

# Following in Jane Addams' Footsteps

Rosalie V. Otters, Ph.D.  
University of Arkansas at Little Rock  
[rvotters@ualr.edu](mailto:rvotters@ualr.edu)

*The Journal of Social Work Values & Ethics*, Volume 6, Number 3 (2009)  
© 2009, White Hat Communications

This text may be freely shared among individuals, but it may not be republished in any medium without express written consent from the authors and advance notification of White Hat Communications.

## Abstract

Social work socialization is a lifelong process that shapes social values and ethics for students, professors, and professional social workers. It is both a subjective spiritual journey of identification with heroes and a more objective journey to satisfactorily understand society and its structures. Jane Addams' life and metatheoretical vision of democracy and social ethics offer social work a much needed direction for the 21st century.

*Key Words:* Values and Ethics, Socialization, Spirituality, Democracy, Metatheory

## Introduction

"The primary mission of the social work profession is to enhance human well-being and help meet the basic human needs of all people, with particular attention to the needs and empowerment of people who are vulnerable, oppressed, and living in poverty." (NASW, 2008, p. 1). Social work socialization is integral to this mission. Socialization is defined broadly as the continuing process through which one is helped to become a member of a cultural group, learning from others as well as contributing to others' welfare (Grusec & Hastings, 2007). Through the socialization process, social work students become professional social workers. Social work socialization involves developing social work values, skills and knowledge, including ethical standards. Social work socialization is a lifelong developmental process with many as-yet unexplored implications for the social work student, professional, and academic.

Spirituality, the quest for meaning beyond ourselves, is central to social work socialization and informs our values and ethics (Canda & Furman, 1999). How we define our values depends on our assumptions. As Reamer (1993, p. xiii) reminds us: "In the end, however, we cannot ignore the primary questions, questions that move social workers in the first place to be concerned about starving children, or any other vulnerable group. If social work is to enhance its own knowledge base as it continues to mature as a profession, it is essential for the profession to examine, shape, and clarify its key philosophical assumptions."

It is not enough for the discipline of social work to use terms like *social justice* or *self-determination* (NASW Code of Ethics, 2008, pp. 1-2) without a deeper understanding of their underlying meaning to us as social workers. In this article, I will offer an inductive inquiry into what has been personally meaningful as I visit sites important to the life of Jane Addams, a founding mother of the social work discipline. Then I will offer a metatheoretical process from Jane Addams' social thought that can provide a foundation for social work ethics, since her social thought has been created through the lens of her own experiences.

I first describe a personal pilgrimage to places in the life and times of Jane Addams (1860-1935). The word *pilgrimage* is used intentionally, since the inductive process is both motivational and spiritual, underlying both values and ethics. The pilgrimage to a *saint* or *hero* is a common motif in both literature and life. In 1875, when Jane Addams was fifteen, a teacher gave her a copy of John Bunyan's famous 17th century work of moral edification, *Pilgrim's Progress*. She, as were most Americans even into the early 20th century, was intimately influenced by this story, which pictured life as a journey toward Christian perfection through good works. Along with the Bible and Declaration of Independence, *Pilgrim's Progress* has defined the American experience (Elshtain, 2002).

In addition, Jane Addams was also greatly influenced by the life and times of Abraham Lincoln. She never personally knew Lincoln, since he was assassinated when she was a small child; yet she had heard much about his life from her father. John Addams had had a long friendship with the man who addressed him in letters as "my dear double-D'ed Addams" (Elshtain, 2002). Her father's stories of this earlier friendship with the fellow Illinois leader and later U.S. President gave Jane Addams both a hero and saint to emulate.

In the process of learning more about the life and times of Jane Addams, I too have found myself seeking to emulate her as a hero. Jane Addams' life and metatheory of democracy and ethics offer a basis for social work student socialization into social work values and ethics. As an inductive inquiry into the development of social work socialization, I am following a feminist pragmatist methodology, using Jane Addams and myself as the subjects of study. This research approach involves boundary crossing, in which the researcher herself at times is the subject of study, in contrast to the traditional *value free* observer approach (Babbie, 2001; Creswell, 1998).

Feminist pragmatist methodology [Hill & Deegan, 2007; *The Jane Collective: Feminist Pragmatism*, 2008; also identified as Jane Addams' pragmatism (Hamington, 2006) and pragmatist feminism (Whipps, 2004)] combines action and theory for a more equalitarian practice. Social context, experience, change, pluralism, embodiment, and interdependence are central aspects of this methodological process. Feminist pragmatism makes no sharp differentiation between the methodology of theory and experience (Whipps, 2004). The methodological informs the theoretical, as the theoretical informs the methodological.

Jane Addams, who herself has been characterized as a *feminist pragmatist* (*The Jane Collective: Feminist Pragmatism*, 2008), created a social theory of democracy that is also a social ethic. Her understanding of democracy as social ethics provides a metatheoretical structure for social work values and ethics. Through a meta-analysis of this structure, we can reflexively study the effects of democracy and ethics as a basis for student social work socialization (Ritzer, 2000).

## **2. The Pilgrimage**

It is Friday, about 4:30 a.m., the end of September, still dark as I make my way, driving on the expanding ribbon of highway toward the first step of my journey, the Little Rock National Airport. Final destination: Madison, Wisconsin. As the 20-minute ride progresses, there are only the occasional bright lights of an early commuter rushing by to break the inky solitude surrounding me in my car. Finally, as I reach the airport, the sky lights up with bands of overpowering brightness. People, activity, the familiar. Takeoff. A new orange popsicle-laced-with-vanilla day appears at the window of the moving plane. As I arrive at Chicago's O'Hare International Airport, it is a little after 8 a.m.

A new step in my journey: navigating this urban labyrinth of concrete as I seek the el train to the University of Illinois at Chicago. A warmish day. Holding my jacket with one hand, I drag my suitcase onto the train with the other. An hour later, I walk several blocks from the UIC station, consulting my Internet campus map. I turn right at Halstead Street and walk a few more blocks, with my suitcase trailing behind me.

It is 9:30 a.m. when I finally reach my destination. On the edge of the campus to the right lies a small brick building with yellow trim, surrounded by a wrap-around porch. I am alone with

my thoughts as I walk the red brick path surrounding this sanctuary of a time past. Once the air here crackled with energy and promise. There were 13 buildings here, most torn down years ago to make way for the UIC campus. Jane Addams, in her last years, reported that sometimes 10,000 people a week came through the Hull House complex seeking to be with one another, to learn from one another, to give to one another (*An Experiment in Democracy*, undated). Walking along the perimeter of Hull House, I look up at the banners hanging along its front: Equality, The Arts, Immigration, Democracy, Peace, Labor. Too early to go in, as this icon of social democracy doesn't open until 10 a.m.; I wander to a nearby building, which houses a campus bookstore.

When I return a half hour later, dozens of teenagers armed with notebooks and pens are milling around the entrance: a new generation to be introduced to the social change vision based on relationship and community. Lots of Jane Addams reports are about to be written—will their authors be believers or skeptics? A *Chicago Tribune* article propped up on a nearby table highlights the tension: "Was Jane Addams a Lesbian?" (Schoenberg, 2007). Jane Addams, the most famous founder of the settlement movement; Nobel Peace Prize recipient; *Saint Jane* for many seeking to live out their social beliefs. But, for these teens, she lived and died a very long time ago. Has prurient speculation about her personal relationships become more important than her historic achievements?

I trail the students, listening in on their guided tour on the small first floor, even while I am reading the display summaries and trying to disentangle myself from this human mass. We walk around in a circle from the entryway to the living room, past the souvenir counter, through the two back rooms. And back to the entryway. No going upstairs as it is blocked off. Such a small place for so much history to have taken place! Hull House's message continues to reverberate throughout the Chicago area; this city has long been a ferment of social activity, for better or worse, even before Jane Addams and Hull House came on the scene.

The second remaining Hull House building was once a gathering place, a dining area. Checking it out, I wander upstairs for the film, *An Experiment in Democracy*. Democracy. Yes, that word again. The Hull House community developed both the social theory and the practice of what Jane Addams called "a rule of living as well as a test of faith" (Addams, 2002, p. 7). Many disciplines, in addition to social work, consider this experiment in democracy as pivotal to their own legacy, including sociology, feminist pragmatist philosophy and public administration (Hill

& Deegan, 2007; Shields, 2006; Whipps, 2004). And how did Jane Addams identify herself? According to Brieland (1990, pp. 134 - 135), she listed herself as Hull House's "head resident" or "settlement worker," but not as social worker, questioning the Charity Organization Society standards of professional charity; she instead favored a peer model of mutual help.

### **Meditation**

The rest of the day, I find myself meditating on Jane's story (she's a friend now, so I think of her as Jane). I'm back on the el train to O'Hare where I wait for the Van Galder bus to Madison, home to the University of Wisconsin as well as the capital city, another three hours away. We drive west out of Chicago along the Jane Addams Memorial Tollway (this was the Northwest Tollway until it was renamed in 2007). The trees are just beginning to change: yellow, shades of brown and red, little Christmas tree bulbs of color, adding a bit of festivity to the warm fall day.

We speed along the highway toward Rockford, a northwestern Illinois town, where Jane boarded at what was then Rockford Seminary (1877-1881). Here at the "Mount Holyoke of the West" (Addams, 1961, p. 47), she honed her ability to think for herself, often in spite of the pressure of both peers and professors. At this time, women who completed the course of instruction were strongly encouraged toward work in a Christian mission field. Jane, however, refused all entreaties, both prayers and direct admonitions from her teachers, toward such a vocation.

My mother-in-law, who grew up on a farm in what was then the outskirts of Rockford, also earned her undergraduate degree here, at what in the 1930s had become Rockford College. For years she has pointed out that even 50 years after Jane graduated, her legacy lived on, making my mother-in-law's choice to study biology rather than a social-centered major difficult. But, like Jane herself, my mother-in-law has always known her mind and continues to make her choices, often very independently, of outside pressures. Could that have also been a legacy of this very unique college? Until the 1950s, Rockford College concentrated on women's education and leadership even as it emphasized a more narrow social responsibility than either Jane Addams or my mother-in-law wanted to follow.

A few miles before we reach Rockford, we turn north toward Madison. Jane's family came from Cedarville, Illinois, a few miles west of the highway. Both in her time and today it continues to be a small town of under 1,000. As an adult looking back at her childhood, Jane remembered fondly her home life there and especially her father, who was an enduring role model, bridging the

ethical and the democratic (Addams, 1961). Jane continues to be remembered in her hometown, now with a sign (Elshtain, 2002, pp. 1-2) as one enters the municipality:

**CEDARVILLE  
BIRTHPLACE OF  
JANE ADDAMS 1860 - 1935  
HUMANITARIAN, FEMINIST,  
SOCIAL WORKER, REFORMER,  
EDUCATOR, AUTHOR,  
PUBLICIST, FOUNDER OF  
HULL HOUSE, PIONEER  
SETTLEMENT CENTER,  
CHICAGO, 1889, PRESIDENT  
WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL  
LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND  
FREEDOM, NOBEL PEACE  
PRIZE, 1931.**

### **Following in Lincoln's Footsteps**

It is 4 p.m. as the bus arrives at the Memorial Union in Madison and I greet my son, a graduate student. For Jane, as a child living in her little village in northern Illinois, Madison, a city on an isthmus, was the big city to the north, laid out so that the Wisconsin state capitol, built on a hill, could be seen for miles (Addams, 1961). Jane had visited an earlier capital building, one that

also looked out at the broad expanse of Madison. During my visit, my son and I walked up the many steps of this more recent building, looking out over the expanse of city and water, as far reaching a view as many might have had in a pre-airplane world. Once inside, we then walked to the great inner chamber that looks up, floor by floor to a far distant ceiling, decorated in gold and sculptured over a hundred years ago as a sanctuary of democracy.

In Jane's childhood, her imagination was captured by the wizened eagle that resided in the earlier capitol building. That eagle, Old Abe, who had been named for President Lincoln, had been previously carried by the Eighth Wisconsin Regiment through the Civil War. As the mascot, Old Abe led his countrymen into battle after battle as he conferred a mystical strength on the troops. Confederate troops tried again and again to capture him but were never successful, even as his Union handlers fell in battle. After the war, Old Abe again called the Wisconsin capital his home, but continued to be enlisted for patriotic forays beyond its borders, since by then he was a national talisman. After the eagle's death in 1881, he was mounted and remained a centerpiece of the capitol for many years. (Wisconsin Veterans Museum, 2006).

In Jane's young mind, the heroics of Old Abe were mingled with her image of President Lincoln himself, whom her father had known for many years as a friend (Addams, 1961, p. 38). She remembered her childhood visit to the "veteran war eagle" as a "search for the heroic and perfect which so persistently haunts the young....the notion of the martyred President as the standard bearer to the conscience of his countrymen, as the eagle had been the ensign of courage to the soldiers of the Wisconsin regiment" (Addams, 1961, pp. 36-37). Today, a facsimile protectively stands guard in the inner corridor of the newer capital building, the body of the original eagle having vanished in the 1904 capital fire. As my son and I visited the halls of this majestic building, we too were taken with this bridge between a distant heroic past and the quest for meaning in the present.

In the same way, we can be mindful of our current president, who has also taken the Lincoln story as his own. From the moment President Obama declared his candidacy in Springfield, Illinois, Lincoln's inspiring story has been invoked again and again, concluding in the swearing in ceremony with the Lincoln Bible. We may agree or disagree with President Obama's policies, but we all need heroes to emulate, whether they are with us in flesh or in spirit.

## **Social Work Values and Ethics Influence Socialization**

Students today come to social work looking for meaning, for something that is bigger than themselves, for a spiritual if not a religious insight. Even for those who profess no creedal belief in God or a Higher Power, there is something about seeking to help others that lifts us out of ourselves into the larger social structure. Canda and Furman (1999, p. 4) emphasize that "social work is fundamentally a spiritual profession—one that sets its reason for existence and its highest priorities on service." This spiritual quest to serve transcends our everyday world, lifting us in some way beyond ourselves toward the sacred. For the sociologist, Emile Durkheim, the end point is not a theistic one; rather, it is found in society itself—and the need to serve society (Durkheim, 1965).

Values are somewhat hard to define; we usually "know it when we see it." Values are what we find to be desirable or worthwhile. What we see as value-able may be an individualistic or personal value rather than a social value. Social work values, however, should be more than personal preferences; they should reflect the priorities of the profession itself (Reamer, 1999). Our priorities as social workers are to support our mission, which seeks to move society toward social justice and mutuality (*NASW Code of Ethics*, 2008). Social work socialization, at its best, offers students a way to access this larger world of meaning and belief, relationally through professors, field supervisors, and others, who as role models embody these values and ethics.

Since social work emphasizes the importance of the relationship in interventions (Hepworth, Rooney, Rooney, Strom-Gottfried, & Larsen, 2006; Miley, O'Melia, & DuBois, 2007), what type of student relationships have been found to help develop students to support the social work mission? If a student were to be asked to name someone they have found to be a role model, a personal window into the profession, whom would they name? A few social work studies have investigated the role of teachers and field instructors as such models, but there is no agreement on what constitutes good role modeling or how to operationalize it (Barretti, 2007). In fact, the very definition of social work itself could be clearer, both for the lay person on the street as well as professionals. Is social work mainly a clinical endeavor to help clients adjust to society, or is it a community-and-policy based discipline to change society itself? How do we define *service* and the contexts through which service is manifested? (Brieland, 1990; Specht & Courtney, 1994).

Social work needs to have a "sustained, scholarly examination of the philosophical foundations on which the profession rests....The principal aims of any profession rest on core assumptions about mission, methods, and conceptual orientation. In short, the heart of any profession consists of a philosophically oriented statement of purpose and perspective" (Reamer, 1993, p. xii). What foundations should underlie the application of social work mission, methods, and concepts? The importance of this question becomes apparent when we talk about socialization of social work students into the profession using the Council on Social Work Education's Educational Policy and Accreditation Standards (2008).

The recent EPAS statement concludes that competency-based education is based on performance outcome, whose foundation comes out of field as the signature pedagogy:

*Signature pedagogy represents the central form of instruction and learning in which a profession socializes its students to perform the role of practitioner. Professionals have pedagogical norms with which they connect and integrate theory and practice. In social work, the signature pedagogy is field education. The intent of field is to connect the theoretical and conceptual contribution of the classroom with the practical world of the practice setting (p. 8).*

I suggest that this begs the question, because other disciplines also socialize students, integrating theory and practice through internship opportunities, which are integral to their self-identity as a discipline (e.g., public administration, applied sociology, counseling, and even engineering). In contrast, social work has a unique philosophical or social theoretical understanding of who we are and what we are about. Jane defines this in terms of a democratic ideal that is relational in our commitment to one another and social in terms of structural formulation.

This is not to say that field education should be less important to social work, but rather that it needs to be undergirded by something larger than itself, even larger than an ethical consideration of applying values. Jane might say that field is social work's signature pedagogy *because of our commitment to realize a democratic society of citizens rather than clients*. Whereas clients are always beholden to the expertise of others, citizens create their own expertise and add to the common good of all, including the so-called expert (Elshtain, 2002; Knight, 2005). In such a climate, democracy itself is the social ethic (Hamington, 2006, p. 7).

## **The Social Gospel and Social Ethics**

Social ethics as a social theory came out of the social gospel movement of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It was an effort by liberal Protestants to develop a comprehensive social ethic based on democratic ideals of justice and mutuality. Whereas Jane was influenced by the Christian underpinnings of social ethics, she always refused to adhere to sectarian Christianity or even any religious dogma. Rather, Jane enacted social ethics as a way to apply her definition of democracy. For both social ethics and democracy, the central issue is that "we are all in it together." Democracy is not for only some, such as the wealthy and propertied, or even for many provided they have certain racial or gender characteristics. Democracy is for all (Dorrien, 2009). The goal of democracy, and the goal of social ethics, is membership in a community. This means developing citizens who are equal with equal opportunities, who learn from one another, working toward a common good.

In socializing students into social work, heroic role models can be important, both as the personification of the discipline and also pointing the way theoretically toward the desired mission outcome. We may or may not know these pathfinders personally, but we know them by reputation, often from an earlier time. For both Jane and President Obama, Abraham Lincoln has been a very personal role model. Jane herself has been a role model, as a founding mother of social work as well as other disciplines. In fact, for most of Jane's life, she was "lionized as an American saint" (Dorrien, 2009, p. 168), as settlement house worker, activist, and Nobel Peace Prize winner. The outstanding exception was during World War I, when she was vilified and ostracized for her peace stand.

Her life and work had been in eclipse until recently when fields as diverse as women's studies, sociology, political science, urban and social history, and the history of education began to study her life and writings in depth (Knight, 2005). In addition, feminist pragmatism and religious studies have taken a second look at her social ethics and found relevance for today (Dorrien, 2009; Hamington, 2006). Social work, however, has yet to really give her life and social thought a thorough look either in scholarship or core courses. When Jane is mentioned in social work articles, it is often in reference to her community or pacifist work (Brieland, 1990; Johnson, 2004; Lundblad, 1995).

There is much more to Jane's story, both in her life story, as well as her writings. During her life, she wrote a dozen books, and more than 500 articles (Hamington, 2006), many of which contain a distinct social ethics that could enrich social work ethical theory development. More recently, researchers have come to better understand her scholarship, which was informed by both an experimentally inductive approach as well as a more traditional empiricism. Her practice informed her research, even as her research informed her practice (Hill & Deegan, 2007; Whipps, 2004)

Dorrien (2009) describes the impact of Jane on Graham Taylor, the founder of the School of Social Economics, which was to become the School of Social Service Administration at the University of Chicago: "In the personality of Jane Addams, living on the corner of Polk and Halsted streets, I found a personification of spiritual and social ideals, dwelling in simple, natural, neighborly, human relations with her cosmopolitan neighbors, and exerting far-flung influences over the more privileged classes" (p. 42).

### **Jane's Belief in a Social Democracy: A Metatheory for Social Work**

We need a story that is bigger than ourselves, through which to grow in our understanding, commitment, and practice of the social work discipline. Each nation or ethnic group has at least one story that is basic to its understanding of itself. If we were to do social work, for instance, in Hitler's Germany, we would find the mythology of racial supremacy central to determining who even deserves help. To develop an alternative social theory would exact a steep price. In a poverty-and-conflict-stricken area like the Darfur region of Sudan, the stakes of doing social work and even the meaning of what constitutes social work might also be very different from what we consider the social work mission here in the United States. Yet, even in the United States, we often find ourselves compromising what we know is a basic tenet of the profession: "Social workers' primary goal is to help people in need and to address social problems. Social workers elevate service to others above self-interest" (NASW, 2008, p. 2). This statement does not answer who, what, and how we are to serve.

A key core assumption in our American culture is that of democracy. Most recently, in the era of George W. Bush, democracy has been extensively intertwined with capitalism and individual initiative. For Jane, there was a very different definition of and philosophical outlook on the democratic principles that undergird what she did and said. Jane conceptualized this

relationship in *Democracy and Social Ethics*: "We are thus brought to a conception of democracy not merely as a sentiment which desires the well-being of all men, nor yet as a creed which believes in the essential dignity and equality of all men, but as that which affords a rule of living as well as a test of faith" (Addams, 2002, p. 7).

Jane concludes that democracy is socially, not individually or politically, determined; rather, it is both a way of living and a social ethic for how to live. The value of democracy is applied through a social ethic of societal responsibility for the common good rather than an individual ethic of individual responsibility for personal gain: For us in the United States who look through an individualistic lens, Jane has a special warning: "To attain individual morality in an age demanding social morality, to pride one's self on the results of personal effort when the time demands social adjustment, is utterly to fail to apprehend the situation" (Addams, 2002, p. 6).

One way social theorists clarify terms like social justice and self-determination is to relate such terminology to larger theories and metatheories. Metatheory, as an overarching theory of theories, gives perspective on Jane's life and social ethics, and is a model for a systematic study of what underlies values and beliefs of social work. A metatheory looks at the bigger theoretical structures that underlie how people in our society act on their values. A metatheoretical study is reflexive in its process as we learn about a bigger overarching social theory and see how it both affects our ethical stance and is affected by it (Ritzer, 2000). For Jane, the democracy ideal provides both a blueprint for living with others as well as a framework for a social ethic. Democracy and social ethics can be further analyzed in terms of feminist pragmatist social philosophy, summarized into four concepts through which democracy and social ethics develop: *sympathetic knowledge*, *lateral progress*, *pluralism* and *fallibilism* (Hamington, 2006).

*Sympathetic knowledge* means that knowledge can be obtained about the other person through an empathetic relationship that can move one beyond present understanding and one's own experience. Such knowledge is educational, liberating, and basic to a democracy, which needs to encourage the continued learning of its citizens in relationship to their environment and to one another. As Jane warns us from her own bitter experience, after admonishing an out-of-work breadwinner who later kills himself: "Wisdom to deal with a man's difficulties comes only through some knowledge of his life and habits as a whole; and that to treat an isolated episode is almost

sure to invite blundering" (Addams, 1961, p. 123). Sympathetic knowledge is also basic to our understanding of human relationships, through which social work enacts change.

*Lateral progress* emphasizes that, in order for democracy to take hold, there is often a need for more people to have the same right throughout the population rather than have a few have even more rights than they already do at present. Jane's support for women's rights was not only based on fairness or equality but even more for the betterment of society itself. "This is the penalty of a democracy, that we are bound to move forward or retrograde together. None of us can stand aside; our feet are mired in the same soil, and our lungs breathe the same air" (Addams, 2002, p. 112).

*Pluralism* recognizes that the inclusion of all parts of society is essential to future progress. Pluralism energizes and enriches society and as such is something to seek rather than to avoid. Democracy is enriched by the variables of difference, which should encourage mutuality. In fact, the settlement house served the upper class who took part even as it served the immigrant poor of the neighborhood. Jane finds herself "permanently impressed with the kindness of the poor to each other" (Addams, 1961, p. 123); even as they have little themselves, they seem willing and able to share. We have much to learn and give to each other, whether rich or poor.

Finally, *fallibilism* involves the opportunity to learn from mistakes and move on. The biggest mistake in Jane's time, as in ours, is to look at democracy in terms of the individual rather than society as a whole. Social ethics, founded on democratic principles, must be for the common good, for everyone. The end product of a democratic society is to encourage its citizens toward action, toward change that will seek the betterment of all society. It is not always easy to learn from mistakes: "The difficulty comes in adjusting our conduct, which has become hardened into customs and habits, to these changing moral conceptions. When this adjustment is not made, we suffer from the stain and indecision of believing one hypothesis and acting upon another" (Addams, 2002, p. 11).

Jane Addams used her own life experiences as well as the democratic ideals of her time to create a broader metatheory that defines social justice and self determination in relationship to democracy and social ethics. This metatheory itself can be better understood through a feminist pragmatist social theory, which emphasizes the use of experience in the service of understanding the social world around us.

## **Conclusion: Following in Jane's Footsteps**

We social workers could more fully apprehend both the opportunity and the challenge of the social work discipline. I refer to Alice Johnson's insightful commentary: *Social Work is Standing on the Legacy of Jane Addams: But Are We Sitting on the Sidelines?* (2004). Johnson has also been communing with the spirit of Jane Addams and the Hull House community, as Johnson moves about the UIC campus from her position at the Jane Addams College of Social Work. We social workers revere Jane Addams but often at a distance; we need to take in the full breadth and depth of her life and thought. She successfully integrated practice with research and theory. It is time to reappraise her work and life. Though this process has been made all the easier because other applied disciplines have also recently reassessed her contributions to their own disciplines, we seem to be standing on the sidelines.

An Addams biographer, Louise Knight (2006), tells social workers that though there is much to be proud of in claiming Jane Addams as a founding mother, "we must also embrace her willingness to face her failures and learn from them...when social workers have experiences that make them doubt the wisdom of current practices and theories, then changing their beliefs and actions is what is required" (p. 102).

In summary, Jane offers us in the 21st century a social ethic through which to see ourselves as part of a common good, which is always imperfect but worthy of seeking and enacting. But, more than that, Jane gives us herself, a spiritual relationship with one who has gone before us but is still with us if we are willing to accept her friendship. By any definition, Jane Addams has been an important role model to early 20th century social endeavors. If we in social work will look seriously at her life and social ethics, her metatheory, she can also deepen our mission today. The social work socialization process continues on, a process that integrates individual lives into the larger community.

## **References**

- Addams, J. (1961/1910). *Twenty years at Hull-House*. New York: The New American Library.
- Addams, J. (2002). *Democracy and social ethics*. Introduction by Charlene Haddock Seigfried. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Babbie, E. (2001). *The practice of social research*. (9th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Thomson Learning.

- Barretti, M.A. (2007). Teachers and field instructors as student role models: A neglected dimension in social work education. *Journal of Teaching in Social Work*, 27(3/4), 215-239.
- Brieland, D. (1990). The Hull-House tradition and the contemporary social worker: Was Jane Addams really a social worker? *Social Work*, 35(2), 134- 138.
- Canda, E.R., & Furman, L.D. (1999). *Spiritual diversity in social work practice: The heart of helping*. New York: Free Press.
- Council on Social Work Education. (2008). *Educational policy and accreditation standards*. Retrieved January 30, 2009, from <http://www.cswe.org>
- Creswell, J.W. (1998). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Dorrien, G. (2009). *Social ethics in the making: Interpreting an American tradition*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Durkheim, E. (1965/1912). *The elementary forms of religious life*. New York: Free Press.
- Elshtain, J.B. (2002). *Jane Addams and the dream of American democracy*. New York: Basic Books.
- An experiment in democracy* (n.d.). Jane Addams Hull-House Museum, UIC College of Architecture & the Arts, DVD.
- Grusec, J.E., & Hastings, P.D. (Eds.) (2007). *Handbook of socialization: Theory and research*. Introduction (pp. 1 - 9). New York: The Guilford Press.
- Hamington, M. (2006). Jane Addams (1860 - 1935). *The Internet encyclopedia of philosophy*, 1-15. Retrieved January 24, 2009, from <http://www.iep.utm.edu/a/addamsj.htm>
- Hepworth, D.H., Rooney, R.H., Rooney, G.D., Strom-Gottfried, K., & Larsen, J.A. (2006). *Direct social work practice: Theory and skills*. (7th ed.). Belmont, CA: Thomson, Brooks/Cole.
- Hill, M.R., & Deegan, M.J. (Aug. 2007). *Jane Addams, the spirit of youth, and the sociological imagination today*. Paper at the 102nd Annual Meeting of the American Sociological Association, New York. Retrieved January 24, 2009, from [http://www.sociological-origins.com/files/ASA\\_2007\\_Hill\\_Deegan\\_Paper.PDF](http://www.sociological-origins.com/files/ASA_2007_Hill_Deegan_Paper.PDF)
- The Jane Collective: Feminist Pragmatism. (2008) Retrieved January 23, 2009, from <http://www.mscd.edu/addams/Site/Welcome.html>
- Johnson, A.K. (2004). Social work is standing on the legacy of Jane Addams: But are we sitting on the sidelines? *Social Work*, 49(2), 319-322.
- Knight, L.W. (2005). *Citizen Jane Addams and the struggle for democracy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Knight, L.W. (2006). Changing my mind: An encounter with Jane Addams. *Affilia: Journal of Women and Social Work*, 21(1), 97-102.
- Lundblad, K.S. (1995). Jane Addams and social reform: A role model for the 1990s. *Social Work*, 40(5), 661 - 669.
- Miley, K.K., O'Melia, M., & DuBois, B. (2007). *Generalist social work practice: An empowering approach*. New York: Pearson, Allyn & Bacon.
- National Association of Social Workers. (2008). Code of Ethics. NASW. Retrieved June 20, 2009, from <http://www.socialworkers.org/pubs/code/code.asp>
- Reamer, F.G. (1993). *The philosophical foundations of social work*. New York: Columbia University Press.

- Reamer, F.G. (1999). *Social work values and ethics*. (2nd ed.). New York: Columbia University Press.
- Ritzer, G. (2000). *Sociological theory* (5th ed.). New York: McGraw Hill Higher Education.
- Schoenberg, N. (2007). Hull-House museum poses the question 'Was Jane Addams a lesbian?' *Chicago Tribune*, February 13. Retrieved January 31, 2009, from <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G1-159233651.html>
- Shields, P.M. (2006). Democracy and the social feminist ethics of Jane Addams: A vision for public administration. *Public Administration Theory Network*, 28(3), 418-442.
- Specht, H., & Courtney, M.E. (1994). *Unfaithful angels: How social work has abandoned its mission*. New York: The Free Press.
- Whipps, J. (2004). Pragmatist feminism. In *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Retrieved January 24, 2009, from <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/femapproach-pragmatism/>
- Wisconsin Veterans Museum. (2006). *Old Abe the war eagle: Wisconsin's most famous Civil War veteran*. Retrieved January 30, 2009, from [http://museum.dva.state.wi.us/Edu\\_Old\\_Abe\\_Story.asp](http://museum.dva.state.wi.us/Edu_Old_Abe_Story.asp)