neighborhood and Nation*, (New York: Macmillian Company, 1971), xii-xiii.

¹⁰³ Hall, *Unfinished Business*, p. 8.

In her first seven years at Henry Street, Hall was in constant contact with Wald. She wrote Wald letters asking everything from whom to invite for Thanksgiving dinner to whether or not Henry Street should support the Cuban women's movement. In turn, Wald did what she could to facilitate Hall's settling into Henry Street. When Hall married Paul Kellogg, editor of the *Survey*, a social welfare magazine, in the mid 1930s, Wald wrote her asking what needed to be moved out of her old rooms in order to accommodate their cohabitation. "There must be many things in my room that you wish could be removed and your own personal things put in their place," Wald wrote to Hall, "Whatever your plans are I will say 'me to.'" She continued, "You may have already disposed of the things that are in the way but I want to be quite sure that there is no confusion in your mind or in the room."¹⁰⁴ When Hall wrote Wald asking who she should invite to Thanksgiving dinner, Wald wrote her back, "much as I desire to see my beloved friends, my great desire is to have the day expressive of you as well as of me"¹⁰⁵ Although Wald facilitated the transfer of power from herself to Helen Hall, she maintained an active presence, both physically and programmatically, at the settlement house. She requested that her portrait be placed over the fireplace mantel in the headquarters' parlor. And beneath this portrait, a painting of Wald's country home was placed so visitors could "sense the beauty of the Henry Street House" and see the "next chapter."¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴ Wald, letter to Hall, 15 February 1935, Henry Street Settlement Records, Box 33, Folder 4, Social Welfare History Archives.

¹⁰⁵ Wald, letter to Hall, 6 November 1933, Henry Street Settlement Records, Box 33, Folder 8, Social Welfare History Archives.

¹⁰⁶ Wald, letter to Hall, 12 November 1936, Henry Street Settlement Records, Box 33, Folder 8, Social Welfare History Archives.

However, a few growing pains emerged in the transition of leadership. Like Carr and Rich at Hull House, Hall had to mediate between the memory of Wald and putting her own mark on the Settlement House. She recalled that one young boys club had determined not to like her because “they had loved Miss Wald so much.” However, after a few months, Hall reported, they gave up the “luxury of disliking me, to which apparently they had looked forward to with such zest.”¹⁰⁷ Hall also recalled that one resident cried herself to sleep every night after she moved her furniture and belongings into Lillian Wald’s room: “To her it seemed desecration; to me it just seemed like my old furniture.”¹⁰⁸ However, these negotiations were small and resolved themselves naturally.¹⁰⁹ Largely, this was because Hall worked hard to maintain a sense of continuity in leadership. To Wald she wrote, “I am not a bit anxious to do away with old traditions but I do think that their significance should be thought through in relation to any changes.”¹¹⁰ She continued, “I am sure you know by this time that I have a great feeling for the value of continuity in a settlement’s work and I do not want any of the old Henry Street people to feel that they are not as welcome and as much a part of it all as they ever were.”¹¹¹ Hall recognized the importance of place in making people feel at home. Unlike Carr, who shuffled and rearranged the interiors of Hull House, Hall purposely made no immediate changes to the settlement interiors in her first few years

¹⁰⁷ Hall, *Unfinished Business*, 7.

¹⁰⁸ Hall, *Unfinished Business*, 7.

¹⁰⁹ Hall, *Unfinished Business*, 3-9.

¹¹⁰ Hall, letter to Wald, 19 November 1934, Helen Hall Papers, Box 14, Folder 4, Social Welfare History Archives.

¹¹¹ Hall to Wald, 19 November 1934.

of residency so “even if returned visitors had to see a new head, they could at least feel at home in the parlor.”¹¹²

The ease of Hall's transition was also marred by a dispute with the settlement's Visiting Nursing Service. Unlike Hall's other growing pains this dispute would not resolve itself naturally; instead this clash would lead to a fundamental shift in the Henry Street program. With its move to its new headquarters on Broadway in 1920, the Visiting Nurse Service had become increasingly distinct from Henry Street's settlement functions.¹¹³ Wald, who was both a nurse and the founder of the settlement acted as the bridge between these two branches. However, when Wald retired and left her position to Hall who was not a nurse, relations between the settlement and the nurses became tense. The nurses challenged Hall's supervision over the Nursing Committee on the basis that she was a layperson and had no knowledge of nursing. For the nurses, Hall could not replace Wald as a “common dominant influence.”¹¹⁴

Exacerbating these tensions was the Great Depression, which placed the nurses and the settlement under immense fundraising strains. In 1931 Wald had written a letter to Mayor James Walker requesting funds, which outlined the impact of the economic downturn on the nurses. She wrote, “The nurses of the Henry Street Settlement are literally overwhelmed with the suffering that they encounter, and the nurses themselves suffer even more because of fear that they may find their patients dead through lack of

¹¹² Hall, *Unfinished Business*, 9.

¹¹³ “Visiting Nurses,” *New York Times*, 29 September 1930, 17.

¹¹⁴ Special Committee, letter to the Board of Directors, 28 October 1943, Henry Street Settlement Records, Box 2, Folder 1, Social Welfare History Archives.

food and depression about them.”¹¹⁵ The request failed to procure the needed funds and over the next decade the Visiting Nurse Service continued to fight for survival with “its back to the wall.”¹¹⁶ Settlement politics did not make the nurses’ drive for funds easier. When President Roosevelt ran for reelection in 1937 Wald and Hall supported his reelection, which lost the Visiting Nurse Service the support of some of their more conservative funders.¹¹⁷

Tensions between Hall and the Nurses came to a head in 1936 over the formation of a committee to pick a new Director of Nursing and the role that Hall, as Head Resident, would play on that committee.¹¹⁸ Hall felt that she should play a significant role in the appointment of a new Director, while the nurses felt that it was a professionally-based issue and should not be determined by someone without the appropriate credentials. Consequently, the nurses began to call for a separation of nursing from the other social services offered at Henry Street. But Wald felt the coexistence of these two functions was essential to the mission of the Henry Street Settlement and did not condone the separation.¹¹⁹ Bedridden in her country home in Connecticut, Wald frantically wrote Marguerite Wales, who had succeeded Goodrich as Head Director of nursing in 1923, and Hall, arguing against a separation of the two functions of the Henry Street Settlement.

¹¹⁵ Duffus, *Lillian Wald*, 291.

¹¹⁶ Wald quoted in Duffus, *Lillian Wald*, 294.

¹¹⁷ Duffus, *Lillian Wald*, 319-322.

¹¹⁸ Wald, letter to Hall, 19 May 1936, Henry Street Settlement Records, Box 33, Folder 8, Social Welfare History Archives.

¹¹⁹ See: Henry Street Settlement Records, Box 2, Folder 10 & 11, Box 14, Folder 5, Social Welfare History Archives.

Lillian Wald: “A Nurse and a Headworker”¹²⁰

The following narrative highlights Wald’s reaction to the nurses’ threat to separate.

Although she was unwilling to grant Hall authority over the nurses, she took her to task over her inability to address their complaints.

“The nurses are never to be interfered with,” Wald wrote Hall in May of 1936.¹²¹ From her home in Westport, Connecticut, Wald had received letters from Hall and Wales detailing the disagreement. These letters worried her. “It would be a tragedy,” Wald felt, “if not much more than a technicality should destroy an edifice so carefully and patiently built up.”¹²² The last time Helen had visited her, they had discussed what, as Head Resident, her position was in regards to the nurses. “You would be on the nursing committee,” Wald had remarked. Standing at the foot of her bed, Hall appeared “perfectly satisfied” with this answer. “I had assurance that you, with your personality, your intelligence, and your ability to articulate could overcome differences,” Wald exclaimed.¹²³ But, it was obvious that this was not longer the case. “I am very unhappy, she continued, “because it seems to me that a relatively unimportant issue menaces the structure that took all that I was and all that I had and all that was only too little for the inception and development of Henry Street Settlement.”¹²⁴ “Perhaps” she “should have taken up the storm signs more strenuously,” but she was bedridden and sick.¹²⁵

She had also written many letters to Miss Wales outlining “the essential principle of public health work and social service in combination.”¹²⁶ Although Wales was “inhibited from power of adjustment and articulation,” Wald believed her capable of carrying on in “the spirit and the quality of the work for which the service was created.”¹²⁷ To Wales, she wrote that the two branches of the settlement were “mutually interdependent,” like “twins,

¹²⁰ Wald to Hall, 19 May 1936.

¹²¹ Wald, letter to Hall, 11 May 1936, Henry Street Settlement Records, Box 33, Folder 8, Social Welfare History Archives.

¹²² Wald to Hall, 19 May 1936.

¹²³ Wald to Hall, 19 May 1936.

¹²⁴ Wald to Hall, 19 May 1936.

¹²⁵ Wald to Hall, 19 May 1936.

¹²⁶ Wald to Hall, 19 May 1936.

¹²⁷ Wald to Hall, 19 May 1936.

inseparable, and they work together to the advantage of both.”¹²⁸ Their “inter-relationship” was “immensely important” to the purpose of the Henry Street Settlement.¹²⁹ “The real contribution that I have made, Wald explained to Miss Wales, “is a certainty of the relationship of public health nursing and public health in its entirety with the social point of view.”¹³⁰ And on no account, she upheld, should the services separate. Hall, she asserted, “does not want to speak as a nurse for the nurses.”¹³¹

The Nurses: A “Loss of Confidence”¹³²

The next narrative captures the perspective of the nurses as a group. With the loss of Wald, a trained nurse, as an active presence at the Settlement House the nurses increasingly felt that their voice was not being heard.

The nurses were overworked and underfunded. And, with the current economic conditions of the Depression putting even greater demands on the nurses’ time and resources, the Henry Street Settlement was rapidly losing nursing staff to exhaustion and illness. “The nurses are finding conditions in the homes much more acute than they have ever encountered before, Head Director of Nursing Marguerite Wales reported to the New York Times in 1933. “Because of these conditions,” she continued, “we believe that no call should go unanswered.”¹³³ But this put an incredible strain on the service and they desperately needed more nurses to help “carry the burden.”¹³⁴ However, the settlements’ budget limitations made bringing in more nurses difficult. And, the nurses bemoaned that the outspoken political opinions of the settlement side of Henry Street, which advocated “medical insurance and socialized medicine,” alienated potential donors.¹³⁵

¹²⁸ Wald quoted in Duffus, *Lillian Wald*, 311.

¹²⁹ Wald quoted in Duffus, *Lillian Wald*, 311.

¹³⁰ Wald quoted in Duffus, *Lillian Wald*, 311.

¹³¹ Wald, letter to Hall, 19 May 1936, Henry Street Settlement Records, Box 33, Folder 8, Social Welfare History Archives.

¹³² Report of the Nursing Committee, 7.

¹³³ “Settlement Nurses Appeal for \$114,000,” *New York Times*, 25 January 1933, 14.

¹³⁴ “Settlement Nurses Appeal for \$114,000,” 14.

¹³⁵ Report of the Nursing Committee, 19 October 1943, Henry Street Settlement Records, Box Folder 11, Social Welfare History Archives, 3.

To add insult to injury, a Board of mostly lay people controlled the funding that the nurses did have access to and they chafed under this control. This discontent was exacerbated with the appointment of Helen Hall, a “non-nurse” who was “able in her own field but not competent in nursing.”¹³⁶ Wald’s “genius and her dual role as leader in both nursing and social work enabled her to administer both activities without questions.”¹³⁷ But with Hall’s appointment, the unquestioned administration of the Head Resident could not continue.¹³⁸ The nurses also worried that the name “Henry Street” was holding them back in their work as well as with their funding opportunities. The name tied them to a particular locality and many people still thought that the nursing service only operated in the Lower East Side. But, the nurses were also “loathe” to give up the name because it had such a “wealth of favorable meaning.” The name, “throughout the city, the nation and the world,” stood for “devotion, efficiency and virtually all that is high and fine in visiting nursing.”¹³⁹ “Our problem” stated one nurse, “is to preserve the good will of this name and at the same time to spread a consciousness of the extent as well as the quantity of this service.”¹⁴⁰

Helen Hall: A Layperson and a Headworker

Hall’s narrative provides a counterbalance to the nurses’ claims that their voices are marginalized. She paints the picture of a settlement, and a Head Resident, that is cobbled in its leadership by the demands of a fringe group.

“It seems a shame for you to be burdened with the whole thing,” Hall responded to Wald on May 15, 1936. She did recognize that “these are hard days for the nurses with flu, bronchitis, and pneumonia, a real epidemic.”¹⁴¹ And, she was not “unsympathetic” to the “nursing problem.” “Goodness knows,” she wrote Wald, “I ... have worried infinitely more over it since I have been at Henry Street than I have over anything at the settlement.”¹⁴² She had carefully tried to court the nurses. Earlier in the year

¹³⁶ Report of the Nursing Committee, 4.

¹³⁷ Report of the Nursing Committee, 2.

¹³⁸ Report of the Nursing Committee, 2.

¹³⁹ James H. Perkins, “Help for Henry Street Nurses,” *New York Times*, 14 December 1934, 22.

¹⁴⁰ Perkins, “Help for Henry Street Nurses,” 22

¹⁴¹ Hall, letter to Wald, 17 February 1936, Helen Hall Papers, Box 14, Folder 4, Social Welfare History Archives.

¹⁴² Hall, letter to Wald, 2 January 1936, Helen Hall Papers, Box 14, Folder 5, Social Welfare History Archives.

she had invited them to the settlement's Playhouse and "tried (unsuccessfully) to give them some conception of what Henry Street meant as a whole" from its founding and onwards. Hall, and a group of "careful guides," had then taken the nurses on a tour of Henry Street's "different buildings where the heads of departments told of the work done in each." "I feel," Hall wrote Wald, "that they should know the place from whence they sprang!"¹⁴³ And, at the time, "Miss Wales seemed really to be very pleased over it all." But in the long run relations with the nurses had not improved.¹⁴⁴

In October Hall wrote Wald with a write-up for the newspapers, which she was hesitant to issue "for fear it will stir up more trouble."¹⁴⁵ The write-up outlined that the settlement's "national political campaign" coincided with the "fall drive for funds for the Visiting Nurse Service of the Henry Street Settlement."¹⁴⁶ And, Hall appealed to the "good sportsmanship of the New York public to keep the two things distinct in their minds." She was not happy to have to issue this type of statement, writing to Wald, "America begins to take on the outline of Germany or Russia when people cannot express publicly their political opinions."¹⁴⁷ She was getting tired of pandering to the nurses. Fundraising for the nursing mission of the settlement house had taken up a large portion of her time, resources and energy. And a great deal of the "preventive and constructive things" that she could initiate through the settlement, was "lost sight of" in their "great effort" to facilitate the nursing budget.¹⁴⁸

Afterwards: A "Confusion of Authority"¹⁴⁹

In the end even the "genius" of Wald could not appease the two sides. And Wald, rather than giving Hall authority over the nurses, in the manner that she had practiced during her tenure at Henry Street, separated the administration of the Visiting Nurse

¹⁴³ Hall, letter to Wald, 18 January 1936, Helen Hall Papers, Box 14, Folder 4, Social Welfare History Archives.

¹⁴⁴ Helen Hall to Lillian Wald, 17 February 1936, Helen Hall Papers, Box 14, Folder 4, Social Welfare History Archives.

¹⁴⁵ Hall, letter to Wald, 14 October 1936, Helen Hall Papers, Box 14, Folder 4, Social Welfare History Archives.

¹⁴⁶ Hall to Wald, 14 October 1936.

¹⁴⁷ Hall to Wald, 14 October 1936.

¹⁴⁸ Hall to Wald, 2 January, 1936.

¹⁴⁹ Report of the Nursing Committee, 7.

Service from the rest of the settlement's activities in 1937. Although they both remained under the corporate umbrella of the Henry Street Settlement, each branch was given a Head Director of equal standing that functioned under the settlement's Board of Trustees.¹⁵⁰ And, the Board created the position of Executive Vice President to mediate between the two groups. That same year Wales retired as Head Director of Nursing and Katherine Faville, associate dean at Western Reserve University's nursing school, replaced her as Head Director of Nursing.¹⁵¹ As well, Wald resigned as President of the Henry Street Settlement, writing Hall that "the big black wolf seemed crouching near."¹⁵² She requested that "whoever be elected by the Board for presidency should be familiar with and dedicated to the purpose of the Settlement."¹⁵³ In keeping with this request, John Schiff, grandson of Jacob Schiff, became President of the Henry Street Settlement.¹⁵⁴ The division of the executive functions did not spell the end of the conflict. The nurses claimed "by the time this action was taken strong feeling on the part of nurses both within and without our organization had arisen."¹⁵⁵ And, these strong feelings would bubble to the surface following Wald's death in 1940.

¹⁵⁰ Report of the Nursing Committee, 4.

¹⁵¹ "New Jobs," *The Survey* 123 (April 1937): 120.

¹⁵² Wald, letter to Hall, 8 November 1937, Henry Street Settlement Records, Box 33, Folder 8, Social Welfare History Archives.

¹⁵³ Wald, letter to George W. Alger, 23 October 1937, Henry Street Settlement Records, Box 33, Folder 9, Social Welfare History Archives.

¹⁵⁴ See: Wald, *House on Henry Street*, with forward by Eleanor Brilliant (New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers, 1991), xxiii; William Blairs, "John Schiff, A Philanthropist and Investment Banker, Dies," *New York Times*, 10 May 1987.

¹⁵⁵ Report of the Nursing Committee, 4.

In 1939, the nurses moved out of their administration building on Broadway into a five-story brownstone at 262 Madison Avenue.¹⁵⁶ In the tradition of Henry Street's administrative buildings and the nurses' Broadway building, the settlement adapted an existing residential building to create their new headquarters. When they moved to this new building the nurses took the memorial fireplace, with the dedication from Jane Addams, from the Broadway home and installed it in the new building. In the new building the memory of Jacob Schiff would be maintained, but the nurses' deserted some of Henry Streets' founding concepts, such as residence in the neighborhood they served. As well, the new building was not home-like. It contained executive offices, meeting rooms and a large classroom, but, unlike the Broadway building, no living quarters or communal dining space. By not accommodating a communal dining space, or the trappings of a home environment, the nurses moved one step further away from the settlement concept.

On September 1, 1940 Wald died at the age of 73 years old. Her private funeral rites were held at noon on September 3 in Westport, Connecticut. A second service was held for her that same afternoon at the Henry Street Settlement. The afternoon service was attended by throngs of people, including among them, Mayor of New York City, Fiorello H. La Guardia, and Secretary of Labor, Frances Perkins. The funeral services were also broadcasted on a local New York radio station the next day. Harry Schlacht, of the East Side News, reported "Lillian Wald ... has procured for herself a niche in the Temple of Fame together with Jane Addams, her intimate friend, Florence Nightingale,

¹⁵⁶ "Nursing Service Opens New Home," *New York Times*, 18 May 1939, 27.

Susan B. Anthony and Louisa Lee Schuyler.”¹⁵⁷ President Roosevelt sent a telegram to be read, which stated, “The Henry Street Settlement with its superb record in bringing light to dark places and joy to hearts that had known only sorrow is her true monument.”¹⁵⁸ John Schiff, grandson of Jacob Schiff and president of the Henry Street Settlement, also paid tribute to Wald at her funeral. “The institution we serve,” he stated, “is but a living expression of her vision and endless courage.”¹⁵⁹

Without Wald her “living expression,” the Henry Street Settlement, could not survive in the same form. Her death severed the last tie between Henry Street’s nursing and the settlement functions. Shortly after her death, Henry Street’s Nursing Committee began to call for an official separation from the Henry Street Settlement. With the resignation of their new head director, Katherine Faville, they felt that “a crisis has been reached.” As well, the appointment of an Executive Vice President who was a “man” as well as a “non-nurse” had exacerbated the situation.¹⁶⁰ Finally, the nurses felt there was too much confusion operating under one Board and one name. It was clear that the combination of these services was limiting the usefulness of both. As an example, the nurses highlighted the settlement staff’s stance on “medical insurance and socialized medicine,” which had led to “misunderstandings” between the Nursing Committee and the medical community. In October 1943 the nursing committee formally requested that

¹⁵⁷ Harry H. Schlacht, “Lillian D. Wald: The Soul of American Social Service Statesmanship Whose Name will be Crowned with August Halo of Immortality,” Henry Street Settlement Records, Box 165, Folder 8, Social Welfare History Archives.

¹⁵⁸ “President Honors Miss Wald’s Work,” *New York Times*, 2 December 1940, 23.

¹⁵⁹ “Obituary 8 – No Title,” *New York Times*, 4 September 1940, 32.

¹⁶⁰ Report of the Nursing Committee, 4.

these two functions be “separated financially, corporately, functionally and otherwise.”¹⁶¹

To assuage the nurses’ concerns, the Settlement’s Board formed a Special Committee to review the management of the Settlement and the Visiting Nurse Service. After several months of negotiation between the two groups, the Committee presented its recommendations. The current “state of disharmony” could not be permitted.¹⁶² The Committee highlighted that previously the Settlement had functioned successfully on the basis of the personality of a single individual.¹⁶³ But it could “no longer continue in such a way.”¹⁶⁴ The nursing and settlement functions had drifted too far apart in terms of policy, politics and management. However, the Committee felt the large amount of property held by the Henry Street Settlement, as well as the issue of ownership over the corporate name, would pose too big of a challenge to a corporate separation. Instead, they surmised that it was easier to reorganize within the existing corporate body. The planned reorganization would give the nurses a majority on the settlement board.¹⁶⁵ “Under this set-up,” the Committee asserted, “neither the Visiting Nurse Service nor the Settlement would have to give up the almost priceless advantage of the name of Henry

¹⁶¹ Report of the Nursing Committee, 1.

¹⁶² B. A. Tomkins, letter to the Board of Directors, 28 October 1943 Henry Street Settlement Records, Box 2, Folder 11, Social Welfare History Archives, 1.

¹⁶³ Report of the Nursing Committee, 2.

¹⁶⁴ Report of the Nursing Committee, 4.

¹⁶⁵ B. A. Tomkins, letter to Helen Hall, 29 October 1945, Henry Street Settlement Records, Box 2, Folder 11, Social Welfare History Archives, 1.

Street.”¹⁶⁶ The nurses did not find this proposal satisfactory and continued to call for more control.

In turn, the Board increasingly became less patient with the nurses’ demands. It felt that the settlement had worked hard to include the nurses in the larger settlement activities, but felt that the nurses failed to reciprocate this overture. To illustrate the situation, the Special Committee highlighted the inclusion of the nurses in the Settlement’s 50th Anniversary processions as well as efforts to emphasize the achievements of the Visiting Nurse Service in the celebration. In contrast, the Visiting Nurse Service’s semi-centennial celebration “was all so sandblind as to be a joke.”¹⁶⁷ The audience, the Committee asserted, “would have never have guessed that Lillian D. Wald founded Henry Street Settlement, that it was here that she organized the Visiting Nurse Service, and carried it through its early stages; or that this companion institution that she initiated is still in existence and functions today as an all round neighborhood center and civic force in this same city of New York.”¹⁶⁸

By fall 1943 negotiations between the groups had deteriorated to the point that, a Committee member wrote, it was “like too women leaning over the back fence calling each other names.”¹⁶⁹ And although the corporate separation of the nursing service from the Settlement represented “a complete negation of the spirit Miss Wald infused

¹⁶⁶ J. H., letter to Robert T. Swaine, 15 October 1943, Henry Street Settlement Records, Box 2, Folder 11, Social Welfare History Archives.

¹⁶⁷ Special Committee, “Re: Draft of Revised Recommendations on Henry Street Settlement Reorganization,” Henry Street Settlement Records, Box 2, Folder 11, Social Welfare History Archives, 4.

¹⁶⁸ Special Committee, “Re: Draft of Revised Recommendations on Henry Street Settlement Reorganization,” 4.

¹⁶⁹ B. A. Tompkins, Letter to Helen Hall, 29 October 1943, Henry Street Settlement Records, Box 2, Folder 11, Social Welfare History Archives.

into the organization,” the board felt that the nurses’ demands had become unreasonable.¹⁷⁰ Settlement board member Newbold Morris wrote Hall that a complete separation had become “most agreeable” because they had “wasted too much time already trying to straighten our obscure differences” and he would “welcome the opportunity to establish our own settlement work in the public mind as one of the most compelling services in the entire city.”¹⁷¹ Another committee member wrote that he could not “help thinking of Czechoslovakia ... a vociferous impetuous minority terrifying the big powers – up to a point we can appease, but now it is time for us to stand firm for the first proposal.”¹⁷² The Committee was no longer going to make concessions.

The Committee did stand firm and by January 1944 had determined its plan for reorganization: the corporate separation of the nursing functions from the rest of the settlement functions. The nursing function became the Visiting Nurse Service of New York. This was free to use any title as long as it did not contain the words “Henry Street” in it. John Schiff left the settlement board to become the first president and chairman of the service’s board.¹⁷³ Interestingly, despite their complaint that the Executive Director was a man, when the nurses separated from the settlement, their organization became more “physician-driven.”¹⁷⁴ This more patriarchal approach largely subsumed the

¹⁷⁰ Board member, letter to Bob (board member), n.d. Henry Street Settlement Records, Box 2, Folder 12, Social Welfare History Archives.

¹⁷¹ Newbold Morris, letter to Hall, 16 December 1943, Henry Street Settlement Records, Box 2, Folder 11, Social Welfare History Archives.

¹⁷² Board Member to Bob, n.d.

¹⁷³ William G. Blair, “John Schiff, a Philanthropist and Investment Banker, Dies, *New York Times*, 10 May 1987, 30.

¹⁷⁴ Beth Houser and Kathy Player, *Pivotal Moments in Nursing: Leaders Who Changed the Path of a Profession* (Indianapolis: Sigma Theta Tau International Honor, 2007), 373.

“patient focused,” “nurse-driven” and collaborative approach of Wald’s original Visiting Nurse Service.¹⁷⁵

Although the Visiting Nurse Service relinquished their right to the Henry Street name they continued to invoke both the settlement and Lillian Wald in their fundraising campaigns. In a 1944 appeal for funding the service stated,

“The Henry Street Visiting Nurse Service, which Lillian D. Wald founded in 1893, makes its appeal for funds this year under its new name, the Visiting Nurse Service of New York. The change of name results from an expansion of service, so that the old association with a pioneer settlement house could no longer be maintained. Miss Wald’s ideals continue to do their work both in the settlement house and in home-nursing activities in the three boroughs.”¹⁷⁶

For its part, during the reorganization, the settlement briefly went by the name of the Lillian Wald settlement. But, it reverted back to the Henry Street Settlement name once the reorganization ended. The Settlement also retained control of the historic settlement buildings and their interpretation. Following the separation, the last remaining nurses’ offices were moved out of Henry Street’s central headquarter buildings.¹⁷⁷

In retrospect, Bertram Beck, who succeeded Hall as Head Director of the Henry Street Settlement in 1967, referred to the leadership as it passed from Wald to Hall as having a “seamless quality.”¹⁷⁸ The nurses’ separation from the Henry Street Settlement belies this statement. This split changed the settlement irrevocably, no longer did nursing, which was its “*raison d’être*,” exist in the settlement’s program or in its physical spaces. But, Hall did have a talent for making things appear seamless.

¹⁷⁵ Houser and Player, *Pivotal Moments in Nursing*, 373.

¹⁷⁶ “The Visiting Nurses,” *New York Times*, 27 October 1944, 22.

¹⁷⁷ Hall, *Unfinished Business*, 6.

¹⁷⁸ Bertram Beck, interview by Greg Raynor, 14 November 1991, transcript, Henry Street Settlement Records, Box 152, Folder 4, Social Welfare History Archives.

Nursing remained a part of the Settlement's identity. Hall continued to reference the nursing service in the settlement literature and kept the settlement open to nurses who wanted to live there.¹⁷⁹ And, in 1946, she opened the Mental Hygiene clinic, which brought a health emphasis back into the settlement's mission.¹⁸⁰

The similarities between the way Hall and Wald ran the settlement enhanced this sense of continuity. Despite the departure of the nurses, Henry Street remained a service institution grounded in its home-like environment. For Hall, like Wald, the settlement was "both her home and her agency; it was she who sat at the head of the table and ladled out the evening supper's soup."¹⁸¹ Her office was a few feet away from her apartment suite and the settlement activities often spilled over into these rooms. And Hall, like her predecessor, felt that this type of environment was essential to the settlement's role as a neighborhood organization. "The job of the head of the settlement," Hall maintained, "is to be a neighbor."¹⁸²

Hall supplemented the home-like interiors of Henry Street with the addition of her own personal mementos. She was an artist as well as a settlement worker and her sculptures and woodcarvings soon decorated the settlement house.¹⁸³ Hall also introduced cats to the home-like environment of the settlement. "Cats, she asserted,

¹⁷⁹ Hall, letter to Miss Starosta, 23 January 1945, Henry Street Settlement Records, Box 28, Folder 10, Social Welfare History Archives.

¹⁸⁰ "The Story of How Henry Street Settlement Grew," n.d. Henry Street Settlement Records, Box 36, Folder 3, Social Welfare History Archives.

¹⁸¹ "Helen Hall," 12 April 1983, Henry Street Settlement Records, Box 165, Folder 1, Social Welfare History Archives.

¹⁸² Phillips McCandlish, "Henry St. Losing a Friend," *New York Times*, 13 June 1967, 42.

¹⁸³ Jeanne DeRevie, "Angel of the Tenements, No. 2," 11 November 1936, Helen Hall Papers, Box 1, Folder 18, Social Welfare History Archives.

“are splendid settlement residents.” Hall had several cats each laying claim over a specific room of the settlement. As Hall stated, “one rules the kitchen, one the dining room, and a small Siamese runs my office for me.”¹⁸⁴ She claimed that the cats brought a hominess to the settlement space and, felt vindicated in her assumptions when she asked a young boy what building he liked the best and he replied “the first one [265 Henry Street], of course ... because that’s where the cats are!”¹⁸⁵

Although Hall felt that “fighting for change” was one of the “settlement’s primary jobs,” she also maintained that the “settlement’s continuity and stability” were important to those whose lives have been instable from babyhood on.”¹⁸⁶ And, she asserted, “One of the most important contributions Henry Street had made to an ever-changing neighborhood has been this sense of stability.”¹⁸⁷ Throughout her tenure at the Henry Street Settlement, Hall strove to maintain this “sense of stability” in the settlement’s program and its interiors. In the early 1960s, she would be the driving force behind the preservation of the settlement’s home-like spaces, as explored in the next critical juncture.

Critical Juncture III: Henry Street Preservation

In 1963 the Henry Street Settlement celebrated its seventieth year of service. This anniversary marked “perhaps the greatest physical change” in the history of the settlement house, with the replacement of many of the Settlement’s “wornout” buildings

¹⁸⁴ Helen Hall, letter to Paul Gallico, 26 September 1962, Henry Street Settlement Records, Box 165, Folder 1, Social Welfare History Archives.

¹⁸⁵ Hall, *Unfinished Business*, 62-63.

¹⁸⁶ Hall, *Unfinished Business*, 9

¹⁸⁷ Hall, *Unfinished Business*, 9

and the rehabilitation of the Settlement's headquarters on 365 Henry Street."¹⁸⁸ In an open letter to the neighborhood highlighting the upcoming celebration, Hall announced that the "building program got under way" with the demolishing of the aging 299, 301 and 303 Henry Street structures, which had belonged to the settlement since 1902, and the initiation of construction of the Guttman building on this site. Hall also indicated that the bulldozer was rapidly approaching another settlement building – the Music School, which was slated for demolition as a result of a widening of Pitt Street. But "in search of a new site" for the Music School activities, Hall emphasized that an opportunity had "appeared on" the Settlement's "doorstep."¹⁸⁹ The City had agreed to sell the settlement a plot of land next to their Playhouse on Grand Street to build a new art center. At this site, the settlement could bring together all of its "creative services," which were "widely scattered and inadequately housed."¹⁹⁰

Finally, she announced that the settlement was "happy to learn" that New York's newly formed Landmark's Commission was considering landmarking 263-65-67 Henry Street as excellent examples of Federal architecture. "The opportunity to retain these fine old buildings in the midst of the tall housing developments that bring a sameness to the once picturesque neighborhood," Hall stated, "is welcomed not only by all of us close to the Settlement, but by our neighbors who are responsive to the beauty of the old houses." However, she continued, despite how "beautiful they may be architecturally ... they are badly in need of repair and renovation."¹⁹¹ So alongside the building of the

¹⁸⁸ From the Office of Miss Helen Hall, "It Happened on Henry Street," 4.

¹⁸⁹ From the Office of Miss Helen Hall, "It Happened on Henry Street," 4.

¹⁹⁰ From the Office of Miss Helen Hall, "It Happened on Henry Street," 4.

¹⁹¹ From the Office of Miss Helen Hall, "It Happened on Henry Street," 5.

Guttman building and the new art center, the Settlement was raising funds for the renovation of the three headquarter buildings. Hall's announcement of the settlement's building spree and the preservation of its structures suggested a happy confluence of circumstances. However, these building projects were the culmination of several years of negotiation between the settlement and the City of New York. And, notably, three years prior to this open letter, as part of these negotiations, the Henry Street Settlement had considered knocking down its three historic headquarter buildings.

Henry Street's building program coincided, and monopolized on, a change an approach to urban development in New York City. In 1959 City Commissioner Robert Moses, and his Slum Clearance Board, had proposed the Seward Park Extension Plan for the Lower East Side. This new project was an extension of the middle-income Seward Park development, which was located on Grand Street.¹⁹² And it would involve the widespread demolishing of this neighborhood. However, this was one on the last redevelopment plans this Board proposed. At the time of this announcement opposition to Moses and his Slum Clearance Committee was gathering in New York. Primarily this opposition was a reaction against the large scale condemning, clearing and auctioning of land that the Committee had enacted under the auspices of Title I of the 1949 Federal Housing Act. Under Title I, many working class New Yorkers had lost their homes and businesses to middle class developments. More often than not the city did not rebuild these homes and businesses. Threatened by the Board's bulldozers, historic neighborhoods, such as Gramercy, Bellevue South and Riverside, had mobilized to

¹⁹² Very few published sources exist that thoroughly discuss the Seward Park Extension Plan. An unpublished dissertation provides one of the most detailed examinations of this project. See: Joan A. Turner, "Building Boundaries: The Politics of Urban Renewal in Manhattan's Lower East Side," (Ph.D. diss., City University of New York, 1984); Thomas Angotti & Peter Marcuse, *New York for Sale: Community Planning Confronts Global Real Estate* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2008).

stave off projects in their neighborhood.¹⁹³ Also opposing Moses-style urban redevelopment were well-known names like community activist Jane Jacobs and Chairman of New York's Urban Renewal Board and the City Planning Commission, James Felt. Both these figures held a tremendous amount of political clout. In response to this growing discontent, in 1960 Mayor Wagner dissolved the Slum Clearance Board and replaced it with the Housing and Redevelopment Board.¹⁹⁴

The Housing and Redevelopment Board would “drastically” alter the practices of the Slum Clearance Board, introducing three new procedures to follow in urban renewal projects.¹⁹⁵ First, the new Board would create the blueprints for redevelopment and give these to the developers rather than vice versa. Second, the board would encourage a “mixture of high and low buildings” within a single development in “an attempt to overcome ‘deadly monotony’.”¹⁹⁶ And, third, the Board would now consider “worth-while older structures” for “preservation and integration into the new schemes.”¹⁹⁷ By “retaining buildings of historical interest while meeting the demands of a growing city,” the new board hoped to “create a neighborhood atmosphere” in its urban renewal areas.¹⁹⁸ The newspapers happily exclaimed that this plan was a welcome “departure from previous projects that leveled an area with bulldozers and put up uniform,

¹⁹³ See: Charles Grutzner, “Gramercy Group Protests Razings,” *New York Times*, 5 March 1959, 38; Charles Grunter, “Bellevue Title I Faces New Fight,” *New York Times*, 20 September 1959, 66; Edith Evans Asbury, “New Fight Made on Slum Project,” *New York Times*, 14 March 1959, 39.

¹⁹⁴ “Plan for Housing,” *New York Times*, 13 March 1960, E2.

¹⁹⁵ John Sibley, “New Title I Plan Outlines for City by Housing Board,” *New York Times*, 5 June 1960, 1.

¹⁹⁶ “How to Tame a Bulldozer,” *New York Times*, 26 February 1962, 26.

¹⁹⁷ “How to Tame a Bulldozer,” *New York Times*, 26 February 1962, 26.

¹⁹⁸ Samuel Kaplan, “Renewal Project Urged for East Side,” *New York Times*, 20 April 1965, 29.

monotonous buildings that looked as if they had been stamped out of a cookie cutter.”¹⁹⁹

This third procedure would modify the City’s approach to the Seward Park Extension Plan and provide the Henry Street Settlement with the opportunity to both preserve and expand its buildings. The Henry Street Settlement was initially not included in the Seward Park Extension Area. However, to meet their own development and building needs they were interested in becoming a part of this area. As early as January 1960, before the Slum Clearance Board was dissolved, Henry Street’s Board of Directors wrote the City of New York requesting that the redevelopment program include the “area on the Lower East Side bounded by Henry Street, Grand Street, East Broadway and Montgomery Street.”²⁰⁰ The Board asserted that this area constituted “a peninsula of deterioration in the middle of a neighborhood that has otherwise been excellently redeveloped with both public and cooperative housing.”²⁰¹ Two of Henry Street Settlement’s buildings were located in this region and, with these buildings, the Board was “prepared to cooperate in a redevelopment program in the interest of the neighborhood” it served.²⁰² And in the fall, the settlement also wrote architectural critic, and advocate of classical architecture, Henry Hope Reed Jr. regarding the preservation of cultural centers in the midst of urban developments.²⁰³

¹⁹⁹ Kaplan, “Renewal Project Urged for East Side,” 29.

²⁰⁰ Winslow Carlton, letter to the Slum Clearance Board, 15 January 1960, Henry Street Settlement Records, Box 119, Folder 4, Social Welfare History Archives.

²⁰¹ Carlton to the Slum Clearance Board, 15 January 1960.

²⁰² Carlton to the Slum Clearance Board, 15 January 1960.

²⁰³ Note: Since 1956 Reed conducted popular walking tours in the Lower East Side focused on the City’s architectural past. Hope Reed referred the settlement to Stanley Tankel, Director of the Regional Planning Association of New York as well as Professor Christopher Tunnard, whom he stated was one of

While the Henry Street Settlement saw room for preservation and expansion in the midst of an urban redevelopment plan, its neighbors displayed a mix of responses to the proposed project. Henry Street's long time, mostly middle class, Jewish neighbors saw the renewal and development of their neighborhood as advantageous. The new plan promised to protect many of their places of worship from the wrecking ball as well as bring much needed middle-income housing to the neighborhood. In contrast, "low-income and minority" residents, mainly of Puerto Rican and Hispanic origins, were worried that the development would push them out of the neighborhood.²⁰⁴ Joining them in this concern were local business groups, who regardless of ethnicity, felt that their businesses would not benefit from the process of redevelopment.²⁰⁵ For its part, the Housing and Redevelopment Board felt that the project, which did not call for widespread demolition, was a huge leap forward from past development projects. The next three narratives capture the perspective of the Henry Street Settlement, the Housing and Redevelopment board, and Henry Street's low-income neighbors as they negotiated this new urban renewal plan.

Henry Street Settlement: "The House the Bulldozer Missed"²⁰⁶

The Henry Street Settlement saw opportunity in the Seward Park Extension Plan for the expansion of their community programs. "The House the Bulldozer Missed" highlights

the national authorities on the question of preservation in urban redevelopment. See: Robert A. M. Stern, Thomas Mellins and David Fishman, *New York 1960* (New York: Monacelli Press, 1995), 1095; Henry Hope Reed Jr., letter to Mrs. Tefferteller, 18 October 1960, Henry Street Settlement, Box 13, Folder 4, Social Welfare History Archives.

²⁰⁴ Joan A. Turner, "Building Boundaries: The Politics of Urban Renewal in Manhattan's Lower East Side," (Ph.D. diss., City University of New York, 1984), 209.

²⁰⁵ Turner, "Building Boundaries," 208-211.

²⁰⁶ "Henry Street Settlement Urban Life Center: A Guide," Henry Street Settlement Records, Box 36, Folder 4, Social Welfare Archives.

the voice of Helen Hall as she bargains for land within the boundaries of this renewal plan.

The Henry Street Settlement was mobilizing all its resources to monopolize on the proposed Seward Park Extension Plan. And, these resources were considerable. Many prominent New Yorkers sat on the settlement's board of directors, not the least of which was James Felt, Chairman of the City Planning Commission. As a friend and mentor to Clarence Davies Jr., head of the Housing and Redevelopment Board, Felt had a direct line on the project.²⁰⁷ So when he talked to Hall on the phone on June 12th and indicated that the settlement would get the piece of property next to their theater under the extension plan, she quickly announced it to "everyone" at the settlement and they were "delighted" and had "planned accordingly."²⁰⁸ She had thought "everything was all right" until Father Keough had contacted her stating that he was promised this property for the Catholic Church and a parochial school. Sam Ratensky, executive assistant of the Housing and Redevelopment Board, also called to tell Hall that there were issues with this site. To Hall it appeared as if there was "an effort to keep Henry Street off this property."²⁰⁹ After the phone call with Ratensky, Hall sat down and penned a quick note to Felt. "Dear Jim," she wrote, "this is personal letter written to both friend and Board Member as well as City Planner because I am very much confused over what seems to be happening in regard to the property next to our Playhouse on Grand Street." "We," Hall stressed "had gone to great pains to consider other plans which involved the consolidation of our buildings and might have saved something in maintenance costs." This is a long story," she continued, "and one which you realize only partially."²¹⁰

"A good many months ago," the United Housing Foundation's architect, Herman Jassor, had approached the settlement house with the "proposition" that they move the "Playhouse off Grand Street and replace both the Playhouse and Music School in the triangle east of Pete's House."²¹¹ Alternatively, he had also suggested that they could move these buildings to the 265 Henry Street location, do away with the three historic headquarter buildings and construct a larger Settlement building at this site.

²⁰⁷ Samuel Zipp, *Manhattan Projects: The Rise and Fall of Urban Renewal in Cold War New York* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 359.

²⁰⁸ Hall, letter to James Felt (Draft), 6 July 1961, Henry Street Settlement Records, Box 13, Folder 4, Social Welfare History Archives.

²⁰⁹ Hall to Felt, 6 July 1961.

²¹⁰ Hall to Felt, 6 July 1961.

²¹¹ Hall to Felt, 6 July 1961.

Hall, and the settlement board, had seriously considered both these propositions asking their architect, Benjamin Moscovtitz, to make preliminary plans exploring if the Henry Street facilities would work at either of these locations. Unfortunately, the settlement had found that the room at both these sites was “inadequate.”²¹² “At this point,” the only option for the settlement was to retain the theater and build the music school next door. At this site, the settlement also hoped to “enlarge” their “facilities for music, drama, dance, and art to serve the people of the neighborhood.”²¹³ “I am sure you would agree,” Hall asserted, “that Henry Street has made a sufficient contribution to the neighborhood throughout the years” and is “important enough to the neighborhood for us not to have to plead for space.” Instead, Hall felt the city should “beg us to stay here as an enrichment to the neighborhood’s life.” The Henry Street Settlement served “the poorest people” in the Lower East Side, as well as the “middle income.”²¹⁴ And the Seward Park Extension Plan, which hoped to unite these two classes, could look to the Settlement as “without a doubt the most effective bridge” between middle income and low income neighbors. “Henry Street has deep roots and a rich tradition of service,” Hall concluded, “and it is very disturbing to feel that this seems to matter so little and that we have to be in a position of defending ourselves at a time when we are so needed.”²¹⁵

Housing and Redevelopment Board: “How to Tame a Bulldozer”

The next narrative spotlights the perspective of the Housing and Redevelopment Board.

It moves from 1961 when the Board formally announced its retention of a group of community institutions within the renewal project to four years later when New York’s Board of Estimates officially approved the Extension Plan.

The handwritten, hastily scrawled greeting “Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!,” appeared across the news release that the Housing and Redevelopment Board sent the Henry Street Settlement December 20th 1961.²¹⁶ “Today,” the release exclaimed, the board “is inviting applications

²¹² Winslow Carlton, letter to Commissioner Davies, 4 October 1961, Henry Street Settlement, Box 13, Folder 4, Social Welfare History Archives.

²¹³ Carlton to Davies, 4 October 1961.

²¹⁴ Carlton to Davies, 4 October 1961.

²¹⁵ Carlton to Davies, 4 October 1961.

²¹⁶ The City of New York Housing and Redevelopment Board, “News,” 19 April 1965, Henry Street Settlement Records, Box 126, Folder 8, Social Welfare History Archives.

for sponsorship of the Seward Park Extension urban renewal project, bounded by Grand, Essex, South Delancey and Willett Streets.”²¹⁷ The sponsorship had opened up with the “formal withdrawal of the previously designated sponsor, United Housing Foundation.”²¹⁸ More importantly, the news release announced “preliminary plans” called for the “retention of eight existing community institutions on the site.”²¹⁹ These eight institutions were the Henry Street Settlement, St. Mary’s Roman Catholic Church, Beth Hammidrash, Bialystoker, Hagodol, Sons of Israel and Downtown Talmud Torah Synagogues, and Beth Jacobs School. The project also provided for “rehabilitation or expansion” of these institutions’ facilities “where necessary, for future service to the entire surrounding community.”²²⁰

Four years later, in 1965, the reconstituted Seward Park Extension Renewal Area was formally designated. Herbert Evans, new Chairman of the Housing and Redevelopment Board, proclaimed that the new extension was a “major advance in the Mayor’s war on slums.”²²¹ Earlier proposals to develop this area had called for complete demolition. “This plan,” he stated, “is another proof of New York City’s continued progress ... in developing new and trailblazing concepts and programs for community improvements.”²²² It would “replace a warren of antiquated, worn-out and neglected buildings with a pleasant arrangement of the new and old together, scaled and laid out with the human needs of the community in mind.”²²³ Importantly, Evans stated, “within the site boundaries” there were several community institutions, some of which are significant not only to the immediate neighborhood but have become known on a Citywide and even national scale.”²²⁴ And “principle among them” was the Henry Street Settlement, whose “preservation and extension” was “an integral part of the renewal concept.”²²⁵

²¹⁷ Housing and Redevelopment Board, “News,” 19 April 1965.

²¹⁸ Housing and Redevelopment Board, “News,” 19 April 1965.

²¹⁹ The City of New York Housing and Redevelopment Board, “News,” 20 December 1961, Henry Street Records, Box 13, Folder 4, Social Welfare History Archives.

²²⁰ Housing and Redevelopment Board, “News,” 19 April 1965.

²²¹ Seward Park Extension, (n.d), Henry Street Settlement Records, Box 13, Folder 4, Social Welfare History Archives.

²²² Seward Park Extension, (n.d).

²²³ Seward Park Extension, (n.d).

²²⁴ Seward Park Extension, (n.d).

²²⁵ Seward Park Extension, (n.d).

Henry Street Neighbors: “Making War on the Poor”

Despite its nod to community organizations, the Seward Park Extension Plan was not embraced by all the people who lived and worked within its boundaries. “Making War in the Poor” captures the voice of the community.

When the Board of Estimates unanimously approved the Seward Urban Renewal Area on July 22, 1965, neighborhood groups were upset. At the public hearing, local East Side residents, the Puerto Rican Citizens Committee on Housing, and the Cooper Square Community Development Committee and Businessmen’s Association had spoken vehemently against the proposed project for its failure to make adequate accommodations for low income housing. “It is absolutely criminal that the poor people of the area will not be taken care of under this plan,” declared Cooper Square representative Wilbert Tatum, “I ask that this plan be replaced by one that will provide principally for the people who live there now at rentals they can afford. And, he asserted, “By doing this, you would be joining the war on poverty rather than making war on the poor.”²²⁶ The outcry of these community residents did not fall on deaf ears. In response to the community’s outrage, the City Planning Commission modified the project to include more low-income housing units.²²⁷

Afterwards: “A Living Memorial to a Great Idea”²²⁸

The Seward Park Extension Plan presented different possibilities for different groups as illustrated in the above narratives. For the Housing and Redevelopment Board the project epitomized progress. Not only was the plan replacing “antiquated worn-out and neglected buildings” with modern facilities, but it was retaining important neighborhood institutions, like the Henry Street Settlement rather than bulldozing them down. For the Henry Street Settlement the plan represented opportunity and the chance of growth. The increase in middle-income residents in a traditionally low-income neighborhood did not faze Hall, who recast the settlement’s traditional role as a bridge,

²²⁶ Charles G. Bennett, “Renewal is Voted in East Side Area,” *New York Times*, 23 July 1965, 31.

²²⁷ Turner, “Building Boundaries,” 211.

²²⁸ “Henry Street’s Spot in the Sun,” *New York World Telegram and Sun*, 6 January 1965.

or intermediary between the classes, to meet this new situation. Accordingly, the settlement argued in favor of the plan at the City Commission hearing in 1965. Joining them in support of the plan was, among others, the Manhattan Planning Board, the East Side Chamber of Commerce, St. Mary's Church and the Bialystoker Synagogue.²²⁹

In contrast to the first two narratives, the low-income community members formed a dissenting voice against the project. Community groups, including the Puerto Rican Citizens Committee on Houses, the New York City Chapter of Core and the Cooper Square Community Development Committee and Businessmen's Association, spoke out against the project at the 1965 public hearing.²³⁰ These neighborhood groups witnessed the displacement of low-income residents under the first Seward Park Plan and they felt that the Extension Plan would herald more of the same type of treatment. But, at the conclusion of the public hearing, all of these party's interests were, apparently, met with the addition of more low-income housing at the site.

The same year the City approved the extension plan, the settlement wrapped up preservation work on Henry Street's three headquarter buildings. Two years earlier the settlement had finished refurbishing the playhouse and completed construction on the Guttman building. The settlement drew on its community to help to make these building projects a success. But, this was not the community in which the settlement currently lived – but a community of people drawn from Henry Street's past. Louis Abrons, who had attended the playhouse as a boy, financed the rehabilitation of the neighborhood playhouse.²³¹ Charles Guttman, who had grown up on the Lower East Side and

²²⁹ Turner, "Building Boundaries," 211.

²³⁰ Turner, "Building Boundaries," 211.

²³¹ Hall, *Unfinished Business*, 62.

attended the settlement's camp programs, financed the construction of the Guttman building. And, the Henry Street Old Timers, a group of men who also participated in Henry Street's programs as boys, helped finance the rehabilitation of Henry Street's headquarter buildings.²³² John Schiff, grandson of Jacob Schiff, joined them in this endeavor, donating \$25,000 dollars to the preservation of these three central buildings.²³³ When bestowing his half-million dollar gift on the settlement Guttman stated, "While it does not even the score, at least it serves to mark a memory that helped open a poor boy's eyes to the possibilities of life in America."²³⁴

The refurbishing of the central headquarter buildings did not mark any major exterior or interior changes. The settlement cleaned the buildings' exterior brick façade and updated the plumbing of the building.²³⁵ With the refurbishing of the interiors, Hall again made no major changes, but cleaned, polished and updated. Notably, preservation efforts left the settlement's dining room virtually untouched. The tables stood in the same positions and many of the objects that decorated the room in Wald's time, were still prominently displayed (see Figures 5-1 and 5-2). Hall's intent was to maintain an environment that combined "hominess with beauty."²³⁶ She felt that the settlement had a "special obligation" to their neighbors, "who were subjected to so much

²³² See: Henry Street Settlement Invite, n.d. Henry Street Settlement Records, Box 165, Folder 5, Social Welfare History Archives; Speech by Henry Street Old Timer (n.d.), Henry Street Settlement Records, Box 33, Folder 13. Social Welfare History Archives.

²³³ John Schiff, letter to Hall, 22 April 1963, Henry Street Settlement Records, Box 9, Folder 19, Social Welfare History Archives.

²³⁴ "\$500,000 Donation Given Settlement," *New York Times*, 10 November 1961, 36.

²³⁵ Henry Street Properties, (n.d), Henry Street Settlement Records, Box 15, Folder 17, Social Welfare History Archives.

²³⁶ Hall, *Unfinished Business*, 62.

ugliness in their daily lives,” to have the “rooms in which they meet as attractive as possible.”²³⁷

On January 7, 1965 Hall hosted a reception to celebrate the newly refurbished buildings to the New York public. Local media coverage was extensive. Upon viewing the refurbished buildings, James Grote VanDerpool, who was executive director of the Landmarks Preservation Commission, remarked that the restored Henry Street Settlement provided the neighborhood an “esthetic oasis,” echoing the sentiments of the 1898 *New York Times* article that described the fledgling Henry Street Settlement as providing “mental refreshment” from the city streets.²³⁸ A *New York World-Telegram* proclaimed, “Not everything in New York is torn down when it gets old.”²³⁹ “Take the Henry St. Settlement,” the article continued, “Generations of small children have romped through the old buildings ... and the years took their toll.”²⁴⁰ Although, “the time came to replace the century old structures,” the buildings were “strong and they were beautiful and they were relics of an almost-forgotten time in New York” and “so they were restored.”²⁴¹ Now “another generation of children will be romping through the old buildings.”²⁴² By continuing to serve the “underprivileged class,” the article concluded the buildings remained as a “living memorial to a great idea.”²⁴³

²³⁷ Hall, *Unfinished Business*, 62.

²³⁸ “Henry St. Landmarks Refurbished,” *New York Times*, 8 January 1965, 10.

²³⁹ “Henry Street’s Spot in the Sun,” *New York World-Telegram and Sun*, 6 January 1965.

²⁴⁰ “Henry Street’s Spot in the Sun,” *New York World-Telegram and Sun*, 6 January 1965.

²⁴¹ “Henry Street’s Spot in the Sun,” *New York World-Telegram and Sun*.

²⁴² “Henry Street’s Spot in the Sun,” *New York World-Telegram and Sun*.

²⁴³ “Henry Street’s Spot in the Sun,” *New York World-Telegram and Sun*.

In 1967 these three headquarter buildings received landmark designation from New York's Landmarks Preservation Commission in recognition of their role as "part of the great and historic tradition of neighborhood service initiated by Lillian Wald".²⁴⁴ The Henry Street Settlement headquarters had survived the bulldozer and would live on to serve its Lower East Side neighborhood. Bolstered in this success the settlement looked towards creating its new art center, which the approval of the Seward Park Extension made possible. The settlement's aspirations for this project were high. It sought to unite its arts projects under one roof and to unite "the area's various racial and ethnic groups in a community project."²⁴⁵

The Neighborhood: "Urban Renewal Can Be Lethal"

Henry Street's triumphant preservation and growth was countered by the effects of the Seward Park Extension Plan on some of its neighbors. As illustrated in the following narrative, which is situated in 1973, the Extension Plan did not deliver on all its promises.

Eight years after the City Planning Commission approved the Seward Park Extension plan the situation looked bleak for neighborhood residents and businesses caught within its boundaries. Already, the city had demolished over 2,000 apartment units in the neighborhood. But, with a federal freeze on housing funds, the City had rebuilt only a portion of the site. Standing among "vacant and boarded-up" stores and empty lots, one resident referred to the Grand Street neighborhood as a "ghost town."²⁴⁶ "It's terrible," stated a business owner, "We're a neighborhood business, and now we're on the northwest corner of a 14-square-block area that has no houses. We just manage to scrape by."²⁴⁷ Another failing neighborhood

²⁴⁴ Landmarks Preservation Commission, "Calendar No. 6/ LP-0096," 18 January 1966, Henry Street Settlement Records, Box 15, Folder 17, Social Welfare History Archives. Also see: "Seven More Landmarks Chosen in Manhattan," *New York Times*, 29 January 1966, 29.

²⁴⁵ George Gent "Henry St. Settlement to Build Arts Center," *New York Times* 15 April 1970, 51.

²⁴⁶ William G. Connolly, "For Business, Urban Renewal Can be Lethal," *New York Times*, 25 February 1973.

²⁴⁷ Connolly, "For Business, Urban Renewal Can be Lethal," 366.

businessman lamented an end of an era. As “an artisan from the Old World,” the man related, “I could have established a business only on the Lower East Side.”²⁴⁸ This neighborhood offered a place where “people used to be able to come from the other side and get started.” Now, he said, that “part of the American way of life is being destroyed.”²⁴⁹ Among these vacant buildings and empty lots in the Seward Park Extension Urban Renewal area only two buildings were under the construction - a combination police/fire station and Henry Street’s new art center.²⁵⁰

The New Art Center: “An Urban Triumph”

In the preceding community narrative the art center is one of two buildings under construction in the Seward Park Extension area. Two years later this building opened. The architecture community embraced the project for its ability to combine service to the community with an aesthetically pleasing design. The following narrative highlights the response of prominent architectural critic Louise Huxtable to Henry Street’s new project.

In 1975 Henry Street’s “Arts for Living Center” opened. Critic Louise Huxtable, wrote in her New York Times column about her visit to the Henry Street Settlement’s new art center. “The Arts for Living Center,” Huxtable proclaimed, “sums up in its name everything that urban architecture should be.” It was a “building meant to serve and expand the life of a community.” And, not only was its “objective” good, but its “esthetic” quality made it “doubly satisfying.” By meeting these two objectives, the building illustrated that the mission of the Henry Street settlement, “to improve the quality of life in an area of urban poverty,” had remained consistent over its “80-odd years.” The design of the building, Huxtable outlined “states its purpose immediately, in visual, three dimensional, urban terms.” The building was open to the street in “a very special way to ask people in, to say that it is part of the neighborhood, to invite everyone to use it.” And, “instead of hugging the building line,” it took the “shape of an open arc, with shallow, curving steps creating an informal entrance space that is used actively for sitting and socializing.” The interior of the building was “arranged in five levels around the entrance arc.” Large glass windows allowed the performance, meeting and instruction rooms to relate with one another as well as the entrance arc. “To state a basic fact simply,” Huxtable asserted, “nothing in a building like this can be closed or hidden.” And that was part of

²⁴⁸ Connolly, “For Business, Urban Renewal Can be Lethal,” 366.

²⁴⁹ Connolly, “For Business, Urban Renewal Can be Lethal,” 366.

²⁵⁰ Connolly, “For Business, Urban Renewal Can be Lethal,” 366.

the function of the art center and its architecture - "to turn energies commonly directed to vandalism to other interests and pursuits."²⁵¹

Importantly, the cost of the new building included the renovation of the settlement's historic Playhouse, which the new building butted up against. The Playhouse was "built in the 1920's in a tentative Federal style" and, Huxtable claimed, it was a "further credit to the architects" that the new building sat beside this old building "with comfort and style." "After visiting the new Center," Huxtable suggested to her New York audience, "it is a good idea to go back to the original Henry Street buildings, a few blocks away, for a fine demonstration of cultural continuity." These landmarked "small, brick row houses of the early 19th century," with their "Georgian street scale," were a precious link to New York's past."²⁵² Inside their walls "museum-quality interiors, used actively and sympathetically for administration and living," were "beautifully proportioned, flooded with daylight from large double-hung window, rich in moldings and mantels, [and] linked in the manner of old houses by steps at changing levels." In "one of the handsomest dining rooms in the city" the Henry Street Settlement residents shared their lunch. The central buildings were "full of architectural grace." And to Huxtable it was clear that at the Henry Street Settlement the "past and the future" were in "good hands."²⁵³

Afterwards: "New and Old" Sit Together with "Comfort and Style"²⁵⁴

As the "Urban Renewal Can Be Lethal" narrative illustrates the Seward Park Extension Plan marked an "end of an era." Henry Street's neighborhood and neighbors were shifting. Where in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, the settlement dealt with a largely homogenous Jewish immigrant population, now it had to address a variety of groups, including "blacks, Puerto Ricans, Chinese, and elderly Jews," who had a diversity of interests.²⁵⁵ And, while the urban renewal project benefited the Henry

²⁵¹ Huxtable, "Architecture View," 107.

²⁵² Ada Louise Huxtable, "Architecture View: Henry Street's New Building – An Urban Triumph," *New York Times*, 10 August 1975, 107.

²⁵³ Huxtable, "Architecture View," 107.

²⁵⁴ Huxtable, "Architecture View," 107.

²⁵⁵ Suzanne Stephens, "Street Smarts: Art for Living Center," *Progressive Architecture* 56 (November 1975): 64-70.

Street Settlement and many of its neighbors, it also dislocated a number of its low-income neighbors. The Henry Street Settlement was becoming disconnected from its neighborhood. And, it would take a new building and a new Head Director, for the Henry Street Settlement to start catching up to this changing neighborhood.

By the time the Arts for Living Center opened, Helen Hall had not occupied the position of Head Director of the Henry Street Settlement for seven years. Hall retired in 1967 when she was 75 years old. Her retirement also marked the passing of an era. The settlement's parlor, with its "Victorian sofas and chairs" and Hall's tradition of holding formal meals in the dining room served with "uptown elegance" were seen as out of tempo with the times.²⁵⁶ One young settlement resident referred to Hall as an "elderly matron," who taught residents how to "hold a fork" properly and be a "good example" within the neighborhood. And because of this emphasis, the resident maintained, Hall and the settlement were not a part of the community but rather "colonizers, often benign, but colonizers nevertheless."²⁵⁷

The settlement's Board of Trustees, under Winslow Carlton, had recognized this gap between the community and the settlement and pressured Hall to retire. Hall wanted long-term Henry Street residents Ruth and Ralph Tefferteller to succeed her, but the board wanted change. They hired Bertram Beck, the settlement's first male resident, to succeed Hall. Beck had great respect for Hall, but like the settlement's younger residents, he saw her, and her running of the settlement, as out of step with the times and the community the settlement served. He described Hall as a "lady," although

²⁵⁶ Dee Dee Halleck, *Hand-held Visions: The Impossible Possibilities of Community Media* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2002), 84.

²⁵⁷ Halleck, *Hand-held Visions*," 84.

he professed he did not like to use that “pejorative.” And, he referred to her belief that it was important for the neighbors to be exposed to “the finer life” through the settlement interiors as “archaic” and “almost paternalistic.”²⁵⁸ Beck was interested in turning the settlement into a more “responsive agency that reflected the needs and demands of its heterogeneous neighbors.”²⁵⁹ And in the tradition of the Settlement House Movement, he expressed his new vision for the settlement through architecture.

Hall may have spearheaded the Arts for Living Center, but Beck was more intimately involved in its design. As Huxtable illustrated in her *New York Times* article, this design had a clear social message. Its welcoming curve and transparency symbolized a breaking down of barriers between the settlement and the neighborhood. Rather than assimilating the settlement’s neighbors the purpose of the new building was to bring together the diverse community for “cultural purposes” while “allowing them room for ethnic expression and separatism.”²⁶⁰ A *Progressive Architecture* article saw this goal materializing in the building’s ability to “stand apart as something unique in the neighborhood, while at the same time melting into the physical surround.”²⁶¹

The building represented a new chapter in the relationship between the settlement house and its community, instigated under Beck. But, it also represented a continuation of the past. As Huxtable outlined, one the building’s greatest triumphs was its ability to marry the old with the new. Like the design for his new building, Beck never

²⁵⁸ Beck, interview by Raynor, 14 November 1991.

²⁵⁹ Ellen Condliffe Lagemann, *Philanthropic Foundations: New Scholarship, New Possibilities* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), 221-22.

²⁶⁰ Stephens, “Street Smarts: Art for Living Center,” 64-70.

²⁶¹ Stephens, “Street Smarts: Art for Living Center,” 64-70.

entirely eschewed the traditions that Wald and Hall set. He resided at the headquarter buildings and kept the elegant parlors and dining room intact. And when asked about Henry Street's continued success, he attributed it to the settlement's "history and mystique" and a tradition of strong executives, like Wald and Hall.²⁶²

In 1976, a year after the Arts for Living Center opened, the Henry Street's three central buildings as well as the Settlement's neighborhood playhouse received National Landmark status. Like Beck, the designation forms referenced the settlement's history as the source of its strength. Utilizing Wald's words the designation's narrative located the value of the settlement house in its ability to maintain "a curious link with what, in this city of rapid changes, is already shadowy past."²⁶³ But, unlike Beck, who located this history in both the figures of Wald and Hall, the landmark designation located the significance of the site in Lillian Wald and her role as a founder of the Henry Street settlement and "pioneer" of "liberal causes."²⁶⁴

Similar to the Hull House Settlement, across the Henry Street junctures it is evident that the "bricks and mortar" of the settlement was important. And, like Hull House, Henry Street's home-like interiors were crucial to its connection to its surrounding neighborhood, helping to maintain the idea that the settlement residents were neighbors living among neighbors. However, unlike Hull House, this relationship between the settlement as a home and a service institution did not fracture after Wald's death. And, the story of the Henry Street Settlement became largely one of continuity rather than change. These parallels are explored further in the following chapter.

²⁶² Beck, interview by Raynor, 14 November 1991.

²⁶³ "Henry Street Settlement and Neighborhood Playhouse," *National Register Nomination Form*, 1973.

²⁶⁴ "Henry Street Settlement and Neighborhood Playhouse," *National Register Nomination Form*, 1973.



Figure 5-1. Dining room before preservation



Figure 5-2. Dining room after preservation

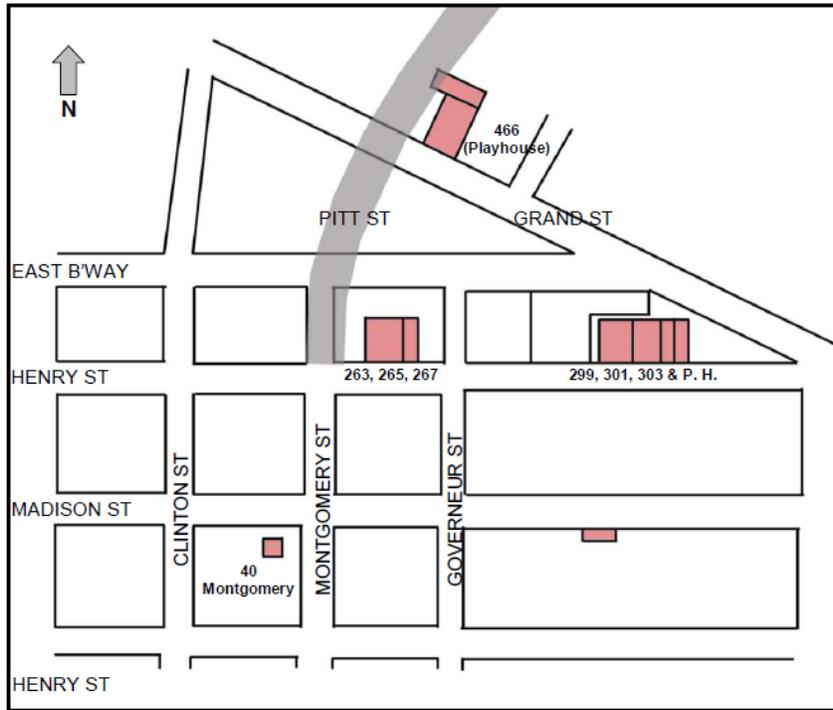


Figure 5-3. Neighborhood street layout prior to Pitt Street widening, 1960s [note: settlement buildings marked in red]

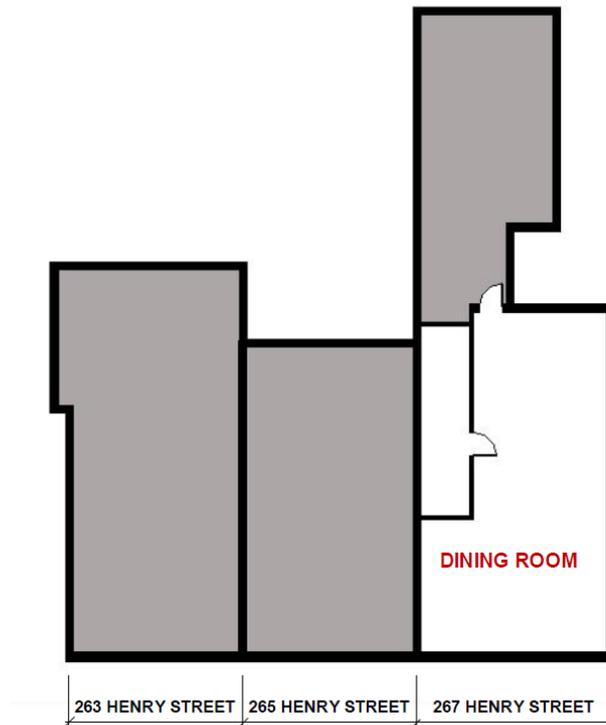


Figure 5-4. Plan of Henry Street headquarter buildings.

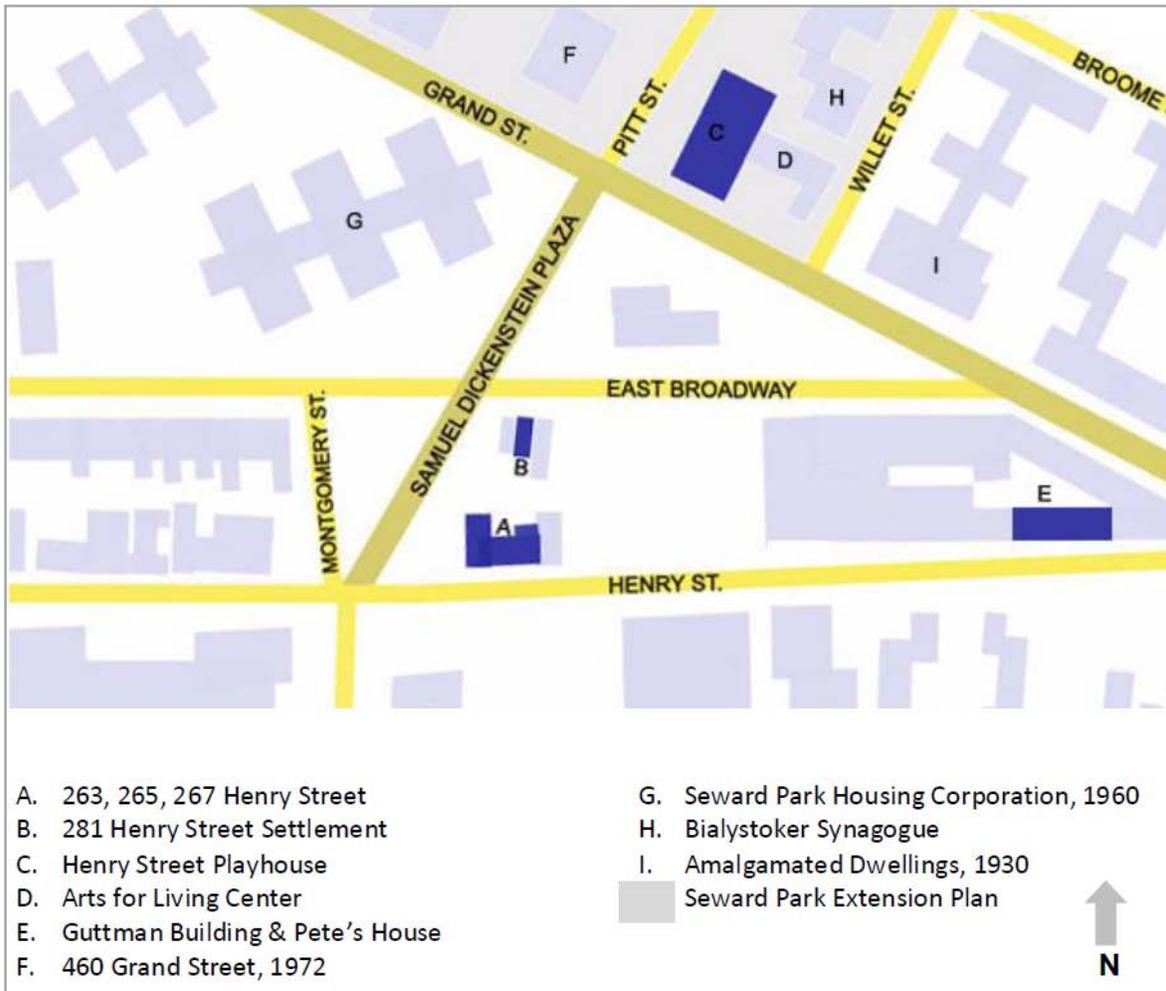


Figure 5-5. Neighborhood map showing Seward Park Extension Area

CHAPTER 6 ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

Introduction

Hull House is an old house and when you begin to see the different parts of it, you feel a little as though you were in a rabbit warren, but there is an atmosphere about it which will seem entirely familiar to anyone who has ever been to Henry Street Settlement or Greenwich House in New York City....In each case one great personality has created that atmosphere. Miss Jane Addams in Hull House, Miss Lillian Wald in Henry Street, and Mrs. Mary Simkhovitch in Greenwich House. These women have something in common, intensively individual as each one of them is, there is a spirit of self-abnegation, an ability to throw oneself completely into the work which they are doing which is common to all.¹

Eleanor Roosevelt wrote this description of the connection of the physical environments of the Hull House and Henry Street settlements with the personalities of Addams and Wald in 1937. At this time, Charlotte Carr was the Head of the Hull House Settlement, and Helen Hall was the Head of the Henry Street Settlement. Yet, as Roosevelt's description shows, even after their departure from these settlements, Addams and Wald's personalities dominated the spaces they created. Three decades later, the National Landmark Designation of these settlements would affirm Roosevelt's connection between the design of the Hull House and Henry Street settlements and the personalities of Addams and Wald. However, at this time, the atmosphere of the Hull House settlement had changed. It was no longer a "rabbit warren of rooms," but a small Italianate Victorian house at the edge of a large university campus. In the intervening years the form of the site had changed as well as the interpretation of what encapsulated Addams' personality. In his article "Academic in Tennis Shoes," Daniel Bluestone challenges preservationists to "take measure of the change from original

¹ Eleanor Roosevelt "My Day," 19 November 1937, The Eleanor Roosevelt Papers Project, George Washington University.

intent and form to current meaning and significance” at historic sites, stating that “people invent and reinvent meaning, value and devalue and value again their buildings.”² The Hull House and Henry Street settlements were subject to a similar process of reinvention and renewal at critical moments and junctures in their pasts.

Critical Juncture I: Founding

There are striking similarities in the settlements that Addams and Wald founded. Both women were interested in creating democratic organizations, they aspired to blend seamlessly into their neighborhoods and they placed the home environment at the center of the very public work their settlements performed. However, Addams and Wald encountered difficulties in realizing this vision and, instead, founded settlements that were dominated by the leadership of a single personality, that stood out from their communities and that were a unique combination of a home and an institution.

When the Hull House and Henry Street settlements were first established they were each considered the work of two women. The Hull House reflected the work of Addams and Starr while the Henry Street Settlement embodied the work of Wald and Brewster. However, within a decade of the founding of the Hull House Settlement Addams gained prominence as the “guiding light” of the settlement. Likewise, as early as 1896, local newspapers credited Wald with Henry Street Settlement’s “existence and success.”³

Both Addams and Wald overshadowed their co-founders, who promptly assumed secondary, supportive roles. They actively claimed a leadership role in the running of

² Daniel Bluestone, “Academics in Tennis Shoes: Historic Preservation and the Academy,” *Journal of Architectural Historians* 58 (1999/2000): 304-305.

³ “Where Children Play,” *New York Times*, 26 July 1896, 21.

the Hull House and Henry Street settlements. Their intimate involvement with the financing of the settlements bolstered their claims to independent authority. Addams personally funded the setting up of the Hull House Settlement and as the settlement grew maintained a close relationship with its patrons, Mary Rozet Smith and Louise deKoven Bowen. Likewise, Wald had close ties with the financiers of her settlement, Jacob Schiff and Betty Loeb, which were rooted in similar social outlooks as well as similar cultural and religious backgrounds. Addams and Wald also took a lead in the physical occupation of their settlement homes. With the Hull House Settlement, Addams took charge of furnishing and decorating the Hull mansion. Similarly, Wald spearheaded the decoration of the house on Henry Street.

Despite Addams and Wald's hopes to create democratic organizations, with shared leadership, in each of these settlement homes, one person had ultimate authority. In this manner the settlement homes were patterned on an authoritarian top-down model. Both Addams and Wald benefitted from women who served in supportive capacities. Initially these women were Starr and Brewster. However, at Hull House, Starr's strong personality and increasingly divergent interests did not correspond well with the supportive role and Mary Rozet Smith soon succeeded her in this capacity. Smith's quiet, accommodating personality made her a good fit for this secondary role. Bowen described Smith as trailing after Addams with food and a shawl to make sure that Addams always had what she needed to sustain herself.⁴ After Brewster's death, Wald did not have a single person that acted as her support system, but, instead, drew on the support of a group of women as well as the support of her patron, Jacob Schiff.

⁴ Stebner, *The Women of Hull House*, 160.

Around their central authority both women created family-like structures based on common interests and friendships. At Hull House, Addams established a hierarchy of authority that hinged on her personal relationships with residents. Partially because of a breakdown in her personal relationship with Addams, Starr faded to the margins of the Hull House settlement community. Addams also kept a tight rein on the running of the settlement, presiding over meals and resident work alike. She did not “relinquish” this authority to other residents as she aged, which created problems when she passed away because no one was trained to replace her.⁵ Similarly, in her settlement community, Wald became known as “the nurse who is head of the house.”⁶ And, from the head of the dining room table she doled out household and settlement chores. In each case, the organizations that the women created were not democratic, but authoritarian.

Similar to their desire to create a democratic organization within their settlements, Addams and Wald were interested in blending with their surrounding communities. But this was also something that they were never able to fully accomplish. There were two ways in which they stood out against the broader community. In their immediate neighborhood, their choice of buildings and décor distinguished them from their neighbors. The Hull House mansion was one of the finest buildings in the Halsted neighborhood, and its large scale and gracefully proportioned façade clearly contrasted with the neighborhood’s dilapidated wood structures. Likewise the Henry Street Settlement’s fine detailing stood out against the surrounding tenement buildings. The

⁵ Muncy, *Creating a Female Dominion in American Reform*, 14-15.

⁶ Dock, *Short Papers on Nursing*, 33.

women's restoration of these structures, and their fine decorating of the interiors, further separated them from the surrounding buildings. And their relationship to their neighbors echoed their relationship to their "families" – they created a central force around which their neighborhood could revolve.

In the broader Chicago neighborhood, the settlements, which placed a group of educated women in the middle of a poor urban neighborhood, also stood out. Addams and Wald were conscious that their living arrangement did not appear natural or normal to this broader community and they actively worked to control the newspapers' interpretation of their image. They purposely downplayed the differences between their neighbors and themselves - they were all people of "society"– and highlighted the normalcy of their activities, particularly their creation of "normal" homes.

Both Addams and Wald situated their authority in a home-like environment. From the founding of their settlements, they carefully nurtured the concept of the settlement house as a home. They staged the interiors of their settlements as the finest domestic spaces, promoted a family-like work environment and cast these spaces as an "oasis" protecting their neighbors from the rough city streets. Creating a home-like environment was also an important part of their connection to their communities as neighbors. By creating homes, they hoped to connect to their new communities on a personal and more intimate level.

But at the same time that they were creating these home-like spaces, Addams and Wald were growing their settlements into impressive institutions. And with the incorporation of their settlements, they simultaneously occupied roles of presidents of institutions and heads of households. In this way both Hull House and Henry Street

were not homes in the traditional sense, separate from public life. They were also not institutions in the traditional sense, separate from the home and the domestic environment. Instead, they were service institutions that were entrenched in the idea of a home and a community. Addams and Wald's ability to reconcile the home with the institution, two spaces that were traditionally segregated into separate public and private spheres, introduced a unique, feminine approach to space.⁷ When Wald decided to incorporate her settlement, Schiff was against it because he felt that it would diminish the family atmosphere of the settlement. To Schiff the home could not successfully survive in the guise of an institution – they were two separate spheres. However, for Addams and Wald this dual personality was not only possible, but desirable. It allowed them a close connection to their neighbors, while giving them the ability to effect change on a larger level.

To unite these dual roles, Addams and Wald strove to be “loose, spontaneous and personal” in the running of their institutions.”⁸ Maintaining the trappings of a home in increasingly large institutional settings helped these women reconcile the dual personality of their settlements. The opening of Henry Street's new nurses' building on Broadway illustrates this point. This building, although physically removed from the central Henry Street buildings, remained a part of the settlement community through its trappings of a home environment, replete with hearth, warm wood tones, flowers and settlement “family” portraits.

⁷ Several authors have explored the idea of settlement houses as public and private space. See: Muncy, *Creating a Female Dominion of Reform*; Spain, *How Women Saved the City*; Deutsch, *Women and the City*, 7 Haar, “The Hull House Settlement and the Study of the City.”

⁸ Fabricant and Fisher, *Settlement Houses Under Siege*, 29.

Addams and Wald created homes and institutions that reflected their “own environmental needs and biases.”⁹ The people that replaced them would not be able to fix the things they failed at, such as the creation of democratic organizations and blending in with their communities, or repeat what the women succeeded at, such as running simultaneously both a home and an institution. Addams and Wald’s successors would have to establish their own “self-identity” in these settlement spaces in a new era. These attempts often led to “open conflict” between their successors and the keepers of Addams and Wald’s legacies – their settlement families and boards.¹⁰

Interlude: The People were the Space

The interiors spaces of Hull House and Henry Street reflected the personas of Jane Addams and Lillian Wald. Beverly Gordon writes about the connection between women and the homes they created in turn of the twentieth century society.¹¹ The interiors of the homes were often seen as the personification of the women who created them. And in the case of Addams and Wald the spaces they created were deeply personal, forged together with a mix of heirloom furniture and prized purchases. The settlements’ families, and the surrounding community, viewed these spaces as an extension of these women’s personalities. The homes did not just “represent” these women, but became almost like another “body.”¹² And “over time” these spaces became more like Addams and Wald. An interesting mix of public and private spaces, these

⁹ Clare Cooper Marcus, *House as a Mirror of Self: Exploring the Deeper Meaning of Home* (Maine: Berwick, 2006), 153.

¹⁰ Marcus, *House as a Mirror of Self*, 153.

¹¹ Beverly Gordon, “Women’s Domestic Body: The Conceptual Conflation of Women and Interiors in the Industrial Age,” *Winterthur Portfolio*, 31 (Winter 1996): 282.

¹² Gordon, “Women’s Domestic Body,” 282.

interiors fit their creators. When Addams and Wald died this intense connection between their homes and themselves was not severed. And the women and men that succeeded them had to contend with the homes, the institutions and the legacies that Addams and Wald built.

Critical Juncture II: Transition

While the first critical juncture traces how Addams and Wald became ascendant figures and how their authority was tied to the creation of their settlement homes, the second critical juncture explores how succeeding generations struggled with the legacy of these two founding women. Wald and Addams were both presidents of their settlements' Boards and Head Residents of their respective settlement houses. After their deaths these roles splintered. And, to varying degrees, this fractured the dual role of these settlements as houses and institutions. The succession in leadership of the Hull House and Henry Street Settlements were handled in different fashions. Addams did not appoint someone to succeed her in the event of her death whereas Wald handpicked and tutored a successor. The failure of Addams to clearly identify a successor at Hull House left the settlement in turmoil and undermined the attempts of Adena Rich and Charlotte Carr to run the settlement. In contrast, Wald sanctioned the succession of Helen Hall, which helped to secure her authority at the Henry Street Settlement.

Addams' death left the Hull House leadership and its buildings in a state of disrepair. The interiors of the settlement were shabby, its vast spaces hard to heat, and, as Bowen demonstrated, a strong wind could possibly blow parts of it away.¹³ The

¹³ Bowen letter to Hicks, 27 November 1943.

settlement's family of residents was also deteriorating. Long time Hull House resident Alice Hamilton described herself as "too old" to take over the running of Hull House, while Milton Mayer, of the *Atlantic Monthly*, described the residents of the settlement as a "few old hats."¹⁴ This aging population was insular, conservative and, without Addams, lacked a center.

In contrast to the Hull House Settlement, Henry Street was in good shape following Wald's retirement in 1933. Wald did not live in the Henry Street Settlement for two years prior to her retirement, but the settlement ran smoothly under Karl Helsly, who took charge of the settlement functions, and Marguerite Wales who managed the nursing service.¹⁵ Charlotte Carr, who was familiar with both houses, described the Henry Street Settlement as "really on the rails" compared to the Hull House Settlement, which was "definitely not today on the rails."¹⁶ And when Hall first moved into the house on Henry Street, she found it "charming." She arrived in the evening and the "glamour of the sunset" gave the neighborhood "sparkle" and cast the Henry Street Settlement "aglow."¹⁷

Despite these differences, the succeeding Head Residents at the Hull House and Henry Street settlements struggled to take up the mantle of their respective founders. At Hull House, both Rich and Carr were unable to handle the dual role of the settlement as an institution and a home. Although, Rich was able to revitalize the homelike aspects

¹⁴ Mayer, "Charlotte Carr – Settlement Lady," 741-748.

¹⁵ Hall, *Unfinished Business*, 6-7.

¹⁶ Charlotte Carr, letter to Helen Hall, 17 January 1938, Henry Street Settlement Records, Box 103, Folder 10, Social Welfare History Archives.

¹⁷ Hall, *Unfinished Business*, 3.

of the settlement, through bolstering residency and resurrecting the tradition of communal dining, she was unable to replace Addams as a central authority in the running of the institution. Unlike Addams, she was not president of the Hull House Board and Louise deKoven Bowen, who replaced Addams as the board's new president, constantly challenged her leadership over the settlement. In contrast to Rich, Carr demonstrated a greater potential to run the business side of the Hull House Settlement. She was able to recruit a generous patron, Mary Wing, as her benefactress and her vibrant personality forged new social and political connections for the settlement house. But, like Rich, she was unable to supersede the authority of Bowen and the Board. She also ran into problems when it came to establishing herself as the center of the Hull House household. By moving her office furniture into Addams room, Carr alienated the Hull House residents who felt she not only violated the memory of Addams, but also challenged the concept of the settlement house as a home. The settlement residents also saw Carr's attempts to reach out to the neighborhood residents and meet them on their own grounds, rather than within the walls of the Hull House settlement, as a threat to the settlement house as a home. Ultimately, neither Carr nor Rich could replace Addams as a matriarch of Hull House.

At Henry Street, Hall faced a different set of challenges. Her situation was unique because Wald was alive during her transitioning years. Wald recognized that it was important for Hall to claim some ownership over the Henry Street space and facilitated her efforts to move into this space and establish her authority. However, Hall still encountered problems with establishing herself as a central authority in the Henry

Street Settlement. Specifically, the nurses rejected her leadership over the nursing functions of the settlement.

Despite her attempts to facilitate Hall's transition into the Henry Street Settlement, Wald was also an obstacle to Hall's claim to authority. Wald was unwilling to allow Hall authority over the nurses. She micromanaged the settlement from her retirement and, when she made the position of Head Director of nursing equal to Hall's position of Head Resident, she created a division in the settlement leadership herself. While Wald was alive Hall was unable to fully assume leadership over the settlement, however, after Wald's death Hall allowed the nurses to separate completely from the settlement, which enabled her to claim leadership over the settlement as a home and an institution. Hall became an impressive matriarch in her own right. Although she was not president of the settlement's board, she exerted a great deal of influence over it. And she also laid a claim to the spaces of the Henry Street Settlement. She did not remove the traces of Wald, her portrait and her impressive brassware collection, but fit her pottery and plants among these existing items. She, like Wald, was a homemaker and a head of an institution.

Hull House struggled in its efforts to go forward and took the drastic measure of hiring a man—Russell Ballard—to take up Addams' mantle. When Ballard took over the Hull House Settlement his use of Addams' memorial room as his office underscored his claim to the Hull House settlement and its space. Ballard, like Hall, was able to unite the Hull House Settlement as a home and an institution, but in order to do this he split the position of Head Resident into two. Ballard took over the running of the institutional side of the settlement house, and he hired a woman, Elaine Switzer, to take charge of the

home-making side of the settlement. Under Ballard, the structure of the Hull House Settlement changed drastically. Not only had a man taken over the running of the Hull House Settlement for the first time, but for the first time the Head Director was not explicitly involved in the homemaking aspect of the settlement. However, this transformation allowed Ballard to move Hull House beyond the shadow of Addams.

It is interesting to note that when Bertram Beck took over the position of Head Resident of the Henry Street settlement from Hall in the late 1960s, his approach to the running of Henry Street was similar to Ballard's. Beck let his wife take charge of maintaining the settlement's parlors while he ran the institution. Like Ballard he recognized the importance of the concept of a home to the stability of the settlement, but he was interested in running an institution not a home.

In this second juncture in the history of these two settlement houses, the settlements were transformed and only Hall came close to keeping home and institution together under one personality. Notably, by failing to relinquish authority, Addams and Wald created the conditions for the instability and transformation of their settlements. Under Ballard a division of labor emerged that undermined Addams and Wald's unique feminine approach to space, which united the public and private. Similar to the traditional family arrangement the man became head of the public, business side of the institution while a woman ran the private, home side of the settlement. In the case of the Hull House Settlement, as explored in the next critical juncture, its preservation would exacerbate the splintering of its home and institutional functions.

Interlude: Creating a Home Together

Addams and Wald's successors had to share the spaces of the Hull House and Henry Street settlements with the memory of these two women. This coexistence was

not always possible or easy. Clare Cooper Marcus writes that often “differences” between people “manifest in clashes over the use and meaning of domestic space.”¹⁸ At Hull House a key issue was who would have control of the settlement after Addams’ death. This issue manifested itself in the interior spaces of Hull House with battles over who would “have control over which rooms.”¹⁹ Throughout Rich and Carr’s tenure the octagon room, which memorialized Addams, remained a “potent symbol” of the intent of Hull House residents to keep the Hull House the same – to keep it Jane Addams’ space. Ballard’s claim on this space as his office suggested that for the first time a new dominant influence had entered the house. Similarly, at the Henry Street Settlement, Wald continued to control the running of the settlement after her retirement. She asserted her leadership at the settlement home by requesting that Hall hang her portrait and a picture of her new abode on the wall. When Hall finally decided to assert her authority it was best expressed when she moved her personal effects into the settlement space.

Critical Juncture III: Preservation and Urban Renewal

In the second critical junction the home and institutional elements at Hull House began to shift apart. In the third junction they split completely at Hull House, but would remain intact at the Henry Street Settlement. With their preservation, the parallel stories of the Hull House and Henry Street settlements break down further. At these two sites, preservation served different needs. The preservation of the Hull House Settlement was used to explain the demolishing of a famous institution, while the preservation of the

¹⁸ Marcus, *House as Mirror of Self*, 134.

¹⁹ Marcus, *House as Mirror of Self*, 134.

Henry Street Settlement became part of a fundraising campaign to renovate and improve the settlement's physical plant; in one case preservation marked a moment of dramatic change and in the other it represented continuity. Illustrations 4-1 to 4-8 of the Hull House Settlement and Illustrations 5-1 and 5-2 of the Henry Street Settlement provide examples of these divergent paths. With the Hull House Settlement a completely new interior space emerged from its preservation, while the Henry Street interiors largely remained the same. However, despite these differences, at the end of the third critical juncture, Wald and Addams emerge as the ascendant narratives in the interpretation of the meaning of the Hull House and Henry Street sites.

The transformation of the Hull House Settlement into a museum was a dramatic transition. Eleven buildings were demolished, the community around the settlement was destroyed and the interiors of the Hull House mansion were staged to represent a period that preceded Addams, the Hull House family, and the community it served. The University of Illinois' restoration committee turned the Hull House Settlement into a purely domestic space, thereby erasing traces of the vast institution that Hull House once was.²⁰ The Italianate Victorian mansion that emerged from this process stood out against the modern architecture of the University's campus, while the mansion's interiors showcased a type of domestic environment that had no connection to the Hull House Settlement.

The preservation of Hull House was deeply contested and centered principally on Jane Addams. The battle to preserve the Hull House Settlement and the Halsted

²⁰ The restoration of these interiors to a purely domestic space overlooked Addams' unique feminine approach to the interior environment, which mixed a home-like environment with an institutional form, thereby limiting the definition of what constitutes feminine space to the domestic environment.

neighborhood largely became, like the battle between Rich, Carr and Bowen, a battle over defining the tradition of Addams and her approach to the Hull House Settlement. The University referenced Addams' gracious and cultured hospitality as a justification for the restoration of the settlement to a purely domestic space. Meanwhile, Russell Ballard, who opposed the destruction and preservation of the settlement, emphasized Addams' service to the community and the larger institutional impact of her settlement to argue for the retention of the majority of the Hull House complex and the Halsted neighborhood. Either way Addams was at the center of efforts to determine the fate of Hull House and she emerged from the preservation of the site as the dominant interpretative figure in the history of the settlement.

While the Hull House Settlement was transformed into a memorial for Jane Addams, in contrast, the Henry Street Settlement buildings continued to house a vibrant and growing social settlement. Under the direction of Helen Hall, the preservation of the Henry Street Settlement retained the connection between the Henry Street Settlement as a home and an institution. Hall continued to use these interiors, despite their "museum-quality," to live in and administer the settlement from.²¹ And, like Wald, she located her authority in the settlement's home-like interiors.

The preservation of the Hull House Settlement makes it an easy target for critical scholarship. In her book *Reclaiming the Past*, Paige Putnam asserts that the preservation of Hull House "serves as a cautionary tale for others seeking to preserve the tangible remains of social settlements."²² The demolishing of the Hull House

²¹ Huxtable, "Architecture View,"107.

²² Putnam, *Reclaiming the Past*, 106-107.

Settlement and Harrison-Halsted community was extreme and the restoration of the Hull mansion, as Chicago's landmark commission put it, was a "bastardized reconstruction."²³ Moreover, the demolition and restoration of the Hull House Settlement severed the remaining ties of the Hull House institution to its physical structure as well as the settlement's ties to its Harrison-Halsted community.

In contrast to the Hull House Settlement's preservation, Putnam highlights the Henry Street Settlement, which she asserts "has survived to the present day with a greater degree of integrity."²⁴ But the Henry Street Settlement's preservation was not without its own challenges. Like the Hull House restoration, the preservation of the Henry Street Settlement marked the dislocation of its neighbors. The same Seward Park Extension Plan that provided the space for the settlement to expand and finance improvements to its existing buildings dislocated many of the settlement's low-income neighbors, and divided the neighborhood along racial and ethnic lines. And similar to the Hull House Settlement, urban renewal, which accompanied the preservation of these sites, transformed the neighborhood around the settlement buildings. The traditional architecture of the Henry Street Settlement's three headquarter buildings stood out against the vast public housing complexes of the Lower East Side, much in the same way that the Jane Addams Hull-House museum stood out against the modern architecture of the University of Illinois at Chicago campus.

Perhaps most dramatically, the Henry Street Settlement also underwent significant demolition. While Ballard and Hull House residents, like Jesse Binford, fought to save

²³ Paul Gapp, "Decision Raises Questions," *Chicago Tribune*, 7 April 1974, 40.

²⁴ Putnam, *Reclaiming the Past*, 108.

the Hull House Settlement from the bulldozer, Hall contemplated tearing down Henry Street's three historic headquarter buildings in order to grow the settlement programs. Although Hall and her board eventually chose to retain these three central historic buildings, they tore down several of the settlements other historic buildings. They were able to knock down these buildings without raising a hue and cry for several reasons. First, the settlement function at these sites was retained. Second, the settlement community was involved in rebuilding these sites. And, finally, these sites were not the home of the Henry Street Settlement. The settlement's home was located in the three adjoining townhouses on Henry Street. In contrast, the demolishing of the Hull House Settlement shifted the use of the site and did not involve either the settlement's past or present community. And, importantly, its entire complex was its home. Where the Henry Street Settlement expanded to multiple locations in the Lower East Side, leaving its central buildings fairly intact, the Hull House Settlement was built with a series of additions to the original mansion. And, this mansion was inseparable from its component parts.

The manner in which the Hull House Settlement expanded its physical plant also made it difficult for Chicago-based preservation groups, like the Commission on Chicago Architectural Landmarks and the Chicago Heritage Committee, to rationalize its preservation. Both these groups emphasized "architectural merit" and stylistic purity as grounds for preservation.²⁵ Although the Hull House additions were completed by the same architecture firm, Pond and Pond, the additions were built across a span of twenty years and showed a mix of stylistic influences, from English Tudor and Arts and Crafts

²⁵ Daniel Bluestone, "Preservation and Renewal in Post-World War II Chicago," *Journal of Architectural Education* 47 (May, 1994): 215.

to Prairie style. Consequently, Chicago preservationists did not find merit in the settlement's architecture. However, they did acknowledge the settlement's historic merit in connection to the figure of Addams and expressed an interest in saving the Hull House Settlement on these grounds. But they were "ill prepared ... to press for preservation premised on cultural as opposed to architectural history."²⁶ And their appeals for the retention of the settlement did not go beyond a few choicely worded letters to the University and the City.

In contrast, the stylistic consistency of Henry Street's three central buildings, which were left untouched by the settlement's expansion, facilitated their preservation. New York's Landmark Commission quickly picked up the call for the preservation of these buildings based on their value as relatively pure examples of early 19th century federal style architecture. Unlike the Hull House settlement, the City gave them landmark status, which provided protection from demolition.

By the early 1970s the parallels between the Hull House and Henry Street Settlements had almost entirely disappeared. However, despite these differences, they were both given national landmark status for the same reasons. The landmark designation of these two sites was predicated on their cultural/historical significance. Both these settlement houses were categorized under the thematic designation of "Social and Humanitarian Movements" and the subheading of "Poverty Relief and Urban and Social Reform." Critical to these settlement's claims to national significance under this thematic heading, as highlighted in their nomination forms' statements of

²⁶ Daniel Bluestone, "Preservation and Renewal," 220-21.

significance, were the figures of the settlements' two female founders, Addams and Wald.

The narratives of these sites' two landmark designations are a testament to the failure of Addams and Wald's careful image management in the newspapers. The founding and success of their settlement houses are placed squarely at their feet. And, their deeds in their neighborhoods and cities are not construed as a natural outgrowth of their relationship with their neighbors, but as extraordinary.

This study's final critical juncture marks two events, the physical preservation of the Hull House and Henry Street Settlements as well as their national landmarking. In the case of both the Hull House and Henry Street Settlements the physical preservation of these sites preceded their landmarking. Consequently, the national landmarking did not immediately impact the physical environment of the settlements. But it did contribute to constructing a narrative of these two sites, which located their significance in Addams and Wald. In the case of the Hull House Settlement the landmarking complimented the University's existing preservation efforts, which already focused on Addams. But, in the case of the Henry Street Settlement, the landmarking interjected Wald as the dominate interpretation of the site, which was understood again, by the settlement's residents and staff as well as the surrounding neighborhood, as the work of "two women" -- Lillian Wald and Helen Hall. The landmark designation fixed the meaning of these sites in the lives of Addams and Wald. Concentrating on these two women limited the interpretation of these sites to their first several decades and also failed to account for the voices of people like Starr, Brewster, Schiff, Carr, Hall, Ballard and, in the case of Henry Street's nomination, the entire visiting Nurses' Service.

Because the landmark designation of both sites came after their physical preservation it may seem superfluous. However, these national landmark designations framed the broader historical meaning of these sites. And, they fixed the meaning of the two sites in the figures of Addams and Wald. Once this significance was established it shaped “policy, planning and design decisions” at both sites.²⁷ And, the relationship of the Jane Addams Hull-House museum and the Henry Street Settlement to their founders would continue to mark their approach to their settlement interiors and their communities over the following decades.

Interlude: Reconstituting Space

In the struggle to save sections of the Hull House complex the University and the Save Hull House Committee fought over the settlement’s meaning as a “social symbol.”²⁸ For the University, the settlement represented a symbol of a bygone era and an impediment to progress while the Save-the-Hull House committee felt that the settlement represented the heart of the Halsted community and had for several decades. The University proposed to radically alter that community. When it won its claim to the Halsted site, the University restaged the interiors of the Hull-House mansion to reflect its own vision of the Hull House, substituting office furniture with sideboards and grounding the meaning of the site in the historical figure of Addams.

At Henry Street, Hall preserved something that already stood in place. The dining room, with its grandfather clock, brassware collection and samovars, remained virtually untouched since 1910, the year 267 Henry Street was purchased. To Hall these

²⁷ Randall Mason, “Fixing Historic Preservation: A Constructing Critique of ‘Significance’,” *Places* 16 (2004): 64.

²⁸ Marcus, *House as a Mirror of Self*, 147.

interiors symbolized the settlement's relationship to its community. But to the younger generation of upcoming social workers these old objects were alienating and did not express the Lower East Side neighborhood with which they were familiar. However, with the construction of the Arts for Living Center, the Henry Street Settlement layered a new space onto its historic structures, much in the same way as Hall layered her objects into the interiors of Henry Street after she moved in. With its modern architecture and inclusive message, the settlement's new building embodied a changing community and a new era of settlement workers.

Afterwards

Over time people change the space they live in. As seen in this study with Addams, Wald, Hall and Ballard, among others, people make active decisions about the interiors of spaces and these decisions can reflect broader social, historical, cultural and political dimensions. This process of change did not stop with the preservation of these two sites. Instead, the preservation of the Hull House and Henry Street sites marked another juncture in the history of these spaces. And there will be many more junctures to come. The last section of this study presents two descriptive narratives, which describe the interiors of the Hull House and Henry Street sites as they appear today. The interiors of these two sites still reflect the shifting relationship of these organizations to their communities. And, both settlements continue to draw on the principle eras of Addams and Wald in order to define their continued relevance in their communities.

Hull House Now

The Jane Addams Hull House museum stands on the east side of the University of Illinois' Chicago campus. In the shadow of the Student Union Building, the mansion appears surprising small. A long breezeway connects this stand-alone mansion with the dining hall. A cast iron fence frames the two buildings, forming a perimeter around the museum's grounds. The Hull

House mansion opens onto a large central hall. A reception desk slices across this hall forming a small vestibule area. On the wall to the right side of the entrance is a portrait of Jane Addams and one of her quotes: "The only thing to be dreaded in the Settlement is that it could lose its flexibility, its power of quick adaptation, its readiness to change its methods as its environment may demand." To the right of the entrance vestibule is the main gallery space. In this room, a portrait of Addams hangs above a fireplace mantel and a display is set-up, showcasing shoe shining implements similar to the ones neighborhood residents used in the early 20th century. A loom, with blueprints, stands across the room from this vignette as well as a display case, which exhibits objects from Hull House's Labor museum. This gallery room flows past a small collection of books, postcards, and other memorabilia for sale and into the south west parlor. In this room, the walls are still covered in amber patterned wallpaper from the museum's first restoration in the 1960s. However, the room is no longer staged as a domestic parlor, instead it holds several museum displays, a few pieces of antique furniture and a computer station for accessing information on the Hull House Settlement. A title of one exhibit asks, Why was Jane Addams so dangerous? Underneath, is a description of Addams' socialist activities and a Red Network book. A portrait of Mary Rozet Smith is displayed above a marble fireplace across the room. Sitting below the portrait is a large board, which poses the question "Was Jane Addams a Lesbian?" In the sparsely decorated parlor to the west of this room Addams desk is displayed next to the window. Behind it stands a grandfather clock, which belonged to her family, and a mannequin displaying one of her dresses. A poster discussing Alice Hamilton and concepts of social justice is placed along one wall while book binding implements, a reference to Ellen Gates Starr, stand in a corner of the room. A small display featuring cubbies from Hull House's nursery school and children's art activities grace another corner of the room while pictures of Addams and Starr line the windows. This room flows into the octagon room on the east side of the mansion, which displays in its center a scaled architectural model of the original 13-building Hull House complex. Around the walls of this room posters hang, outlining the impact of urban renewal and public housing on the museum's Harrison-Halsted neighborhood.

As this narrative demonstrates, the interiors of the Hull House mansion have shifted again. And, its relationship to its community continues to evolve despite the fact that it stands fixed in time by its preservation. Since its restoration in the 1960s the museum has actively tried to bring the larger settlement community into a museum space. It has brought back into the Hull House interiors aspects of the lives of many of the residents who lived there, such as Alice Hamilton and Ellen Gates Starr. The

museum has also tried to bring the settlement's neighborhood community back into its spaces. Objects such as homemade pottery, shoe-shining equipment and a spinning wheel highlight the immigrant community that utilized the Hull House. Most symbolic of this shift in emphasis, perhaps, is the museum's octagon room, which displays in its center, where the bust of Addams used to stand, a scaled architectural model of the Hull House Settlement before the 1960s.

The interiors of the Hull House museum demonstrate a conscious effort to move beyond its 1960s restoration. This is evident in attempts to reconnect with the neighborhood surrounding it. It is also reflected in the museum's attempts to make the Hull House and Jane Addams relevant to contemporary issues by asking new questions of her past. New interpretative materials examine who Addams was well beyond her role as the head of one of the nation's most prominent settlement houses. One display highlights the FBI's labeling of Addams as one of the most dangerous women in America, while another explores whether or not she was a lesbian.

Likewise, the interiors of the Henry Street Settlement have also gone through a reinterpretation. Between 1994 and 1996, the Henry Street Settlement started preservation work on its landmarked structures due to their deteriorating condition and the modern needs of the neighborhood center. The following narrative describes the settlement today.

Henry Street Now

The Henry Street Settlement is still scattered around the Lower East Side. Within a two block radius of the headquarter buildings there are five other Henry Street buildings. Except, instead of dwelling among tenement buildings, vast public housing projects frame these structures. Henry Street's three headquarter townhouses stand in a solitary line along Henry Street. Their small size, red brick façade and ornate detailing distinguish them from their public housing neighbors. On the front of these townhouses

bronze plaques proclaim their status as both city and national landmarks. A newer bronze plaque sits on 265 Henry Street, the settlement's oldest building, and proclaims the dedication of this building to "Lillian Wald, Founder of the Henry Street Settlement" in recognition of the settlement's centennial. Within these buildings, the interiors open up onto one another to form an eccentric maze of rooms. People no longer reside at the settlement and the tiny bedrooms on the upper floors now form a tangle of offices. The hallways leading to these spaces are small, winding, and randomly littered with historic artifacts. Years of interior modifications are evident in the changing floor levels, walls that splice windows in two, ornate fireplaces that stand in modest sized rooms and the confusion of hallways. On the ceilings of the various rooms, modern track lighting runs alongside historic chandeliers. And in the offices, family portraits stand alongside historic brassware. In this "rabbit warren," the settlement's historic dining room stands as an, almost unexpected, reference to the building's domestic past. This recently restored dining room occupies what is technically 267 Henry Street. It is an open spacious "L" shaped room. Two large tables, several sideboards, a piano and a grandfather clock grace the room. Menorahs and brass candlesticks decorate the two gold-veined marble fireplace mantels while samovars and blue and white china are prominently displayed on the sideboards. The rooms yellow ochre colored walls are bare, with the exception of Lillian Wald's portrait. Restoration of the settlement's central buildings extended to the courtyard behind the townhouses – the settlement houses' old playground. This space now forms the Dorothy Schiff Memorial Garden. Art sculptures from neighborhood art classes dot the courtyard space and the remnants of a mural that neighborhood children painted decades earlier is discernable on the courtyard walls. Finally - among the plants and the artwork - outdoor furniture and a barbeque stand ready for use.

The preservation of the Henry Street Settlement comingles the old and the new. It is still an active settlement and its spaces are still utilized for settlement activities. This active use is reflected in the barbeque in the courtyard and the layering of historic objects with the personal mementos of new employees. This layering of history is also marked by the names of the settlement's spaces. The settlement has renamed 265 Henry Street the Lillian Wald building, the courtyard is named in honor of Dorothy Schiff, granddaughter of Jacob Schiff and a settlement board member from 1928-1934, and a new settlement building bears the name of Helen Hall. The broader settlement community, through the art sculptures in the courtyard, the retention of the mural on the

courtyard walls, and the samovars displayed in the interiors, is also referenced in the restoration.

Among this layering of history, the settlement's dining room remains almost untouched. The lack of any changes to this room speaks loudly of the values of the settlement house. The objects that are in this space, the menorah, the samovars, the blue and white china and the grandfather clock have remained in this room for decades. These objects allude to the culture and home life of the settlement's traditional community and attest to the continuity of the settlement's mission. This continuity has, as Bertram Beck attested, given the settlement the label of archaic and old-fashioned, but it is also what invests the settlement with its authority. The dining room invokes the settlement's influential past and it continues to ground the running of the organization. Staff members still meet in the dining room for informal meetings or lunch. And the space forms the backdrop for public conferences and fundraising campaigns.

Both the Hull House and Henry Street sites draw on their principle eras to assert their relevance today, but they are doing so in different ways. One house is trying to capture the persona of Jane Addams while the other is trying to keep alive the mission of Lillian Wald. Despite the fact that it has not been a settlement house for nearly half a century, Hull House continues to try address issues that are contemporary to the twenty-first century, such as Addams' sexuality. In contrast to the museum's focus on the present, the Henry Street Settlement's interiors reflect a continued emphasis on the past. With its interiors Henry Street draws on an era when it had a large amount of authority in its community. The Henry Street's authority is located in a time when the settlement was a home and through the retention of the dining room, the last home-like

space in the settlement, it continues to draw on its past as Lillian Wald's home to go forward as an institution.

Today the success of these sites, in terms of capturing multiple voices, is harder to gauge. As demonstrated, there is a continued emphasis at both sites on the settlement's founders. The interpretation of the Jane Addams' Hull-House museum still, as its name suggests, largely focuses on the figure of Addams. And, the Henry Street Settlement has renamed 265 Henry Street, the settlements' original building, the Lillian Wald House. Wald's portrait also hangs in the center of the settlement, its dining room. Yet both also attempt to capture the voices of the community. The Hull-House museum now includes objects and interpretative materials that reference the community it used to serve. Similarly, Henry Street's dining room contains mementos that reference its traditional neighborhood. However, unlike Hull House, Henry Street captures the voice of its current community in its spaces and, in doing so, reflects the traditional purpose of the settlement as a neighborhood institution. The Hull House site no longer anchors its neighborhood and the loss is keenly felt among members of its community, even decades after its demolition. Florence Scala summarized this sense of loss early in the twenty-first century:

Sometimes I've gone to Hull-House because they have had something going on there. The last time I did that was in the evening and as I left the building, there was all of downtown lit up in front of me and for the first time in many years I felt teary-eyed. I thought, you bastards, you took it all, we don't have anything. I'm an alien person here.²⁹

²⁹ Carolyn Eastwood, *Near West Side Stories: Struggles for Community in Chicago's Maxwell Street Neighborhood* (Chicago: Lake Claremont Press, 2002), 197.

Summary

This project establishes historic interiors as important areas of study and proposes a model for studying these interiors. This model has two central elements: organizing interior space conceptually by critical junctures, or moments of transition, and examining the narratives of the people that were connected to these sites at these key points. Importantly, it provides a method for capturing voices in a changing environment.

This model is particularly appropriate to an analysis of these two settlement homes. The Hull House and Henry Street settlements contain multiple and varied pasts. They were important institutions that anchored their communities. And, they were run by dynamic and activist women who left their mark on their cities and the nation. Both houses anchored and defined the surrounding communities as settlement leader's incorporated the characteristics of those communities, and the people who lived in them, into their interior environments. The critical junctures analyzed in this study are vital to the conceptions of these spaces as preserved spaces. They highlight moments of plurality in the history of these two sites, where multiple voices emerged that conflict with, or else complement, one another. Using narrative methods to capture the voices that mark these critical moments provide a lens into the ways in which historical actors constituted their environments at key points in each sites' history. Battles at these critical junctures were "concretized" in their interiors and examining these interiors helps to provide perspective on "other, less visible issues."³⁰ Just as interiors can provide an important lens into broader social, political, historical trends, exploring this larger

³⁰ Marcus, *House as Mirror of Self*, 150.

environment can provide important perspective into the changes people make to their interior environments.

This study transforms space into an analytical tool for studying historical phenomena. However, the model it proposes has relevance to design practice today. It encourages designers to examine the ways in which people construct interiors in response to their surrounding environments. It provides a way to read interior architecture as sites of multiple, sometimes, contested meanings. And, it draws the focus of designers beyond the interior layout of rooms to assess material culture as “potent statements” of social, political and cultural values.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Erin Cunningham's current academic interests are shaped by her previous degrees. In 2001, she graduated from the History Department at the University of Victoria with a Bachelor of Arts. By the end of her degree, Erin's interest gravitated to issues dealing with 20th century urban space. She was attracted to the possibilities of design and the opportunity to use her studies to address contemporary issues. In 2002, she enrolled in a Master of Interior Design program at the University of Manitoba and graduated in May 2006. During this program, she examined issues of adaptive reuse and sustainability. When she graduated, Erin was drawn to the Design, Construction and Planning program at the University of Florida, noted for its strong interdisciplinary approach to design and its concentration in historic preservation. It allowed her to marry her two passions — history and design.