

“This Third Space”:
Real-and-Imagined Spaces in Turn-of-the-Century
American Settlement Fiction

by

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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners. I understand that my thesis may be made electronically available to the public.

Abstract

This thesis is a literary analysis of American settlement fiction, using a spatially-informed cultural historicist approach. The settlement movement in the U.S. was both a Progressive Era reform movement and a precursor to modern-day social welfare systems. As such, it has typically been viewed in either laudatory or censorious terms – as an innovative force for social good, or as a negative source of social control. Drawing on Edward Soja’s concept of Thirdspace as a uniquely generative and semiotically rich cultural site, and focusing on Hull House as an example of Thirdspace, I argue that the settlement movement was in fact an extraordinarily multivalent phenomenon. Hull House (and the many settlement houses modeled after it) instantiated issues of gender, class, and race in complex ways that both reflected and refracted larger patterns in American culture. Moreover, these same patterns are evident in fiction that incorporates the spaces of the settlement house and the figure of the settlement worker. Contextualized readings of five novels (Elia Wilkinson Peattie’s *The Precipice*, Clara Laughlin’s *Just Folks*, Hervey White’s *Differences*, Sherwood Anderson’s *Marching Men*, and W.E.B. Du Bois’ *The Quest of the Silver Fleece*) provide evidence of the value of further recovering this dramatically understudied area of settlement discourse.

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Dedication

To Elliot. Thanks for believing in me.

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Chapter 1: The Spaces of Settlement Fiction

I smiled, happy that the curators had noted the significance of ‘settling’ and of the strange, disruptive, and improvised ways with which settlers made this third space.

(Jackson 149)

In her vibrant and insightful book, *Lines of Activity*, Shannon Jackson combines vividly described archival research with explorations of existing physical traces such as museum exhibits to revisit – as literally as possible – a fabulous and richly ambiguous space: Hull House, the American epicenter of the Progressive Era¹ social movement known as “settling.” Hull House, the settlement movement, and their best-known leader in America, Jane Addams, have been extensively studied, most often by historians, but also by sociologists, political scientists, philosophers, and interdisciplinary scholars in fields such as urban and gender studies. Unfortunately, these analyses can be a bit tendentious: Addams/Hull House/the settlement movement are either lauded as inspiring forces for social change (e.g. Deegan, “Jane Addams”; Knight; Elshtain) or critiqued as counterproductive forces for social control (e.g. Lissak; see also Spratt 771-72). The “renaissance of interest in Addams” (409) noted by Louise Knight in 2005 has done little to alter this dualism, as evidenced by Mary Jo Deegan’s recent declaration, in response to “inaccurate and unwarranted” criticism of Addams, that “Only a sweeping statement...can begin to capture her stature as a leading citizen of the United States and the world” (“Jane Addams” 217). Given that the settlement movement was one of reform, of an earnest attempt to make people

¹ The Progressive Era has been variously dated – I use this term to refer to the period from roughly 1880 to the 1920s, following Elisabeth Israels Perry’s point that, when women’s activities are included, such periodization more accurately reflects the development of Progressive movements and ideologies.

and society better, it is appropriate to ask whether its aims were lofty or misguided, fully achieved or undeservedly mythologized. But, as Jackson demonstrates, there is also another perspective to take: Hull House can be studied as a “strange, disruptive, and improvised” social space, constituted by and generative of multiple contentious discourses and embodied practices – what Edward Soja would call a “Thirdspace.” Jackson’s work, though relying of necessity on historical texts, is squarely focused on the physical structures and performative aspects of Hull House practice. It is my hope in the current project to apply a similarly open, multifaceted spatial perspective to the more explicitly textual – and staggeringly neglected – subject of settlement fiction.

Before going further, a brief summary of background information may be helpful. Hull House began in 1889, when Addams and her friend Ellen Gates Starr took up quarters in one of the poorest, most ethnically diverse neighborhoods of Chicago, where they hoped to give disaffected well-to-do youth (including themselves) an opportunity to engage directly with “the social and industrial problems ...of life in a great city” (Addams, *Twenty Years* 86). A recasting of the prototypical English settlement of Toynbee Hall, Hull House was conceived by Addams as a secular (though Christian-inspired) experiment in social democracy, one that would enact and promote what she saw as the best attributes of American culture (see, for example, the discussion of Addams’ *Twenty Years at Hull House* in Davis 172-73). Over time, it also became a steadily increasing set of services and amenities, including art exhibits, theatrical performances, washing facilities, cooking classes, discussion groups, meeting spaces and a daycare. In addition, Hull House was involved in sociological research and political activism, often in deliberate conjunction with each other (i.e. documenting neighborhood conditions in order to advocate for governmental regulation

or other reforms). Addams, Starr, and a variety of mostly upper-middle-class, mostly female residents, lived on the grounds; many others volunteered or were paid for shorter-term activities such as leading a class. Addams quickly became, and remained, the primary spokesperson for the project, to the point where Hull House became “an embodiment of Addams” (Haar, “At Home” 101). In fact, as her fame grew, Addams came to be seen in popular culture as “a Joan of Arc...representative of the whole [settlement] movement” (Lissak 22) – despite the actual diversity in settlement workers’ opinions about both goals and methods (Spratt 775). When Hull House opened, it was one of only three settlements in America. By 1914, it was by far the most famous, even iconic, example of a thriving movement that included umbrella organizations, inter-organizational alliances and several hundred individual settlement projects.² As the movement itself declined, its “lines of activity” (to borrow Jackson’s phrase) continued, morphing into the professionalized, often bureaucratized programs and institutions we now associate with the terms “welfare” and “social services.”

Even in this short *précis*, we can begin to see how the polyvalent nature of Hull House allowed it to signify across a dizzying array of topics, including gender (and by extension, sexuality), class, ethnicity and race, art, science, education, religion, democracy and national identity. To pick out several axes of current analytical interest: as a woman-led and woman-dominated space, Hull House invoked issues of gender; in its intention to bring

² Although some sources name the College Settlement in New York as Hull House’s only American predecessor (e.g. Elshain) in fact The Neighborhood Guild (later renamed University Settlement) was founded in 1886 (Trolander 8, Carson 36). The number of settlements at the height of the movement is often quoted as 400, but Trolander refines this estimate to 200-400, depending on the definition of “settlement” (10).

people with different socioeconomic statuses together, it invoked issues of class; and in its orientation towards new immigrants of different ethnic backgrounds, it invoked issues of race (issues that are complicated by the relative absence of black Americans at Hull House). We can also begin to see what Jackson calls the “paradox of its residential mission” (155), how the settlement house was always simultaneously a public and a private space, a place where the private act of habitation was also a public act of civic engagement and where public meetings addressed private domestic matters such as cooking and cleaning. In ways that are obvious and not-so-obvious, this public/private quality intersects with Hull House’s embedded issues of gender, class, and race.

Considering this intersection in more detail is the primary goal of my exploration of settlement fiction: I hope to demonstrate how certain broad patterns of spatial renegotiation related to public/private distinctions as well as key social identities were both instantiated in the local spaces and practices of Hull House and also traceable in (some) settlement novels’ form and content. To clarify this goal and provide tools for its achievement, I turn now to an overview of settlement fiction, and then to a summary of the theory and historical context informing my analysis.

1.1 Settlement Fiction

As noted by Lock, “The settlement movement had a significant cultural presence that is virtually unknown to literary scholars today” (3). Predictably, the most extensive (though still limited) treatment of settlement discourse has been of the voluminous speeches and writings of Jane Addams, whose published works ultimately numbered 514 (including newspaper and magazine articles, scholarly papers, biographies and memoirs), and whose

best-known book, *Twenty Years at Hull House*, has been continuously in print since its first publication in 1910 (see Elshtain, xiii and 449-74). Katherine Joslin has noted the literary qualities of much of Addams' prose, including generic hybridity, polyvocality, and a movement "from objective, rational, linear expression toward subjective, imaginative, associative prose" (36). Yet few other scholars have approached Addams as a writer or her texts as stylistically interesting. Similarly, the vast amount of non-fiction written by journalists, social scientists and others connected to the settlement movement has been used as documentary evidence, but rarely been recognized as worthy of study in its own right, as a body of discourse with intriguing and non-transparent semiotic features. The most neglected aspect of Hull House discourse, however, is the presence of settlements in fiction.

Beginning in the 1890s, settlements (often overtly modeled on Hull House) appeared regularly in American novels, plays, poetry, and short stories, especially in the Chicago area. For example, Israel Zangwill's important 1908 play "The Melting Pot" used a settlement house as a key setting, drawing on standardized, recognizable architectural features to "symbolize assimilation and social unification" (Szuberla, "Three Settlements" 128). Other noteworthy writers who mentioned settlements in their work include Jack London, John Dos Passos, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, Robert Herrick, O. Henry, Edna Ferber, Sinclair Lewis and Upton Sinclair (see Appendix). Among these authors, settlement work was usually used to signify the vapidness and ineffectualness of the upper-class, particularly upper-class women; for example, in Sinclair's *The Jungle* a young, pretty settlement worker is left laughing uncomfortably when she is described by a plainspoken immigrant as one of the "rich people who came to...find out about the poor people" to no discernable end (202). Ironically, settlement work was also sometimes used to signify a kind of unattractive toughness or

worldliness in women, as in Edna Ferber’s depiction of the “leathery” Carrie in “The Gay Old Dog,” whose “hard, clear, orderly” mind causes her to hate caring for her family and dream instead of “liv[ing] at the Settlement House and giv[ing] all her time to the work” (52-53). Though many appearances of settling in fiction are minor or even incidental, their frequency and varied significations suggest both the widespread recognizability and the unstable cultural meanings of the movement.

Settlement work was also used more centrally, and arguably in more complex ways, in the group of novels that I have been calling “settlement fiction.” Settlement fiction was first loosely identified in Clarence Andrews’ encyclopedic survey of Chicago fiction, as “the social-service and settlement novel.” Andrews usefully lists 14 novels under this heading, but his comments are necessarily cursory given that the entire section consists of five short paragraphs – one of which is exclusively devoted to a plot summary of *The Reformer* (apparently notable due to its author, Charles Sheldon, who, as Andrews notes, also wrote the massive 1899 bestseller *In His Steps* [110]). Guy Szuberla provides a more extensive overview. He claims that Andrews’ list “might easily be enlarged to some twenty or more novels without...breaking the implied genre definition” (“The ‘Settlement House’ Novel,” 60), and goes on to characterize the “genre” as “blend[ing], sometimes in contradictory ways, radical politics with conservative cultural beliefs and traditional gender values” both in form and content (60). Sidney Bremer (“Lost Sisters,” “Introduction”) and Judith Raftery also provide overviews, with a somewhat stronger focus on authorial biography and the local historical context of Chicago. Fictional representations of settling also appear in studies of other, related subject matter (Bremer “Many Cities”; Szuberla “Three Settlements,” “Melting Pot”; Chura; Batker), and many individual authors are of course studied independently of

their settlement novels. Finally, Sarah Jo Lock's 2008 dissertation critiques the published work on settlement fiction and extends it by including non-fiction essays by black writers as well as novels written outside of Chicago.

This small body of scholarship is a useful beginning, but it does not go very far, either in breadth of coverage or in depth. In terms of breadth, the range of potential material has scarcely been touched: even limiting the list to novels, my research to date has identified 60 works in which settlement houses, workers, or the overall movement appears to play a recurring or otherwise significant part (see Appendix). The diversity of these works strains the credibility of Szuberla's assertion that settlement fiction is its own genre; rather, settling seems to lend itself to a variety of distinct genres, from detective stories (Arthur Train's *Tutt and Mr. Tutt*) to tenement fiction (Louise Montgomery's *Mrs. Mahoney of the Tenement*) to realist literature (Sinclair Lewis' *Ann Vickers*). Further work is needed to define the boundaries of settlement fiction, map out the place of individual texts within those boundaries, and, in some cases, to locate texts currently unavailable for analysis. The rationale for this work, however, first needs to be strengthened. To say, as Judith Raftery does, that settlement fiction demonstrates how "issues central to Addams and women settlers" were "portrayed" (39), is a weak argument. It is true enough, but essentially treats settlement discourse as transparent documentation of an isolated historical phenomenon, limiting its interest to specialists in that specific area and ignoring the unique insights that fiction allows. My hope is to continue the recovery of settlement fiction while also suggesting ways to move in a deeper, more theorized, and more broadly contextualized direction.

1.2 Theoretical Context

My analysis is indebted to many scholars, several of whom have been foundational to my approach. Firstly, because the vast majority of settlement fiction is decidedly non-canonical, I have been deeply influenced by Jane Tompkins. The novels I will discuss, like those Tompkins worked to re-evaluate, do not generally correspond with current standards of literary excellence. That I am able to base a thesis on them at all is testament to the influence of Tompkins' assertion that "novels and stories should be studied ... because they offer powerful examples of the way a culture thinks about itself," not because they meet arbitrary aesthetic standards (Tompkins xi). Importantly, Tompkins does not use this position to discount structural or formal analysis; rather, she sees the formal "flaws" of popular fiction as meaningful and even purposeful. More specifically, much of my analysis builds on Tompkins' insight that the generic conventions of nineteenth-century sentimental novels worked to give women a "central position of power and authority in the culture" (125). In settlement fiction, sentimental conventions are built upon and reacted to by authors negotiating new Progressive Era power dynamics of gender, class, and race.

Secondly, Edward Soja's brilliant and exuberant *Thirdspace* is the basis of my understanding of spatial theory. Extending and clarifying Lefebvre, Soja advances a vision of space as simultaneously "real-and-imagined," always at once constituted both by "the concrete materiality of spatial forms" and by "thoughtful re-presentations of human spatiality in mental or cognitive forms" (10-11). For Soja, this spatial perspective is part of a larger project of "critical thirding," or the rejection of binary analysis of all kinds in favor of "the possibility of a both/and also logic" (5). Such "thirding," I believe, is demanded by Hull House's complex, multi-faceted nature; in fact, Hull House exemplifies the capacity that Soja

sees in physical-and-metaphorical, real-and-imagined spaces to be radically open to interpretation, to “contain all other real and imagined spaces simultaneously” (69). Jackson’s work, though not directly drawing on Soja, is consonant with his approach and a good example of its applicability to the settlement movement. As she writes, “I think of Hull House, its buildings, its people, its activities, its rhetoric, its methods, and its goals as ‘interspatial’...Like a complex text that contains allusions, suggestions, parodies, and quotations from other texts, strains of many spaces may permeate selected spaces” (Jackson 24). I also hope to explore Hull House as interspatial and real-and-imagined – but with a more overt attention to its textual, imagined aspect, as it emerged in fiction.

Combining a spatial perspective with the historical contextualization of literary recovery may seem somewhat counterintuitive. Spatial perspectives have sometimes (including by Soja) been positioned in opposition to both historicism and narrative. Yet my approach is not without precedent. For example, Gilbert argues that, since the 1980s, literary studies has shared with other disciplines a strong interest in space and how “spatial constructs organiz[e] both the representation and the lived experience of gender, class, race, ethnicity, religion and other identity categories” (104). Yet she illustrates this “spatial turn” with “a historical overview of narratives” related to the city (102). Soja himself, although arguing that space should be analytically privileged, states that “Sociality...produces spatiality, and *vice versa*, putting to the forefront of critical inquiry a dynamic socio-spatial dialectic that by definition is also intrinsically historical” (72). Although challenging, I have found that considering material from both an historical and spatial perspective has been extremely fruitful in suggesting different perspectives and metaphors through which to understand settlement texts. Indeed, I have found myself drawing on an eclectic range of secondary

disciplines, including feminist geography and cognitive science, and theorists, including Jurgen Habermas and Michael Warner as well as Toni Morrison and bell hooks.

The thread that (hopefully) ties all of these strands of thought together is the attempt to demonstrate how certain social-historical-spatial patterns that Hull House reflects and refracts also show up in the form and content of settlement fiction. This attempt is conceptually indebted to scholars such as Millette Shamir, William Gleason, and Hsuan Hsu, who use historical context to fuel innovative inquiries into the “homologies between narrative and architectural [or, in the case of Hsu, geographic] form” (Gleason 28). In fact, Shamir’s work on visions of privacy in nineteenth century architecture and literature is not only a useful methodological exemplar, but an important starting point for exploring settlement fiction’s somewhat later public/private renegotiations.

1.3 Historical Context

To understand public/private renegotiation in the Progressive Era, it is first necessary to understand the meanings that these terms had in the nineteenth century. Shamir identifies two key “frames of reference”: the cult of domesticity or “separate spheres,” in which privacy was associated with women, and the rise of liberal individualism, in which privacy was figured as fundamentally male (23). More specifically, Shamir argues that normative nineteenth century privacy for women was “the state of being within the family and close circle of associates...embedded in, defined by, and valued through intimate, affective relations,” whereas privacy for men involved “being let alone,” with both states in opposition to a public world of business and politics (23-24). This gendered ideology shaped and was shaped by spatial segregation within the home: by mid-century, middle-class house plans

consistently featured “one essential division,” namely that between the parlor as a “feminine space of ‘domesticity’” and the study as a “masculine preserve of ‘retirement’” (Shamir 32). Shamir further contends that different genres are associated with and structurally reflect each type of privacy. So sentimental fiction is associated with “‘parlor’ femininity” and functions primarily according to a logic of exposure, a “mode of power...that can be deployed to counter the privileges accorded to the white, middle-class, [implicitly male] liberal individual,” while romantic, individualistic literature (think Hawthorne) is associated with “the liberal ethos captured by the space of the study” and functions primarily to create “zones of inexpressible, intractable interiority” (8).

Leaving aside issues of textual analysis for the moment, there are several aspects of Shamir’s account that require interrogation. Firstly, the gendered distinctions drawn between models of privacy are perhaps overdrawn – recent scholarship has tended towards interpreting separate spheres ideology less rigidly (see Kerber for a summary of this and earlier trends). More specifically, Glenn Hendler, among others, has convincingly argued that nineteenth-century sentimentalism and sympathetic identification were part of masculine, as well as feminine, culture. While these caveats do not invalidate Shamir’s insights (more than one thing can be going on in a given culture, and Hendler’s argument pertains mostly to working class and black men), they are important to note because of their ability to highlight continuities and changes emerging at the turn of the century.

For women, the Progressive Era saw the “lingering power” of separate spheres ideology (Boylan 22) continuing as a cultural presence, while the dramatic emergence of the New Woman significantly expanded the accessibility of (often already existing) roles and spaces. For example, the general nineteenth-century proscription against paid employment

for women continued to surface (as it still does today) in anxious discourse about conflicts between familial and extra-familial duties. Yet some women had worked outside the home throughout the nineteenth century and the number of women in this category tripled between 1870 and 1900 (Donaldson 103). By 1920, nearly 40% of women aged 16 to 24 were employed (Kleinberg 96). Similarly, although there were women who gained access to higher education much earlier in the century, by 1870 there were 11,000 women attending college or university and by 1920 that number had jumped to 283,000 – 47.3 percent of all undergraduates (L. Gordon 214). Meanwhile, for men, the turn of the century brought about a newly aggressive, hyper-individualistic masculine ideal that responded to “wide-ranging social, economic, and historical forces apparently arrayed against the self” (Donaldson 125), echoing in amplified form the sense of threatened liberal self-hood that Shamir describes, and decisively opposing sentimental notions of manliness.

Secondly, Shamir’s focus on privacy qua privacy prevents her from fully considering the adjacent real-and-imagined spaces of publicity. Her analysis, particularly of liberal individualism, draws substantially on Jurgen Habermas’ *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*. As well, she engages with Michael Warner’s work, specifically his insight (which she co-credits to Lauren Berlant) that dominant American modes of gaining public recognition require “a process of self-abstraction and self-concealment...that negates the specificities of one’s embodied existence” (98). However, she does not really engage with analysis of public spaces or with the idea of “public” as a noun. Both of these issues, although perhaps not central to her argument, are important to mine: part of the unique valence of Hull House is its status as *both* a private *and* a public space, and another part is its role as a locus for the development and interplay of the Progressive Era’s multiple publics.

In my opinion, the interaction of multiple publics was a critical aspect of the settlement movement's historical moment and of related public/private distinctions. In *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, Habermas describes the concept of a "public sphere," a kind of collectivity that exists separately from the state and "may be conceived above all as the sphere of private people come together" to make "public use of their reason" (27). As a historical process, the development and decline of Habermas' public sphere is contentious, particularly in an American context. However, Ryan argues that, in general, "the public sphere seems to have been slightly longer-lived" in the U.S., where "the rise of state bureaucracies, organized private interest groups, and mass methods of political persuasion," key indicators of the decline of the public sphere according to Habermas, did not get a real foothold until late in the nineteenth century (132-33). More specifically, she makes the case that "the methods of interest-group politics and bureaucratic government that would mature into the welfare state and mass democracy" were originally instituted by Progressive Era women (169). I see these activist women as forming one of many "counterpublics," as described by Warner. In his view, the singular, rational Habermasian public is a kind of dominant background against which multiple "counterpublics" may define themselves (56). Importantly, counterpublics operate in part by challenging the dominant public's very structure and rules of engagement, using embodied, performative acts and affective, expressive language to redraw the lines around what is public and what is (or should be) private (54). For example, settlement workers disrupted notions of a woman's "place" when they chose to live and work in the same ambiguously public/private space in the midst of the city. They disrupted these notions again, in a different and more problematic way, when they

used sentimental tropes of motherhood to argue for increased public intervention into previously private, home-bound activities such as childrearing.

Women, of course, were not the only social group whose identity was tied to public and private space. Shamir devotes a chapter of her book to slavery and its aftermath, demonstrating how both the public and the private (in the sense of both domesticity and solitude), were denied to blacks in nineteenth-century America. Gleason, in a more detailed account, has argued that race should be “as central to our understanding of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century spaces and structures as gender” (27). He notes that by the mid-nineteenth century, different residences and public building types were associated with different racial identities in cultural artefacts ranging from children's books (4) to board games (19-20). Segregation, that prototypical manifestation of racial ideologies, later became a notable feature of Progressive Era cities, where ghettoized black Americans faced “discrimination in...employment, inadequate education and diet, and disproportionate rates of delinquency, crime, death and infant mortality” (Lasch-Quinn 12). Class identities, as well, began to be reified in the nineteenth-century design and distribution of space, with architectural pattern books, for example, actively promoting the need for domestic spaces to match perceived class-based differences in personality and taste (Shamir 32-33). As the nineteenth century drew to a close, increased labor militancy, frequent strikes, and economic upheavals (together, I would argue, with massive immigration) “produc[ed] a set of social and economic forces that changed the dimensions and perceptions of urban poverty” (Schocket 112). Bold new skyscrapers and rows of rapidly-deteriorating tenement housing signified the instability and material disparity of class identities. All of these spatial markers

demonstrate the range of material and symbolic spaces within which specific counterpublics of race and class could contest their imposed identities.

Another important field of negotiation, of course, is the discursive space of the novel. Susan Donaldson, whose *Competing Voices: the American Novel 1865-1914* provides an invaluable overview of Progressive Era fiction, states that

the novel became a highly contested arena for negotiating new and often competing identities, for articulating previously unheard voices, and for limning the outlines of new and multiple stories....the novel could also serve as a powerful tool for imposing order and structure, for establishing the boundaries of social categories like region, race, class, and gender, and even for scrutinizing and interrogating some of those new identities and stories. (x)

The representation and redefinition of public and private spaces was part of this process of exploration and dissent. New forms and themes such as naturalism and the New Woman responded to the nineteenth-century genres discussed by Shamir, and, I will argue, were used in settlement fiction to demonstrate the renegotiated meanings of separate spheres ideology and liberal individualism in American culture.

1.4 A Look Ahead

Thus far, I have tried to capture a number of points that underpin my analysis. First, I have suggested the need to recover and theorize settlement fiction, and have further suggested the appropriateness of a combined spatial and cultural historicist approach. In particular, Soja's concept of "Thirdspace" helps to capture the semiotically profuse nature of the settlement movement, as exemplified in Hull House. Second, I have posited a homology between the social-historical-spatial patterns instantiated in Hull House's spaces and the

content and formal properties of settlement fiction. Third, I have begun to sketch out some of the contours of those larger patterns, focusing on Progressive Era developments in the imbricated ideologies of separate spheres and liberal individualism.

In the chapters that follow, I hope to support and build on these points through readings of five diverse works of settlement fiction. All of these works are tied to Chicago and/or Hull House, as the physical and metaphorical epicenter of the settlement house movement, and were produced during the settlement movement's "heyday" from the late 1880s to the beginning of WWI (Trolander 7, 21-24).³ First, borrowing the concept of scale from cultural geography, I will show how the female-identified space of the home was enlarged for Hull House women to include the neighborhood and ultimately the nation. Close readings of *The Precipice* by Elia Wilkins Peattie and *Just Folks* by Clara Laughlin illustrate scale-shifting in the textual space of the domestic settlement novel. Next, I will use the concept of figure-ground relationships to develop a theory of "spatial occupation" as a response to class anxiety in Sherwood Anderson's *Marching Men* and Hervey White's *Differences*. In both of these novels, class anxieties are resolved through an assertion of aggressive masculinity; textually, this assertion is evident in the movement from sentimentalism to naturalism. Finally, I will examine race (or more accurately, blackness) as a cultural frame, a marginal space that remains largely hidden in Peattie's, Laughlin's, White's and Anderson's novels, but one that becomes a space of resistance and meaning in W.E.B. Du Bois' *The Quest of the Silver Fleece*.

³ Chicago is also a useful focal point because of the direct connections between Hull House and the Chicago literary scene. For example, "most of Chicago's women writers were teachers or visitors or residents at Hull House at one time or another" (Bremer, "Lost Chicago Sisters" 218), and many male authors also spent time there or knew settlement residents personally – often, they knew Jane Addams, who was a member of the influential Little Room writers club.

Chapter 2: "A larger domesticity"

...many women today are failing properly to discharge their duties to their own families and households simply because they fail to see that as society grows more complicated it is necessary that woman shall extend her sense of responsibility to many things outside of her own home. (Addams, "Women's Conscience" 252)

For women in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, separate spheres ideology still loomed large; although never a social absolute and no longer even a norm, the idea of women being confined to home and hearth continued to haunt American culture. Yet it did so in oddly expansive ways: the space of home and hearth became, in a sense, limitless. This is not to say that women experienced absolute freedom or even equality with men in terms of their mobility, access to settings of power, and so on. Rather, what I am getting at is that the concept of domesticity, once tied, however knottily, to the material space of the home, became increasingly elastic; it was "a larger domesticity" (Jackson 47), stretching to cover all sorts of activities and spaces that would not previously have been a comfortable fit. One way to more formally explain or envision this dynamic is using the geographic concept of scale.

In her frequently-cited article, "The Social Construction of Scale," the geographer Sallie Marston argues, citing Horowitz, that scales are primarily relational – in other words, that scales of size or level (e.g. local, regional, national) exist in a meaningful sense only because of the socially constructed relationships between elements (220-21). These constructed relationships "can have both rhetorical *and* material consequences" but "are not necessarily enduring" and in fact are often contested (221). Focusing on the period 1870 to the 1920s, Marston demonstrates how the home was used by urban middle-class American

women “as a scale of social and political identity formation that eventually enabled [them] to extend their influence...to other scales of social life” (235). Specifically, Marston concentrates on the emergence of influential “scientific housekeeping texts,” which promoted an image of women as skilled and efficient experts within the home (237). These texts typically included “an explicitly political vocabulary” that advocated the idea of female citizenship, connected the home conceptually with larger scales (e.g. arguing that a well-run home would off-set the impacts of urban growth on society) and re-envisioned the home as “a unique form of public space” (237). Marston contends that scientific housekeeping was one of many developments that pushed forward the idea of female influence over public (in particular governmental) affairs by drawing parallels between caretaking in the home and caretaking at other scales (235).

While Marston focuses on the home as “the site from which other scales were addressed and occupied” (236), I am interested in foregrounding some of those other scales, namely the urban neighborhood and the nation. I also wish to address the limitations and spin-off effects of scale-shifting, and to focus on fiction rather than other forms of discourse. In turn-of-the century America, we see middle-class white women redefining the area of their influence, and we see this redefinition allowing them greater ownership over their bodies, and a greater ability to move freely through physical space, as well as to move into different types of discourse. At the same time, the strategy of scale-shifting had a certain intrinsic self-nullifying quality: its dependence on domestic rhetoric ultimately deformed the democratic goals it was meant to support, casting poor and otherwise marginalized citizens in an obviously problematic role as “children” while also limiting the potential empowerment of middle-class “mothers.” In the settlement novels that I discuss below, these patterns are

reinscribed: new textual elements are overlaid on well-established “women’s” plots and tropes, making them more palatable but also undercutting their own questioning of gender roles; as well, by continuing to privilege white middle-class norms, these novels directly and indirectly reinforce cultural inequalities of class and race.

2.1 **Shifting the Scales at Hull House**

Hull House, from its inception, actively participated in the pattern of scale-shifting and exemplified the consequences that arose. Like many other women at the time, settlement women sought both to “increase women's rights in the home and simultaneously bring homelike nurturing into public life” (Hayden 4). Discursively, Jane Addams’ notion of “civic housekeeping” (in other words, female caretaking for the city and nation) became “one of the most omnipresent, efficacious, and malleable of discourses to emerge in American women's history of the Progressive Era” (Jackson 47). As exemplified in the epigraph above, Addams wrote and spoke extensively in support of her belief that the delimited “household” of a given woman was both metaphorically and materially connected to the “outside” world. In terms of space, Hull House activities and spaces brought the concept of civic housekeeping into high relief: for its residents, the public and the private routinely overlapped, commingled, and even merged, so that caring for the bounded space and social unit of the home became at times not merely *connected* with but problematically *conflated* with caring for the neighborhood, city, or nation.

As a home, Hull House provided a new kind of living space that in many ways could be (and was) seen as liberating for its residents. As a “literally and figuratively porous and permeable” space, it “challenged the way in which the house – the domestic sphere – was

sited within the city” (Haar 111). Women who lived or spent their days at Hull House could draw on each other informally for support in illness, childrearing and so on while they pursued activities associated with the public sphere (see e.g. Jackson 161-62 on Florence Kelley, a divorced mother who became a noteworthy labor leader). Living at Hull House “was respectable, and the camaraderie among the residents provided an alternative to family life” (Trolander 13). As well, settlement architecture and domestic routines were designed to collectivize and sometimes professionalize household tasks such as cooking, cleaning, and laundry, making them more efficient and enabling residents to shift their time and attention to other activities (Hayden 174). In other words, it was a private space whose residents were also public figures – a home that, through the “reconstitution and reclamation of the social geography of daily life” (Marston 235), both allowed for and in many cases actually became a public career.

At the same time, settlement living framed the city itself as “home,” and civic activities within this urban habitat acted as a springboard to larger scales such as the state and nation. The settlement facilitated this process by acting as one of many nodes (perhaps a more important node than most) through which the words and actions of women reformers passed. Deegan describes the resulting mesh of relationships using Smith-Rosenberg’s concept of a “female world of love and ritual” (qtd in “Dear Love” 591), arguing that the Progressive Era Chicago model “creatively extended the earlier, much less public and less powerful friendship patterns of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries” in which intense same sex friendships were considered normal and provided women with a source of support and fulfillment (591). In the Progressive Era, this “ritual world was not anchored in weddings...and childbirths...but graduations, congressional hearings, book publications, and

travel” (604). Although this “ritual world” is perhaps most obvious at the local level, it substantially overlapped with larger women’s networks which have been identified as critical to the success of broader Hull House campaigns led by (for example) Florence Kelley (Kish-Sklar 9-10) and Julia Lathrop (Ladd-Taylor 117). Settlement houses were thus a social space in which women could enact a different kind of citizenship; at the same time, the physical presence of these structures, together with other large, noticeable women’s buildings, made a visual statement about gender equality (Boylan 24, Spencer-Wood 132).

Yet the power and visibility gained through enlarging the domestic sphere was inherently dependent on maintaining the uniqueness and importance of the female domestic role. Settlement women were always in a conflicted position. Most of Hull House’s female leaders experienced clashes with parents, spouses, or siblings who perceived settlement work as detracting from more traditional domestic duties (Jackson 159). Moreover, the activities they wound up doing within the settlement often bore a strong resemblance to those traditional domestic duties: children, for example, were both a “visceral presence” and a significant symbolic resource, and as such “activate[d] nearly all aspects of Hull-House spatial and linguistic life” (Jackson 60). Perhaps most significantly, scale-shifting did not address the key problem identified by Shamir in terms of earlier nineteenth-century separate spheres ideology, namely that “as liberal individualism began to define personhood in terms of inviolability and solitariness, the bourgeois woman, defined in opposition to these terms, was thereby deprived of full personhood” (41). Maternalist rhetoric helped to form a useful counterpublic, “enabl[ing] a horizon of opinion and exchange....mediated by print, theater, diffuse networks of talk, commerce, and the like” (Warner 56-57). It perhaps made possible “new forms of gendered or sexual citizenship” (Warner 57); Hull House, for example, has

been described as “a social vehicle for independent political action and a means of bypassing the control of male associations and institutions” (Kish-Sklar 9). But ultimately, the old, implicitly male form of citizenship – the one with voting rights – remained dominant during the Progressive Era. As Boylan succinctly puts it: “men still held the winning hand in the political game” (26).

Beyond its own self-limiting qualities, scale-shifting was problematic in that it reproduced and even heightened inequities of class and race that were built into separate spheres ideology. Many scholars have pointed out that the ideal domestic woman at the turn of the century was generically represented as white and socioeconomically privileged (see e.g. Babb 138-49, Batker, Lasch-Quinn). As the home expanded to include the city and nation, white middle-class women could perform this ideal in their role as “civic mothers” – but those working-class and racialized subjects who could not or would not embody their proscribed domestic roles were logically recast as either children in need of care or threats to the family. Settlements, despite their espoused goals of promoting equality and democratic engagement, were certainly not immune to this pattern.

The size and distinctiveness of the Hull House complex, for example, can be read as a sign of women’s right to the city, or even as the redistribution of cultural capital, but it can also be read as signifying and reifying class difference. Szuberla states that by 1908, the complex had grown to 11 buildings which “by their size and contrast to the neighborhood...declared Hull-House to be separate from the community” (“Three Settlements” 123). Similarly, Trolander describes Hull House as “overwhelming the neighborhood and clashing architecturally with its surroundings,” and claims that most Progressive Era settlements, “if they could afford it, built big buildings in their attempts to

become *the* community centers of their neighborhoods” (20).⁴ Discursively, too, calls for social justice and expanded roles for women (e.g. Addams, *Twenty Years* 82-83, 87) intermingle in settlement rhetoric with demeaning descriptions of neighbors as “cared for inevitably by some agency from the outside” (Lathrop 143).

The potential for condescension implicit in maternalist ideology was exacerbated when the settlement movement began to move away from its focus on building local relationships. At the outset, settlements embraced a domesticity that included both “a scientific patience in the accumulation of facts” and “a sense of relationship” with their neighbors (Addams, *Twenty Years* 87). Over time, the movement reinforced and contributed to a trend away from the latter and towards the former. Within settlements themselves, as paid, non-resident, professionally trained staff supplanted residents and volunteers, interactions became less social and more therapeutic or rehabilitative; by the 1920s, “social work schools were well on their way toward transforming... ‘friendly visitors’ into caseworkers” (Trolander 33). By the end of WWII, the movement would literally not have been recognizable to Jane Addams, as remaining settlements abandoned the notion of a “homelike atmosphere of good taste” (32) and moved to new buildings with “a more functional, efficient, institutional character about them” (33). Most significant, however, were the settlement movement’s affiliated projects – programs and organizations which, though not explicitly part of any settlement, were promoted and often staffed by current or former residents. These projects strikingly illustrate how escalating maternalist ideology to

⁴ It should be noted in this context that settlement houses took up far less space than other, far more socially problematic, architectural projects. Spain, for example, describes Hull House’s scale as “practical” next to the “fabricated White City” that “spread over more than six hundred acres” (234-35).

larger (e.g. national) scales resulted in the problematic rupturing of barriers between the state and the private sphere.

The federal Children's Bureau, established in 1912, is a key example. Headed by Julia Lathrop, a respected leader at Hull House, it maintained "close ties to settlement houses, women's clubs, and individual mothers" while it effectively "operated as the women's branch of the federal government in the 1910s and 1920s" (Ladd-Taylor 110). Although ineligible to hold elected office, the Bureau's female staff successfully functioned within government both "as advocates for poor mothers and as administrators of the (sometimes injurious) policies that affected them" (123). For example, the Bureau pushed for the enactment of child labor laws, and subsequently enforced them through its Child Labor Division. Under the Keating-Owen Act, Bureau inspectors issued and revoked employment certificates, effectively denying parents' ability to choose for themselves whether and where children under sixteen years of age could work. More insidiously, the Bureau's influential infant-health campaign responded to high infant mortality rates through a program of maternal education (despite its own research showing that poverty, rather than a lack of knowledge, caused most deaths) and used this program to promulgate "middle-class home life and child-rearing methods" (115). Ryan has suggested that such "direct lobbying of state officials and...placement of 'private' family and gender issues on the public agenda" by Progressive Era women contributed decisively to the transformation of the Habermasian model of the public sphere, in which private matters are kept at arm's length from the state (169). Similarly, Jackson notes that the settlement movement is often identified as an origin point for the "host of centralized, federally administered programs called the welfare state" (Jackson 6). Ryan rightly points out that "the representation of ... 'special interests,' and the

empowerment of marginal groups” can be seen as “positive steps in the expansion of the public sphere” (170), a process that Warner has described as “the transformative and creative work of counterpublics” (62). Yet few would argue that America’s version of the welfare state has uniformly empowered marginalized groups. This contradiction points to the often paradoxical goals and effects of the maternalist ideology threaded throughout the settlement movement.

Women authors, perhaps particularly in Chicago, were uniquely positioned to express and comment on this maternalist ideology. Bremer argues that for “turn-of-the-century Chicago women in general, the family home was central...[it] was a domestic microcosm for – not a bulwark against – the city itself” (“Lost Sisters” 217). She goes on to point out that there were many capable writers among these women, most of whom lived the bulk of their lives in Chicago and “were *encouraged as women* to ‘stay at home’ in fact and to express themselves as residents in fiction” (“Lost Sisters” 215, italics in original). These writers were often journalists or editors in addition to writing fiction, and were typically involved in myriad artistic and political activities through women’s and artists’ clubs and settlement houses (217-18). In short, they “stretched and recreated their ‘woman’s sphere’... far beyond the limits of the public recognition they have received” (216).

Situating these lost Chicago authors among their peers is somewhat difficult; there is surprisingly little written about turn-of-the-century American women writers as a group. The literature that does exist typically describes writers such as Kate Chopin and Edith Wharton, who are contrasted with earlier, less “literary” nineteenth-century domestic novelists.

Ammons, for example, states that “While the tradition of the domestic writer continued... especially among popular writers, most of the authors I am talking about either consciously

broke with that heritage or never identified with it, declaring... that they were determined to be artists” (10). This narrow choice of focus obscures the fact that domestic fiction itself is an evolving genre. In the two novels that I will begin with, the conventions of domestic fiction are modified rather than rejected outright, enacting the strategic continuity inherent in scale-shifting. As settlers justified their assertive stance on social issues, their independence from blood relatives and spouses – in essence, their public character – by situating themselves in the modified domestic space of the settlement “house,” Laughlin and Peattie, who were both professional writers with experience in a variety of popular forms including journalism, situate their “New Woman” characters in the safe environs of domestic fiction – with some adjustments. In *Just Folks* we see the domestic rendered at the scale of neighborhood and city; in *The Precipice*, home comes to mean the nation. Through a careful examination of these novels, we can see how scale-shifting worked to increase women’s public presence within a discourse of private values. We also begin to see how this strategy has inherent problems that limit its effectiveness and create spin-off effects for other disenfranchised groups.

2.2 “This Close-Knit World”: Neighborhood as Family in *Just Folks*

In *Just Folks* by Clara Laughlin, domesticity is scaled at the level of the neighborhood. Interestingly, Laughlin establishes the neighborhood as the primary social unit by using Hull House architecture in contrast to Hull House’s foundational rhetoric. Beth Tully, the protagonist of *Just Folks*, personifies Jane Addams’ admonition for settlement workers to be “content to live quietly side by side with their neighbors, until they grow into a sense of

relationship and mutual interests” (*Twenty Years* 87). Yet she does so in part by rejecting Hull House as a home and embracing it only as a professional, public setting.

The novel opens with a sustained description of Beth entering the Hull House courtyard after finishing her workday at the nearby Juvenile Court, and a contrasting description of the tenement where she ultimately arrives and takes up residence. Beth’s assessment of Hull House is one of both admiration and dismissal. The arches and stone terrace of the courtyard have a “beauty which never failed to thrill her,” and she “wistfully” recalls the “rich,” “shining,” “peculiarly lovely” features of the residents’ dining-hall (1-2). She thinks of “the comfort, the refinement, the charm that was in this apartment and in that” (2), listing specific details of decoration and interior design (3). Yet throughout these glowing descriptions there is a sense of distance and subtle judgment. The quadrangle is “lovely” yet “suggestive of some ancient close or cloister” (1); the dining-hall’s “clever conversations” are separated and protected from “the world outside” (2). To Beth, Hull House is not a home but a “splendid institution” (4). Moreover, this perception is one she knowingly shares with the inhabitants of her true home, the tenement-dwellers of the Nineteenth Ward, who likewise think of the Settlement in terms of “professional benevolence” (4). Beth wishes to understand the residents of this area in a specifically non-professional way, to develop more intimate relationships by reducing the “barrier[s] between her and the human nature of her charges” (4). She has thus decided (ironically, as Raftery points out, much like Jane Addams [48]) to strike out on her own and actually “live in the Ghetto” (6). In other words, “Laughlin’s text...argues for Jane Addams’s original settlement goal of mutuality while pointing out that, in practice, the settlement has not realized that

ideal” because it has lost its sense of true sympathy or domestic intimacy with its neighbors (Lock 181).

A few pages later, Beth moves into a Maxwell-street tenement building. This home, like Hull House, is described at some length. The building is “of a familiar type,” with a “little pocket-sized hallway” at its entrance, and “straight, steep, dark stairs” leading through several levels of cramped, identically laid-out tenements (8). The room being offered is cheaply and minimally furnished, with no closet or bureau and a “lumpy little mattress” (10). We are led to believe that this setting is, as yet, a relatively new one for Beth (she feels pride in being able to tell the kitchen from the front room door). Yet she feels an instant rapport with the sub-letting tenant, Liza Allen, and this rapport builds so quickly and reciprocally that, by the time Beth’s boyfriend calls a few days later, Liza welcomes him with the remark “Seems, a’ready, ‘s if she’d been here always” (21). Over the course of the novel, Beth becomes at home not only in Liza’s space within their shared dwelling, but also in myriad other local spaces: in warm weather, when one neighbor routinely sits outside “watching the human comedy in Maxwell Street,” Beth “would come to sit beside her” (41); when visiting her friend and childhood nursemaid, Mary Casey, she enters “as the Caseys themselves did, direct from the oozy yard” (47). Indeed, Midget Casey (Mary’s daughter) describes Beth to others as her “aunt” (52). Beth’s continual involvement in her neighbors’ lives furnishes the bulk of the novel’s plot. The clear vision that emerges is of the neighborhood as Beth’s domestic space; indeed, the novel has been summarized as the story of a woman who “discovers old family ties” in a neighborhood, then “strengthens them through her work, and finally embraces them by making her married home there” (Bremer, “Lost Sisters” 213).

This domestic vision is underlined by the presence of sentimental textual features as well. In the small body of literature on Laughlin's settlement novel, Beth is typically described as a "New Woman" character (e.g. Lock, Raftery, Chura, Szuberla), and her concerns for self-determination and personal growth follow the standard New Woman plotline. At the same time, Szuberla comments that Laughlin "occasionally drifts toward the brand of urban picturesqueness she had once practiced as an editor at McClure's magazine and in her earlier 'popular sentimental' fiction" ("The 'Settlement House' Novel" 69). In fact, there are many sentimental moments in *Just Folks*. Szuberla gives as an example Mary Casey's simple faith and Beth's tears over Mary's "toil bent figure" (69); other examples might include Hart Ferris' conversion to Beth's social mission after saving a dying child (Laughlin 68-69), or Mary clutching her child "to her bosom" and announcing her husband's heroic death, "her voice br[eaking] in sobs that had, somehow, a note of triumph in them" (246). Even Beth herself, as a "tiny sprite of a fair-haired girl with...direct, earnest ways" (4), calls to mind the innocent, angelic children of nineteenth-century domestic fiction. Moreover, it is at these moments of classic sentimentalism that the Christian God is most likely to be invoked: in the passage referenced by Szuberla, for instance, Beth's tears are quickly followed by the exclamation "when I think of you, Mary, dear, I can only think how God must love you – how – how *proud* of you He must be!" (338, italics in original). Religious tolerance and moral relativism are admitted into the text at other points, for example when a listener comments mildly that "I guess most religions have their inconsistencies" in response to Liza Allen's critique of Judaism (129). But when sentimental tropes and hyperbole signal a moment of deeper truth, Christianity is presumed to be a part of

that truth together with other domestic values such as the primacy of motherhood and the need for human sympathy.⁵

This infusion of sentimentalism functions in several ways. Most obviously, it softens the impact of Beth's "New Woman" qualities, by invoking conventional, socially conservative character types (the angel in the house, the converted husband, and so on). Beth may be seeking her own fulfillment, but this fulfillment is, at least on the surface, entirely congruent with and even dependent on her responsibility for and intimate knowledge of others: "Every day that Beth lived in Maxwell Street she became more and more aware of the amazing difference it was making in her work and in her, to live close to the daily problems of a few typical individuals" (37). In this context, it is significant that Beth's birth family is both framed in positive terms and barely mentioned at any point. Beth's social work is not a threat to this unit or the values it signifies – rather, the neighborhood-as-family simply becomes a functional equivalent, an expanded venue for the enactment of domesticity. The marriage plot within *Just Folks* further supports this reading. Ferris Hart, Beth's suitor, initially objects to her choice to live in the Nineteenth Ward, but he quickly becomes fully integrated into her life there; by the end, when she agrees to marry him, he recognizes the neighborhood as their home, the place "where all our friends live" (Laughlin 375). Indeed, rather than closing on the newly engaged couple, *Just Folks* follows them as they make their way back to Liza Allen's flat, warmly interacting with virtually all of the key characters who live on Maxwell Street. In this scene, the conflict between what Jane Addams called "the family claim" and "the social claim" (*Twenty Years* 83) is simply moot: whether or not she continues to work for the Juvenile Court, Beth's work in the neighborhood can

⁵ Other examples of settlement fiction are even more firmly rooted in Christian rhetoric (see Lock chapter 3).

continue because it is her home, the people there her family. In this way, Laughlin discursively enacts the settlement's physical enfolding of traditional family within collective life, as for example when residents nursed neighbors' children or brought their own dependents to live at Hull House (see Jackson 160-64).

More subtly, the intimate confessional mode of domestic fiction enacts the sentimental belief that "the very possibility of social action is...dependent on the action taking place in individual hearts" (Tompkins 129). Shamir's central claim about the strategy of exposure is that it counters liberal individualism's denial of inequality in the public realm and abuse in the private realm. The liberal model, by bracketing some issues as "private" and therefore inappropriate to the ostensibly neutral space of the public, elided those issues and obscured its own exclusion of people who could or would not bracket their private selves.⁶ Antebellum domestic fiction, in Shamir's view, "forc[ed] into visibility the private stories and social identities on whose repression the liberal public sphere was constituted" (103). By giving voice to Beth's thoughts and detailing her experiences as a woman, *Just Folks* certainly gives some idea of the frustrations that women such as Laughlin faced. As well, private tragedies and injustices faced by working-class immigrants are described, often in an overtly didactic manner, with the apparent aim of gaining sympathy for their plight. However, it is notable how much of the novel is given over to positive portrayals of the urban working class as resourceful and even wise. Liza and Mary, especially, are held up as sources of learning for Beth and as positive, if imperfect, models of woman/motherhood. In this sense, the exposure of private matters serves not only to protest injustice but to build bonds

⁶ For a thorough and important explication of this critique specifically in relation to Habermas, see Fraser, "What's Critical about Critical Theory?"

of sympathetic identification with a group that, in much Progressive Era literature, was represented as inscrutable at best. Lock, noting the many instances where reformist legislation and initiatives are shown to be flawed in *Just Folks*, suggests that Laughlin “does not favor [sic] absolute reform but a reform that takes into account the particular needs of individuals” (180). I would argue that in fact Laughlin does not particularly promote structural reform at all. Rather, her text endorses the side of settlement ideology that advocated a personal, empathetic understanding of social problems, and uses the devices of earlier sentimental novelists to help her readers, as Harriet Beecher Stowe put it, to “feel right” (qtd in Tompkins 133).

However, *Just Folks* also provides evidence of the limitations of this approach. For example, when Hart and Beth disagree over whether to turn in a young suspect in a murder, Hart declares that “women have no business fooling with the law. You are all sentimentalists. It isn't in you to have respect for the law as an abstract thing...Your pity is greater than your sense of justice; you want to make an exception of each individual case” (348). Clearly this casts Beth’s domesticity in opposition to the ideal of the liberal individual, who is able to bracket personal identity for rational-critical debate. Working through a domestic paradigm at the neighborhood scale, women are still removed from the “public” of the state except indirectly through its agents (e.g. police, judges) as personally known individuals. Beth does not have the clout of a man; for example, when she seeks police aid in locating a missing girl, she must gain the Sergeant’s cooperation by behaving in a “meek” manner, ignoring his “teasing” and condescension (195). In general, she intervenes through personal influence and connections, much as a wife or mother might.

The circumscription of Beth's world is signaled in spatial terms by the fact that she almost never leaves the city, and rarely leaves the neighborhood. The one exception, when Beth goes to stay with her mother for a month of "much-needed rest" (291), has dire consequences. Chura describes this absence as "avoid[ing] Beth's personal entanglements in ... topics such as strikebreaking, social revolution, and 'direct action' against the capitalist system" (136), but in fact, Beth's most entangled moments, and those in which she seems to suffer most, result directly from her absence. Mary Casey's son, after losing his job, begins to drift and ultimately winds up as the above-mentioned murder suspect, prompting a series of moral choices that leave Beth facing conflict with Hart and nights in which "no merciful unconsciousness would come" (350). Although the young man is exonerated and all turned right in the end, the text makes it clear that the whole mess might have been avoided if not for the fact that Beth "was not there to appeal to" in Mikey's hour of need (292). Though her home is the neighborhood, rather than a single residence, her duty is still to be there; she is still confined to domestic space, albeit enlarged.

Beth's role as civic "mother" also has problematic consequences in terms of the portrayal of her neighbors. Although they are "exposed" as likable and even wise persons, their depiction often betrays the privileged position of the exposé. Liza Allen, for example, is given a great deal of narrative space to recount, in her own voice, her life stories and opinions. Moreover, those opinions are often immediately accepted as moral lessons by Beth, from the first chapter, where Liza helps her understand the nobility of sacrificing to pay for an expensive funeral (17), to the novel's end, which has Beth agreeing with Liza that "when you live real close t' people an' know lots about their lives, the ways o' Providence, it seems t' me, is pretty plain" (377). Yet Liza is also the butt of jokes. Beth and Hart often chuckle at

her exclamations, and the narrator, too, sets her up as laughable, for example when Liza naively mistakes a clown dressed as a celebrity for the real person (76).

It is here where Laughlin seems to undermine her own attempts at creating cross-class sympathy through an over-reliance on tropes and techniques of the urban picturesque. By “urban picturesque” I refer to writing that is set in urban ghettos but parallels the structures and concerns of pastoral regionalism or “local color” writing⁷: an episodic, fragmentary structure (often in the form of short story collections or sequences), a focus on the local as a geographic scale, the use of dialect or local slang terms, and the central presentation of “spectacles of the quaint and the curious” (Donaldson 44). *Just Folks*, although more coherent than a work such as Jacob Riis’ similar 1914 work *Neighbors* – or for that matter Jane Addams’ *Twenty Years at Hull House* – retains an episodic storytelling style. Some plotlines interweave and cross several chapters (e.g. the story of Dinah Slinsky or of Angela Ann), but the bulk of the novel’s storytelling is made up of self-contained vignettes. The focus on the local is overt in the text’s exclusive and detailed use of the Nineteenth Ward as its setting, and the phonetic display of non-standard speech is constant. Laughlin even explicitly compares Liza to Mr. Dooley, a popular turn-of-the-century Irish immigrant character known for his pithy, humorous folk wisdom (64). Invoking the “folksy” imagery and textual structures of regionalist fiction may have been effective, in Laughlin’s text, in neutralizing other circulating images of the working class as dangerous and unknowable. However, as Donaldson and Foote have both shown, picturesqueness ultimately reaffirmed a sense of difference. Like ethnographic artifacts, Donaldson argues, these stories functioned to

⁷ Although “local color” fiction, in its rural, regional form, reached the apex of its considerable popularity in the years between 1870 and 1900 (Foote 5), its urban equivalent seems to have emerged and peaked a little later – Fine, for example, states that ghetto fiction was a popular trend from the 1890s to WWI (170).

display “everything that the audience was not, whether regional, traditional, quaint, foreign, or ethnic” (44).

This distance between the (white) middle and (ethnic) lower class also surfaces in *Just Folks*' plot. Although Beth clearly regards the neighborhood as home, this home-as-neighborhood in some ways simply reproduces the troubled reciprocity of relationships that had long existed within the bounds of the traditional home-as-house – namely, the close domestic relationships between servants and employers. In other words, because class relations pre-exist historically *within* the home, making the neighborhood into a home does not necessarily promote equality. In this light, it is notable that Beth's quick, close involvement with the Casey family is based on recognizing Mary as her childhood nursemaid. Although Beth is affected by her neighbors in the Nineteenth Ward, these effects are the result of her thoughtful contemplation and observation of their lives. As Lock points out, it is primarily Beth who has agency and acts to deliberately change others' lives (181-82). As we will see, this dynamic is intensified in the next novel I will discuss, where professionalization and an orientation to the national scale allow greater agency for the female protagonist, with proportionately greater consequences for those she acts upon.

2.3 “The Mothers of the State”: Institutionalizing Family in *The Precipice*

In Elia Wilkinson Peattie's *The Precipice*, the heroine (who becomes a Hull House worker midway through the novel) rejects the scale of the neighborhood in favor of the nation. Peattie's novel, compared to Laughlin's, is a little longer and more intricately plotted. The primary plotline concerns Kate Barrington, a “New Woman” type whose struggles to understand herself and the world form the driving impetus of the story. Kate's journey

proceeds through two structuring devices: first, a series of rejected marriage proposals culminating in an acceptance; second, a series of observations of female “types” embodied in other characters. These devices are used to explore and comment on changing gender roles, in particular in relation to the private world of the family and the public world of the city and nation. Commentators on *The Precipice* have framed this exploration as an attempt to deal with gendered cultural binaries: “career” and “marriage” (Raftery 54), for example, or “domestic and urban worlds” (Bremer, “Introduction” xvii). I believe that what these comments gesture towards is actually the conflict between seeking authority through a Habermasian model of liberal individualism versus seeking authority through a politics of domesticity. Whereas *Just Folks* plainly favors the latter, *The Precipice* is more ambiguous: it presents “male” modes of power and identity as positive but unavailable and domestic scale-shifting as approximating those modes by allowing personal independence, connection with an abstract “public,” and access to the state.

Significantly, the novel opens with Kate at the train station, recently graduated from college and about to head back to her parents’ home in the small town of Silvertree. The journey takes her from one point (the civic space of the city) to another (the domestic environment of her parents’ house), and implicitly posits them as diametrical. During the journey, as she reflects on her time in Chicago, another opposition emerges. First, she recalls the mass of students whose sheer numbers and diversity was a source of excitement and energy for her: she “streamed with five thousand others...swarms, literally, of fresh-faced, purposeful youths and maidens” (4) and “delighted in their variety” (5). Each person’s “vital essence...seemed to materialize into visible ether, rose-red or violet-hued” and to gather in “evanishing clouds” (5). This rhapsody, the “choicest of her memories,” is then contrasted

with “the most irritating of her recollections” (5), in which she accidentally sits on a bench that is reserved for men. As her soon-to-be-love-interest Ray McCrea explains, “It’s where the drum is beaten to call a mass meeting, and the boys gather here when they’ve anything to talk over” (6). After this incident, the C-bench becomes “a sort of symbol” to Kate, one that represents the exclusion of women from “the seat of privilege” (7). From the beginning, then, Kate’s quest is not to choose between the dichotomous spaces of the domestic home and the public city. Rather, it is to somehow come to terms with three divergent real-and-imagined spaces: the traditional domestic world instantiated in her parents’ home, the ideal public space exemplified in her vision of diverse students collectively forming a wonderful, almost mystical crowd, and the actual public spaces of a city and nation that actively disenfranchise her gender.

The traditional domestic world is swiftly rejected as stultifying. This world includes the sense of community that is championed in *Just Folks*: Silvertree, her parents’ small town, is full of “homely niceties” and visiting neighbors whose “inquisitiveness has an affectionate quality to it” (16). Yet Kate almost immediately feels “trapped...in this silly Silvertree cage” (18) where “the whole challenge of the city is missing” (16). After returning to Chicago, she remains unmoved by the idea of neighborhood life, even after joining Hull House as an employee. In fact, she “draws hard, sharp lines of division between the settlement house residents and the city’s immigrant population” – she does not even live in the Nineteenth Ward, never mind within the settlement house itself, despite several invitations to move in (Szuberla, “The ‘Settlement House’ Novel” 71). Consistently, she sees the neighborhood scale as limiting to her sense of self.

Rather, her journey of self-discovery is oriented to connecting with larger, more abstract social groups. Kate is the quintessential Habermasian individual, holing up alone in her room (4), reading and writing, and emerging to discuss her observations and ideas with a group of educated bourgeoisie at the Caravansary, a dining room where she takes her meals. In fact, she declines her second invitation to move into Hull House in part because privacy is one of few “unattainable luxuries” there (127). Kate is deeply interested in “the people,” but only in the abstract, as part of an imagined community in the sense of Benedict Anderson’s nation, Habermas’ public sphere, or Warner’s counterpublics. Indeed, the few individual lower-class people who appear in the text are completely two-dimensional, with no personal history or dialogue (Raftery 56). Thus, while Kate shares Beth’s desire to belong and to serve, she directs this desire to the scale of the “public” at large, a fact underlined by her envisioning of idealized masses of people at key moments of the text, such as in her recollections on the train in chapter one, or in her apprehension of the collective “Feminine mind” at the climactic meeting of the Federation of Women’s Clubs (219).

Unfortunately for Kate, her journey is complicated by the fact that she is not a man. She can envision rose-colored collectivities all she likes, and can roam freely throughout the city and across the nation in her capacity as a social worker, but the symbolic space of the “C-bench” – the space where decisions are made, where public discourse becomes powerful – is denied to her. She cannot vote, does not run great business affairs – even her friends at the Caravansary are against her participation in a suffrage march (91). In other words, the public to which she aspires excludes her from most of its normal mechanisms of effective participation. As Warner notes, “The bourgeois public sphere has been structured from the outset by a logic of abstraction that provides a privilege for unmarked identities: the male,

white, the middle class, the normal” (167). For people marked by embodied difference, this dominant public “presents...the paradox of a utopian promise that cannot be cashed in” (168).

And so, Kate must seek alternative mechanisms for claiming public space. The various women around her provide possibilities for her to consider and draw lessons from. Lena Vroom, a friend who succumbs to nervous exhaustion after pursuing a PhD, teaches Kate that academic achievement is not the answer: “the colleges could not make a man, try as they might” (63). From Marna Carton, a singer who gladly gives up her career upon marriage, comes the lesson that motherhood out-values fame and fortune. Mary Morrison, “the quintessence of femininity” (47), demonstrates the power of female sexuality; Honora Fulham, whose husband runs off with Mary, demonstrates the proper place of this sexual power, namely within marriage, where it can balance out any career ambitions and be part and parcel of a mother’s “fecundity” (229). Even from a chance acquaintance Kate learns that “a child might be born of the body and not of the spirit” (87) – in other words, that a birth mother does not necessarily provide good mothering to her children.

The upshot of all of these examples is that “the maternal oversoul” (53) must be the source of and justification for political involvement: “State motherhood it would be” (127). Specifically, Kate hits upon the idea of a Children’s Bureau (obviously modeled on the nonfictional version headed by Julia Lathrop). Peattie makes it clear that this type of national-level initiative is the ideal use of domestic energy. For example, Kate’s “neighborly accent,” which would have made her “no more than an entertaining village gossip” if utilized at the neighborhood scale, now allows her to gain the trust of large audiences by addressing them “as if she were talking to a friend” (104-105). Despite her gender, Kate is

acknowledged as a citizen – specifically, “the Addams breed of citizen” – by “the popular imagination” (108) and finds herself speaking directly with the nation’s President (107), who ultimately approves her Bureau and telegraphs her personally to request her leadership of it (222). In Raftery’s words, Kate is “recognized for her competence and rewarded by the state, which will now help her solve society’s problems” (57-58).

Its overt politicism is one of several elements that make *The Precipice* a less straightforward descendent of sentimental fiction than *Just Folks*. As well, Kate’s scathing indictment of her mother’s submissiveness, her own physical strength and commanding height, her blunt ambition and the liberal use of “God” as a secular exclamation all deviate profoundly from the tenets of the Cult of True Womanhood. Yet Peattie’s novel is in some ways not so different from the sentimental fiction of her foremothers. After all, in sentimental fiction “the bond between the woman author and her feminine audience” was “cemented” by stories of a woman’s “strengths, her trials, her possibilities” (Baym 277). Although framed within the ideology of separate spheres, domestic narratives often suggested that women could “master not only themselves but the world,” and even sometimes presented heroines, such as those of Augusta Evans, who “might *wish* to struggle and strive” even when protection was available (Baym 278, italics in original). Not unlike earlier heroines, Kate finds a way to make domesticity work for her. However, in order for this move to be effective, she must demonstrate her own domesticity, which she does through the extremely well-used convention of the marriage plot.

Kate’s struggle to find meaningful work equal to her talents and ambition comes to a “public climax [when] she presents her vision of ‘maternal’ public service....But she must still answer Honora’s contemptuous charge that putting worldly career ahead of sacrificial

‘Love’ amounts to blasphemy” (Bremer, “Introduction” xxiii). Honora, as the prime carrier of the domestic mantle, is the ideal person to pose this challenge. After her betrayal by her husband David causes her to realize the folly of behaving too mannishly, Honora becomes characterized in increasingly sentimental terms, given to “agon[ies] of weeping,” “heaving of her troubled bosom” and “lifting of her wistful eyes” (124). In Chapter 27, she experiences a mystical reunion with David when the ship he is on sinks and she viscerally experiences his drowning, with “a strangled cry, wrench[ing] the collar from her throat, fighting in vain against the mounting waves that overwhelmed her” (189). Kate, despite her supposedly practical nature, experiences a similar communion with Karl Wander when she goes to his ranch to help care for Honora: “Back and forth between them flashed the mystic currents of understanding. A happiness such as neither had known suffused them” (201). Kate’s embroilment in this conventional love plot, ending appropriately in an accepted marriage proposal, links her with long-standing traditions of domesticity.

As several commentators have pointed out, however, Peattie modifies the conventional marriage plot to provide resolution of the conflict between the public domesticity of her work and the private domesticity of her intimate bond with Karl (see e.g. Lock, Raftery, Szuberla, Chura). *The Precipice* actually uses a fairly complex triple-suitor, double-proposal marriage plot to set out the conditions under which Kate can acceptably marry. Before she even gets to Karl, Kate must reject not one but two alternate suitors (Dr. von Shierbrand and Ray McCrea) due to their disrespect for her autonomous selfhood. Finally, Karl enters her life more decisively. Significantly, they go walking on a mountain path, stopping to rest together on a stony “bench,” recalling and ameliorating Kate’s previous exclusion from the “C-bench” at school (205). They discuss gender roles, Kate makes a

literal “declaration of independence” (209) and Karl demonstrates his understanding, “looking into her face as if he would spell out her incommunicable self” (211). All seems headed for a happy ending, but upon further discussion Kate finds that Karl expects her to fulfill herself by raising children and caring for her home (215). Kate, of course, validates this domestic ideal by agreeing that these things are “the fundamentals” (215) – but they are still not quite the right fit for her. Kate leaves to expound on her idea of “state motherhood,” and upon her return tries to explain that she is soon to be “the mother to many, many children” (235), fulfilling Karl’s expectation that she, as a woman, will value this role. Karl initially argues with her, but then a few pages later comes to see how their marriage can accommodate this new, larger version of motherhood: he will “stay with my task” (241), as the symbolic father of his ragtag mining town, and Kate will go to her motherly work, creating a kind of national family by becoming “a Republic of Souls” (242).

Unfortunately, the solution that Kate arrives at for herself not only remains inaccessible to most of the characters in the book, it actively works against its own logic of equality with reference to the book’s non-characters – in other words, the working-class immigrants who remain in the background. Chura notes accurately (and significantly) that “Kate’s physical distance from the slum increases in direct proportion to her success in restructuring the lives of the poor in ways that meet the approval of her own class,” namely as she moves into more broadly public work that will take her to Washington to work administratively, removed from front-line social work (140). In her pivotal speech at the women’s club convention, in which she makes her case for the establishment of the Children’s Bureau, Kate declares “I do not say that you are to use this extension to your motherhood for children alone.... Be the mothers of men and women as well as of little

children – the mothers of communities – the mothers of the state” (220). Far from empowering all women, the scaled-up domesticity in this vision divides them into those worthy of being mothers and those in need of mothering.

This type of social control is a quite literal representation of the problematic nature of the nonfictional Children’s Bureau. Lathrop, as the head of the Bureau, was called “America’s First Official Mother” in the popular press (Newell). There is even a historic origin for the central agricultural metaphor in Kate’s speech. When she declares that “As the bureau of Agriculture labors to propagate the best species of trees, fruits, and flowers, so we would labor to propagate the best examples of humanity -- the finest, most sturdily reared, best intelligenced boys and girls” (221), Kate reiterates an early argument used by Lillian Wald, one of the originators of the Bureau of Children concept. In the process of defending her idea against “manufacturers hostile to the regulation of child labor and ... conservatives who saw the bureau as an invasion of family life,” Wald “noted with irony that Congress appropriated federal funds to protect crops and livestock but not children” (Ladd-Taylor 111). Both instances of the agricultural metaphor disturbingly gesture towards what Kate proudly describes as “the conservation and the scientific development of human beings” (221), although Kate’s use seems to have a more distinctly eugenicist edge (for example, in her aim to “propagate” rather than “protect”). Lock overstates things somewhat when she accuses Kate of promoting “state-sponsored genocide” (190); Peattie’s heroine advocates “easing [the] way” for children “possessed of any sorry inheritance,” not eliminating them (220). However, the overall intention to intervene in the most private areas of life, up to and including the management of bodily functions and possibly reproduction, is clear – and clearly antidemocratic.

This point brings us back to Ryan's description of women's politics as "midwives to the birth of the welfare state and mass democracy" (169). In contrast with Habermas and others, Ryan depicts the existence of "special interest groups" and the serving of their non-bracketed private interests through the state as potentially positive (169-70). However, she also acknowledges that this "new configuration of American politics obscured some social differences as it highlighted others" and that "advocates of women's rights were hardly immune to the politics of exclusion – usually neglecting, sometimes disdaining, at other times competing against...the poor, and the nonwhite" (Ryan 70). When activism was grounded in the spatial strategy of shifting scales, expanding domesticity to apply the rule of the mother to civic relations, the politics of exclusion were just as likely to become a politics of invasion and coercion, in which the balance between protecting vulnerable subjects and impairing personal freedom was at constant risk of being upset.

Gender was never far from such power negotiations. We have seen how Laughlin and Peattie's novels both feature significant pairings of New Men with New Women. In *The Precipice*, this gendered pairing is interpolated with another one: the New Woman versus the Brute. For example, although Kate clearly exerts power over men, women, and children, she states that it is especially "my pride and pleasure to... arrest brawny fathers" (61). In one key scene referenced repeatedly in studies of *The Precipice*, Kate confronts a lower-class immigrant who has been beating his child. Kate, "amazingly tall," with "the star of the Juvenile Court officer" dramatically revealed by throwing back her cloak, stands like a sheriff of the urban frontier before the "cringing," voiceless man (178). Kate's ability to wield power over this embodied masculine presence seems to both compensate for and signal the mistakenness of sexist attitudes held by men of her own class: after this scene concludes,

both Kate and Ray McCrea recognize that their relationship is untenable because of Ray's outdated and disparaging beliefs about women (179). In this case, the combination of a settlement woman with an embodied working-class man serves to emphasize the woman's strength and power. In the next chapter, different instances of this recurring trope will be discussed in relation to the perspective of working-class men and the perceived turn-of-the-century crisis of masculinity.

Chapter 3: Figuring the Working Class Man

The president of the Pullman company thought out within his own mind a beautiful town. He had power with which to build this town, but he did not appeal to nor obtain the consent of the men who were living in it. (Addams, “A Modern Lear” 175)

While middle-class white women broke out of confinement by enlarging the space of the home, shifting between scales to allow their socially-determined identities to become relevant to the city and the nation, other disenfranchised subjects faced different spatial problems and used different strategies to challenge them. For Progressive Era working-class Americans, the central problem was not one of being confined in a too-small space; rather, it was being rendered invisible and impotent in any space that they entered.⁸ Working class people were not absent from either public or private spaces (few spaces did not require a cleaner, repair person, delivery man, etc.), but neither were they properly present. To borrow a contemporary literary image: working-class people were not being driven crazy by the wallpaper – they *were* the wallpaper. Whether in public, in the private homes where they worked, or in their own domestic spaces, the poor were subjected to objectification, surveillance, and spatial reorganizing to suit the designs of the socioeconomically better-off. There were various strategies to deal with this spatial dynamic: “moving up” into the roles and neighborhoods of the dominant class, for example, or resisting imposed spatial practices through “tactics” that “use, manipulate, and divert” spatial elements (de Certeau 30), as in the notorious example of “model tenement” bathtubs being used to store coal (mentioned in, e.g.,

⁸ This is not to say that scale is irrelevant to working-class interests or identities; unions, for example, have been shown to carefully consider scale in negotiating local, regional, and national contracts (Herod, qtd. in Marston 223). However, in order for this to happen, workers first had to build a stable network with enough power to render them predictably non-trivial.

Addams, *Twenty Years* 205). In many cases, being disregarded led the working class to react with deeply embodied anger, notably through aggressive, often violent strikes. These diverse strategies can perhaps best be summarized under the umbrella term “spatial occupation.”

To clarify what I mean by this term, I will turn to the concept of figure-ground relationships in spatial perception. The figure-ground principle, briefly, is “the characteristic organization of perception into a figure that ‘stands out’ against an undifferentiated background” (Tsur 238). This principle is extremely well-established within cognitive science, and indeed – at this point – within popular culture: most people have probably seen a variation of the two-faces-or-a-vase image first used by Edgar Rubin to illustrate the phenomenon. Looking at this image, one sees either a vase or two faces in profile. The vase (or the pair of faces) is the figure, the thing that is perceived as meaningful; whatever is not the figure is the ground. For most people, perception easily switches back and forth between these two interpretations, an experience known as figure-ground reversal (see Tsur for additional explanation and examples). This dynamic captures two key developments identified by Pittinger as emerging in American culture starting in the 1890s: first, a heightened awareness of and concern about class disparity; second, a growing anxiety about unstable class identities (31). In spatial perception, figure-ground relationships are perceived as absolute. Whatever is figure is, for that moment, absolutely figure, and whatever is ground is ground. Yet this apparent certainty is completely illusory: reversal is always imminent. Similarly, the real-and-imagined differences between classed subjects in a “harshly-dichotomized” nation (Pittinger 31) can be thought of as producing a figure-ground relationship – one which is both strictly divided yet, in an era of social and economic

upheaval, utterly unreliable. Acts of “occupying” space, in the forceful sense that I intend, were one way of forcing a reversal and, at least provisionally, asserting oneself as figure.

The aggressive, even martial overtones in the idea of “occupation” take on additional significance if we focus more specifically on working-class *men*. The late nineteenth and early twentieth century saw the rise of a “cult of masculinity” in which “physical strength became increasingly important culturally” even as its material importance declined due to technological advances (Baron 146). This development has often been associated by historians with the middle and upper classes, who “suffering from anxiety resulting from ‘overcivilization’ and threatened with ‘neurasthenia,’ an occupational health hazard believed to be related to sedentary jobs... became obsessed with ways to compensate for their emasculation” (Baron 147). However, working-class men were also threatened by workplace competition from women and technology, and “incorporated muscularity into their gendered response to labor protest and class oppression,” for example by portraying labor movement heroes as “physically massive” and by “romanticizing brute strength, violence, and aggression” in their rhetoric (Baron 147).

In this chapter, I examine two settlement novels in which masculinity is asserted as a way of occupying space and reversing the nullifying effects of class. These novels cast settlement workers and spaces as both feminine and upper-class, and therefore antithetical to the empowerment of working-class men. Each novel therefore requires plots of separation and conquest, in which male protagonists assert themselves in part through the rejection or subordination of settlement women. In a parallel textual move, generic features of naturalism are used to reject or subordinate the conventions of domestic fiction.

3.1 Common Ground? Gender and the Working Class at Hull House

In some ways, the patterns of gendering and class relations at Hull House made the settlement movement a singularly apt vehicle for this type of novel. The majority of Hull House workers, and all of its central leaders, were middle or upper-class women. The majority of space was given to women's classes and activities. In short, Hull House's "living plan threatened the anxious codes of Progressive manhood," leading some commentators to describe male residents as "self-subordinating and mild-mannered" or even "mollycoddles" (Jackson 178-79). Class inequality was also a fact in a setting where different classes were believed to be reciprocally beneficial rather than inherently exploitative. Yet the position of working-class men at Hull House was quite deeply ambivalent. A comparison with another social experiment, the model town of Pullman, provides a sense of context for further considering this ambivalence.

George Pullman, owner of the Pullman Palace Car Company, founded his eponymous town in 1880 specifically to provide high-quality housing and public spaces such as parks for his company's employees. Although on the surface this action would seem to draw attention to workers' rights to both public and private space, the opposite was true: workers who lived in the town were forced to follow "stringent rules that maintained Pullman's financial, administrative, and moral authority" (Jackson 80). The very fact of the town's name highlights how deeply George Pullman and his company were foregrounded in the town's spaces and discursive representations. As one inhabitant famously declared after conditions deteriorated, "we are born in a Pullman house, cradled in a Pullman crib, paid from a Pullman store, taught in a Pullman school, confirmed in a Pullman church, exploited in a Pullman shop, and when we die we'll be buried in a Pullman grave and go to a Pullman hell"

(qtd in Reiff, “Rethinking” 10). This litany of public and private spaces underscores how town residents were simultaneously denied effective privacy *and* effective public presence: all spaces, from crib to church to workplace, were rendered equivalent in their subjugation to the omnipresent Figure of George Pullman.

The 1894 strike was, in part, a dramatic reaction to such dramatic suppression. Reiff details several tactics used by the strikers, all of which illustrate the concept of spatial occupation. First, residents resisted the totalizing narrative of the town by treating its boundaries as permeable, organizing with workers who lived in neighboring communities. This alliance provided better meeting places, access to goods through agreements with non-Pullman merchants, and other material benefits (“Rethinking” 17-18). It also served important symbolic purposes, building solidarity between residents and non-residents (who made up almost half of the Pullman Company’s workforce and were therefore critical to collective action). Parades designed to celebrate workers, for example, were typically routed through adjacent areas (9-10). At the same time, strikers used the built space and circulating images of Pullman to further their cause, bringing reporters and other opinion leaders in tours and “cultivating [their] own, alternate perception of the physical space of the town” (18). In this way, workers refused the passivity of being perceived as ground and became the acting, initiating focal point within the space.

Moreover, this reversal occurred within a gendered context and had gendered implications. Historiographically, the unfolding of the strike is often told as a narrative of “oppressed workers reassert[ing] their manhood in the face of monumental efforts to deny it” (Reiff, “Gender in Pullman” 67). This narrative obscures the fact that the Pullman Company did employ women, as well as the significant role of male workers’ wives and daughters in

supporting the strike. However, it captures the important role of gender in critiques of the Pullman experiment. Policies that restricted property ownership and freedom of assembly were seen to violate liberal democratic ideals that, in theory, were the right of all American *men*. As well, part of the threat to manhood was a conflict over whose paternalism (Pullman's or male tenants') should be privileged — i.e. who should have the right to dictate what happens in the home (71-72). As well, Reiff argues that both sides framed women's participation in (and against) the strike in terms of traditional domestic roles. Strikers promoted an image of dependent women and children who were victimized by wage earners' inability to provide under George Pullman's regime (76). Pullman, in his turn, used female strikebreakers to garner media sympathy and recast strikers as the ones denying families access to income (79-80).

Jane Addams was critical of Pullman (the man and the town), and sympathetic towards the strikers (see Addams, "A Modern Lear"). Yet in many ways Hull House reenacted the Pullman scenario. It is important to note here that the settlement model was built on the idea of bridging, not abolishing, class difference; in Jane Addams' words, "Hull House was soberly opened on the theory that the dependence of classes on each other is reciprocal" (*Twenty Years* 64). In terms of built space and activities, Hull House "was a stratified community reflecting late nineteenth-century class distinctions," for example giving working-class women a separate building apart from the main structure where the largely upper-middle class residents stayed (Haar 110). As well, Hull House spaces were heavily inflected by an iconic, charismatic leader — as one resident put it, "The essential fact of Hull-House, the dominant fact, was the presence of Miss Addams" (qtd in Jackson 177).

Importantly, however, this leader was a woman, and the spaces of Hull House were (and are,

retrospectively) generally thought of as women's spaces. Haar suggests that this was partly due to the obvious fact that it was "founded, run, and largely funded by women" but also because "the Settlement complex was a house, the physical manifestation of domesticity" (108). In any case, contemporary observers often perceived "a man's subordination to female authority" when men chose to be involved at Hull House (Jackson 179).

Most significant for working-class men, however, was the influence of Hull House and other settlement leaders on projects outside the settlements proper. Littmann, for example, describes how many factory managers tried to create non-residential mini-Pullmans, making each factory complex a "city unto itself, with gardens, sporting facilities, and hospitals" (93). Often, managers hired settlement associates and other reformers to design and run programs for employees (e.g. Gertrude Beeks, a friend of Jane Addams, was hired at the massive McCormick Works). Unfortunately factory improvements were not well-used by employees, who "generally believed that industrial betterment programs were offered only in lieu of higher pay and as a way to stave off union activity at the plant" (105). Although less invasive than the town of Pullman, these programs continued to offer the benefits that their owners determined to be useful, rather than the benefits desired by employees.

Other reform programs went farther in exerting social control. For example, between 1890 and 1915, "every state in the union enacted new laws that made a husband's desertion or failure to support his wife or children a crime, punishable in many locales by imprisonment at hard labor" (Willrich 460). In Chicago, the pioneering Court of Domestic Relations was established after Jane Addams and other Hull-House activists persuaded the Municipal Court that it was needed; thereafter, settlers remained involved by laying charges

and prosecuting cases (482). Much as the Children's Bureau functioned to monitor and police aspects of the domestic function of child-rearing, the Court of Domestic Relations and its Associated Social Service Department exerted control over the traditionally masculine preserve of the family's financial support. Although within the actual court "the power of the state resided exclusively in men" (484), in order to reach the court couples normally went through the adjacent Social Service Department, a space deliberately decorated to resemble a middle-class parlor, where female social workers "vetted all complaints, and in so-called non-emergency cases tried to reconcile husbands and wives with only the threat of punishment" (482). It would be difficult to imagine a more concrete enactment of the emasculating female power suggested by Kate Barrington in *The Precipice*. Here, the potential of "parlor femininity" to threaten the right to be left alone (Shamir 53) becomes not only realized but institutionalized.

However, as Willrich notes, "criminalization of nonsupport meshed surprisingly well with the rhetoric of the American labor movement," which often based its demands for higher wages on the right of men to support their families (474). Problematic gender expectations were not necessarily imposed on men by women; they were circulating ideologies that both genders supported. From this perspective, it is easier to understand how Addams could push for the formation of the domestic court while also critiquing Pullman and supporting union formation and other activities that gave voice and space to working-class men. For example, the Working People's Social Science Club, a club composed of and led by mostly working-class men and dedicated to the open discussion of social problems, was a large and ongoing group at Hull House. Middle-class speakers who came to this group were openly critiqued by club members, many of whom argued from a socialist or anarchist

political stance (Jackson 76-77). More broadly, Spencer-Wood notes that settlement activities, though often initiated by residents or volunteers, were critically affected by those they were offered to: reformers were open to negative feedback because “they viewed their offerings as social experiments” and they made ongoing changes “in response to complaints, requests, and amount of participation” (121). Outside of the settlement movement, male workers in the Progressive Era participated in an “unprecedented” number of strikes that affected commerce and daily life across America (Schocket 70). Although they could be violent, these strikes were “more than simply ruptures or acts of negation” (Schocket 73); as actions that claimed the possibility of social change, they were “positive, constructive, and constitutive of a working-class presence” (Schocket 73). In both the settlement movement and the culture at large, working-class men found or created opportunities occupy and reclaim space.

Yet, their successes were ambivalent. On a material level, strikes were often met with equivalent force – the Pullman strike, for example ended with armed government intervention. On a semiotic level, the occupation of space could easily and unpredictably switch from an act of appropriation, of self-foregrounding, into an act of self-objectifying. As Baron insightfully points out, although acts emphasizing physicality provided working-class men with a certain amount of cultural capital, “white, middle-class men held privileged positions as spectators who were empowered by the act of looking onto the bodies of others. Laboring men became spectacles...they became something to look at and therefore vulnerable” (149). Spatial occupation, then, can become an example of Warner’s “pathologized visibility,” in which “publicness will feel like exposure, and privacy will feel like the closet” because the identity that is being made visible (or not) is marked as shameful

(52-53). Within Hull House, the best example of this uneasy visibility is the Labor Museum. A combination trade school and living exhibit, the Museum invited public visitors to observe curated activities of production being performed by (mostly) working-class immigrants. Addams, describing this project, states that the name “Museum” was chosen in part because it had “some of the fascinations of the show” and would therefore generate interest (“Labor Museum); Jackson points out that it did indeed produce interest, but “also the discomfort of a manufactured spectacularity” (259).

As this summary shows, the intersection of masculinity and class was a volatile cultural site at the turn of the century, extremely vulnerable to reversals of meaning and power. It is also important to note how this intersection, and responses to it, modifies and extends the liberal model of private and public. Working-class men seemed to maintain the value of privacy in the liberal sense of having a space where social ties and obligations are secondary to personal autonomy. As Willrich somewhat wryly notes, “husbands who fell under the scrutiny of the Social Service Department did not share reformers' enthusiasm for a domesticated judiciary” (483), and the Pullman strikers were protesting, in part, the intrusion of another man into their private lives. Working-class men also followed the liberal model in complementing this autonomy by coming together to form a public, notably in collective actions such as striking. However, this public varied from Habermas' (and related) models in its often non-rational, non-discursive, embodied quality. As with middle-class women, working-class men in this area appear to best fit Warner's idea of a counterpublic.

In settlement fiction, writers can be seen struggling with these complex dynamics. Their chosen medium (i.e. fictional texts) is perhaps uniquely suited to the struggle: in literature, figure-ground relationships exist, and can therefore be meaningfully manipulated,

on many levels. Consonant with Soja's approach to spatiality, Abrantes observes that perception can be thought of as having an imaginative component, i.e. as inherently involving both the "reception of sensorial stimuli" and "conception, in a broad sense" (188). Fictional texts, as imaginatively mediated and often deliberately aesthetic objects, can therefore create hierarchies of perception on more than one "layer" (189). For example, in popular fiction, the presence of conventionalized character types signals that plot will be the focus of attention rather than poetic language (poetic language, of course, will still be used – virtually all narratives contain metaphor and so on – but it will not be the main point). Simultaneously, at the level of plot, a particular character can be foregrounded or made central by using a first-person perspective, devoting textual space to that character, etc. As Abrantes demonstrates in her analysis of Peter Weiss' *Der Schatten des Körpers des Kutschers*, the reversal of figure-ground relationships can also, in itself, become an important element of a text.

In the novels I consider below, reversals of various kinds contribute to an exploration of the power dynamic between middle-class women and lower-class men. In terms of plot, male protagonists simultaneously assert their dominance in the realms of gender and class by conquering the bodies and spaces of these women. However, they do so not from the position of traditionally privileged male roles⁹ (e.g. rich, politically powerful, savior figures). Rather,

⁹ Given the significance of the gaze noted by Baron, and the turn-of-the-century popularity of what Chura calls "downclassing" and Schocket terms "class transvestism" – in other words, middle or upper class writers trying in more or less literal ways to see "how the other half lives" – it is necessary to give a brief synopsis of my authors' historical class position. Hervey White was born to a poor farming family and worked in ranching as an adolescent. He attended Harvard, although how he afforded it is unclear. He may have saved up the fees (World Biographies) or won a scholarship (Flanagan 30). He was involved in Hull House activities for about 5 years (White *Autobiography* 84, 92) including as a resident when he could afford it (92) and also helped run the Elm Street Settlement (89). It was during this period when he wrote *Differences*. A follower of William Morris, he eschewed symbols of class privilege throughout his life, although "perhaps poverty...had more influence than principle" (92). Sherwood Anderson also experienced poverty and social stigma during childhood, in his

both narratives work to convey the possibility of an alternative, primarily non-discursive male counterpublic. Textually, this cultural work is supported by the introduction of naturalist features to challenge domestic conventions and express distance from the reader.

3.2 Differences, Indeed

Although published 15 years earlier, in 1899, Hervey White's *Differences* has much in common with *The Precipice*: its female protagonist, Genevieve Radcliffe, is a settlement worker on a quest to understand the world and her place in it; her rejection of a well-off but shallow suitor in favor of a more rugged, deep-feeling man forms the crux of the plot; conflict with a traditionalist male relative (here, an uncle) is critical to her developing sense of self. In terms of form, both novels make use of sentimental and Western motifs, epistolary sections, and significant amounts of exposition. Yet key elements of the plot and structure make *Differences* a very different type of book, indeed.

Structurally, White's novel begins with newly graduated Genevieve on her way to "Settlement House" (an apparent amalgam of Hull House and the Elm Street Settlement¹⁰) and ends with her living as the wife of John Wade, a working-class laborer. One might expect that the journey between these two points would be one of personal growth, a story of a naïve or overly professionalized New Woman gradually coming to understand, like Beth

case due to his father's business failures (Bassett 19). After leaving high school to work, he spent his adolescence and young adulthood in various menial labor jobs. In 1900, at the age of 23 or 24, Anderson found work with a publisher and then with an advertising firm; he eventually moved into the role of businessman, managing several different companies with varying degrees of success from 1907 to 1912. Anderson's memoirs are rife with fraught discussion of his varied class experiences, from his bleak wanderings in the "almost universally ugly and cheaply constructed" tenement houses of his early Chicago days (*Storyteller* 171) to his "struggle... within the walls of a particular moment and within the walls of a particular room" (219), as he describes the nervous breakdown that ended his business career in 1912. In short, both authors trouble the rigid class distinctions made by Chura and Schocket. Rather, they embody the traumatic ambiguity and instability of class position at this time in American history.

¹⁰ White lived and worked at both, and seems to have taken characteristics and characters from both settings (see unpublished autobiography 82-89).

Tully, that she belongs among the “folks.” White’s sardonic portrayal on the opening page certainly builds this expectation: “it was an odd thing,” our intrepid heroine muses, “going off to live among the poor and the criminals” – and yet “if you are going to be philanthropic now, you must be more active... You must study the poor ... You must make them your brothers and sisters... and, above all, must gather statistics” (1). The abrupt juxtaposition of crass elitism, Christian kindness, and scientific detachment clearly signals the absurdity of Genevieve’s initial philosophical position, and are consistent with circulating depictions of settlement workers as foolish and misguided. When, shortly, a workingman appears with a special “something... that drew her to him” (52), it seems clear that their relationship will be a vehicle for her development.

Yet the progress of this romance follows a curious pattern. Initially, Genevieve and John relate primarily as social worker and client. Genevieve does go to John’s house, but as a representative of the settlement house, to bring charitable aid and “sympathy” (83). After a time, Genevieve leaves Chicago for the summer to stay at her uncle’s estate, and she and John agree to write. This agreement, and the letters that follow, seem to indicate a romantic progression: the letters grow increasingly personal, and are treasured by both. John remembers “how silly he had once been with the factory girls’ simple love-letters... and he was ashamed that he should feel the same now” (146), while Genevieve, though not explicitly framing her experience as one of love, was “all the time... looking forward to his letter” (158). Moreover, Genevieve decides to “earn my own living” as a solution to her directionless quest for meaning, and, crediting John for this epiphany, she promptly dissolves in joyful tears (160). Everything seems set for courtship. Yet, when they are reunited in Chicago, the scene is a decided let-down: “Each of them was a little disappointed in the

other. She was only a lady as he looked at her, and he was but a workingman to her” (168). The reader, too, is disappointed; but then, once more, the relationship moves towards a domestic pairing, this time through the sudden (and conventionally sentimental) device of an ill child. Now, Genevieve visits often “to watch by the drooping life” and between herself and John there is “no longer any thought of themselves or the classes to which they belonged” (200). Angeline, the dying daughter, with her “golden hair” (182) and “motherly” ways (193), is the image of the sentimental angelic child. Her death, as an echo of “the epitome of Victorian sentimentalism—the death of little Eva” (Tompkins 127), should reasonably be expected to bring about a climax of redemption and sympathetic understanding. Instead, “her drooping jaw” is “ghastly” and the adults quickly get over their few moments of falling “crying together” (White 207): it was “exactly as if nothing had happened....They would have the funeral on Thursday. They spoke of it as they might speak of any work to be done” (209). Far from having “the power to work in, and change, the world” (Tompkins 130), Angeline’s death cannot even convince John and Genevieve of the common humanity they share. Rather, he continues to see the idea of “being in love with a lady” as a “crime” (White 220) and Genevieve, after forcing him to confess it, “must say good bye,” fearing that she has “done [him] great wrong” (232).

There follows a lengthy section in which John travels away from Chicago as a tramp, and Genevieve, alone, ponders her relationship both to him and to his entire socio-economic class. At the end of this section there is a final, definitive disappointment. Genevieve, having broken off her engagement to the shallow Neville Maynard, and upset her whole family with her arguments over class privilege, comes to the conclusion that she desires to fully join the working class by making “what had been a friend...a husband” (293). She writes John a

flirtatious, joyful letter intimating her change of heart, and he rushes home to rejoin her, but instead of a celebration of this crossing of class lines, the book ends with a “lonely” and “solemn” wedding, followed by an uncomfortable scene of Genevieve and John at home: “each [was] strained with the consciousness of the situation, each trying to be natural and cheerful. The lady was more ladylike than ever. The man was a workingman still” (310).

This continual deflation of key moments in the marriage plot is a kind of aesthetic reversal that serves a dual purpose. Perhaps most immediately, undercutting the reader’s expectations creates a sense of distance between reader and writer. As a contemporary review notes, Genevieve’s decision to marry John is “perfectly consistent with her theories, but it is a shock, nevertheless” (Bookman 182). The possibility of intimacy or sympathetic understanding between writer and reader is foreclosed, textually performing “the masculine ethos of boundedness, individualization, and reticence” that was likewise performed, using different stylistic techniques, by earlier male authors (Shamir 211). At the same time, this textual alienation foregrounds (or “figures”) the status of the text as a created object – a work of art which, “as a form of skillful behavior... involves intense awareness of both performers and perceivers, generating an elaborate network of shared attention” (Abrantes 184). In other words, “the viewer views the work and is aware of others viewing the work (simultaneously or not) in a sort of collective and continuous fugue” (Abrantes 184).

Both Habermas and Warner discuss this process, in slightly different terms, as central to the formation of publics and counterpublics. Their shared sense of a public as an abstract group linked by the social circulation of texts (which, in Warner’s view, can include visual images and embodied performances [68]) is important in understanding John Wade as a public figure. John, as the representative of working-class men within the text, is never

shown participating in collective action. In fact, he explicitly states that “I have no taste for politics or any kind of public life” (202). Yet his mode of connecting (or failing to connect) with others demonstrates key characteristics of the male working-class counterpublic of which he is the text’s representative.

I have argued above that, in the Progressive Era, working-class men embraced the need (often denied to them) for autonomy and solitude in private spaces, consistent with the general liberal model outlined by Shamir. At the same time, their entry into the public sphere was typically marked by spatial occupation, the bodily performance of presence, rather than by rational-critical discourse. In *Differences*, John’s private home is invaded by Genevieve and her gradual emotional encroachment leads to a crisis point where the whole city is saturated with her, so that it “had become unendurable...as he moved in his work or in his home, he never lost consciousness of her” (233). His intimacy with her is compulsive, and not without pleasure, but always uneasy. His letters are “cheap and illiterate in appearance” (158), striking to Genevieve in the “childish poverty of the[ir] language” (159); when the duo intermittently manage to achieve some shared understanding, it is typically in spite of John’s “blundering” (160). To escape this troubled intimacy at home, he decides to tramp through the country, and it is as a tramp that he finds a different kind of intimacy, one that is paradoxically predicated on silence and anonymity.

In his wanderings through the open country and in and out of small towns, John is constantly in the most exposed and public of spaces, including railways and cafes and the open road. In them, he encounters “jeering laughter” (244) and is stared at by better-off men (239). Yet he also has experiences of instant – and paradoxically anonymous – rapport. In this world, even “a man but little higher ... than a worm” can be redeemed by “talking the

language of men...with the feeling of men” (249). This language-feeling is – again, paradoxically – one of discursive minimalism and even wordlessness. In one pivotal encounter, John meets a man who orients him to the rails and even saves him from freezing by holding him in “close, warming embrace” (257). On parting, “Neither had learned the other’s occupations or desires. Neither knew of the other’s name. They had been companions but a few hours, and yet each seemed to know the other perfectly” (261).¹¹ Again, when he receives aid at an immigrant-owned farmhouse, the occupants “had but little to say” (267) and, although they do listen to his life story, afterwards withdraw “drowsily, each with his own personal thoughts” (269). Yet far from indicating disinterest or alienation, this largely silent companionship quickly becomes a strong connection: within a few days, John is one of “four brothers sleeping side by side” (276). By the time he leaves, John is part of the family, which models for him the possibility of a male-oriented domestic space (even the mother is “muscled like a man” and speaks in a “heavy, slow bass” [265]).

Here we see a revision of the public and private that is central to the working-class counterpublic. Like the earlier liberal male subjects whom Shamir sees reflected in romantic literature, John craves and finds a kind of intimacy in which “silence or the sparest exchange creates a relatively unmediated economy of friendship that...preserves privacy, essence, and equality” in the private sphere (226). Unlike these subjects, however, he does not avoid “too close a physical proximity” (Shamir 221) but in fact extends physical intimacy to the public sphere, finding in it an extradiscursive way to connect with the “indefinite strangers” who form all publics (Warner 74). This process in turn creates counterpublic “scenes of

¹¹ These encounters also intertextually reference other fictional and nonfictional representations of tramping as a homosocial and potentially homosexual social space. See Nissen, “A Tramp at Home.”

association and identity that transform the private lives they mediate” (57), giving John a sense of identity that allows him to reclaim Chicago as “his native heath” (307) and his own domestic space as “his kingdom” (311).

This reclaiming of space is also apparent structurally in the text through a reversal of the foregrounding of the two main characters. The novel begins as a story about Genevieve. Although John’s thoughts are also narrated once he appears, hers are given more text space. As well, she dominates the described physical spaces of the novel. John, in the public space of Hull House’s offices, is visibly diminished, his “sturdy frame” reduced to “uneasily...twirling a shabby hat in his hand,” his “smooth white brow” reddened with “a burning blush” (53). In fact, as Genevieve goes through the standard interrogation required of applicants for aid, he speaks “pleadingly, as if he expected her to strike him” (55). When she visits him in his home, she enters freely, uninvited but without thought of scandal, a possibility only because of her class status – as John himself later points out (118). However, John is given more and more dialogue, and his thoughts and struggles begin to be detailed not only in the service of Genevieve’s learning, but as issues in and of themselves (chapter XV, for example, discusses John’s internal reactions to their relationship for three continuous pages). When he leaves Chicago, the balance of the plot decisively shifts to favor his perspective. Whereas John initially appeared as a device to resolve Genevieve’s quest for personal meaning, Genevieve now appears to serve the function of resolving John’s crisis of confidence. John has become the figure of the story, “absolute though all else was shifting” (290). This dominance is confirmed on the couple’s wedding night, which ominously recalls John’s earlier assertion that a wife should “look after me...comfort me...be my slave, if you like” (204). As they sit, painfully aware of their contrasting class backgrounds, Genevieve

begins to cry and “suddenly, her womanishness was uppermost.” At this, “the strong man came to his kingdom” and, declaring her “my own little wife” possessively “fold[s] his arms around her” (311).

The contrast with Peattie’s triumphal declaration of a “Republic of Souls” (242) is noteworthy. Here, rather than being a vehicle to allegorize a bridging of differences, the marriage plot is used specifically to display their unbridgeability. John and Genevieve have not found common ground; rather, they have switched positions while maintaining the fundamental dynamic of power differentials that define them as a couple. Similar class and gender power differentials are again explored in a more fully naturalistic context in the next novel I will consider, Sherwood Anderson’s *Marching Men*.

3.3 **Marching Men and Warring Women**

Marching Men, although published in 1917, was written between 1906 and 1913 (Whalan 63) and reflects Anderson’s peaking class-related anxiety during this period. It is one of his least-recognized novels. When it is discussed at all, *Marching Men* is typically grouped with Anderson’s other early novel, *Windy McPherson’s Son*; evaluations of these first efforts are then dismissed as “crude, often bizarre....failures” (Dunne 14) or at best as “apprentice novels” (Bassett 26), of interest only insofar as they provide insight into later works. As Tomkins argues, however, “texts already in the canon, which modern critics have considered artistically weak or defective, assume a quite different shape and significance when considered in light of the cultural ‘work’ they were designed to do” (xv). Considering *Marching Men* in light of figure-ground relationships and spatial occupation offers an opportunity to reinterpret two of its most commonly mentioned “flaws”: its romantic plotline

(in particular, Beaut's confrontation with Margaret Ormsby and Edith Carson) and its use of the trope of marching.

Marching, as the obvious focus of the novel, should perhaps be addressed first. Marching first occurs in an early scene, where Beaut McGregor, the novel's angry young protagonist, contrasts striking mine workers with the soldiers newly arrived to break the strike. Beaut, despite having lived among the miners his whole life, "did not sympathise [sic] with them. He hated them. In a way he sympathised with the soldiers....He thought there was order and decency in the rank of uniformed men moving silently and quickly along" (14). After leaving his home town in disgust and coming to Chicago, Beaut is consumed with a need to replicate this sense of "order and decency," and he eventually hits on the idea of the Marching Men of the title. This idea is both simple and enigmatic: men should gather in groups and "just learn to march, nothing else" (54). Although Beaut's vision is specifically of working-men, it does not include a particular target (such as a company or government office) or even any instrumental goals (such as a general demand for increased wages).

Understandably, Anderson scholars have reacted to this vision with some consternation. Some view it as implicitly violent and power-hungry: For Whalan, it exemplifies "Anderson's proto-Fascist" politics (63); Ditsky describes it as "lock-step totalitarianism" (104); to Dunne, it shows "a preoccupation with creating a Superman" (28). Others, perhaps responding to its vagueness, simply see it as "peculiar" (Lindsay 21). Without denying the angry, power-oriented, and semiotically opaque qualities of *Marching Men*, I would argue that these qualities have been misinterpreted. Marching, in this text, becomes a type of spatial occupation par excellence, a pure demonstration of the power of public visibility to render figure that which was ground. Moreover, it is a style of occupation

that expresses and reinforces the male working-class counterpublic's model of private autonomy and public physicality.

As with *Differences*, the naturalist features in *Marching Men* serve to alienate the reader,¹² rejecting the goal of sympathetic understanding between reader and writer and asserting the writer's autonomy from social expectations. The text's very opacity, too, can be seen as a gesture of self-concealment, along the lines of the "refusal to narrate" that, according to Shamir, creates an "extradiscursive subjectivity" in antebellum romances (8). Unlike *Differences*, however, *Marching Men* has no sentimental features to turn inside-out; from beginning to end, the text fairly oozes the negative tone, violence, blunt sexuality, and "lower class subject matter" associated with naturalism (Pizer 189). This poses a conundrum in terms of the liberal ideal of the solitary individual ensconced in his study: for many naturalists, deterministic forces leave "hardly any room at all for the autonomous self" (Donaldson 127). Characters in these novels can seem like "just...more details in meticulously observed settings, granted no special status...no single feature that sets them apart from their background" (148). In Anderson's novel, however, the quality of being backgrounded is not a necessary human condition but instead is related to class status. In other words, the opportunity for private and public selfhood does exist, but is unequally distributed – so that men need to forcefully claim it.

A seemingly trivial story-within-a-story near the end of the book nicely illustrates Anderson's basic framework of figure and ground. A reporter is interviewing a factory owner, who has manufactured a personal history of himself as a Horatio Alger type. After

¹²In the interests of further recovering White's fascinating body of work, it is worth noting that *Quicksand*, the novel he wrote after *Differences*, was deeply naturalistic and was named by Theodore Dreiser in an interview as one of the world's greatest literary works (see Jett, "Literary Soul Mates").

recounting the travails of this “purely imaginary young workman,” (96) the factory owner proclaims that “such men as myself – we are the power. Do you see we have come out of the mass? We stand forth” (97). This exclamation encapsulates the familiar rags-to-riches plotline that proscribes economic advancement as the solution to being perceived as ground in America: pull up those bootstraps, rise through the ranks, and you too can “stand forth” and be seen to matter. The businessman’s soliloquy is then interrupted by the sound of his workers exiting the factory in a troop, marching. These men are the polar opposite of the speechmaking businessman, their speech consisting only of brief directives, their strength derived from the fact that they “did not shuffle off alone but marched along the street shoulder to shoulder” (98). He “bawl[s]” commands at them, but they merely laugh (97), leaving him with “terror in his face” (98). Although these men have not actually caused any harm or issued any threat, they have perceptibly taken the power within the space, and have done so not by leaving “the ranks” but by very literally being in them. The whole point of the Marching Men is to reverse a reversal – to reverse class relationships *as a whole* by upsetting the usual rags-to-riches narrative.

It is from within this framework that Beaut McGregor’s oft-cited antipathy towards his fellow man, as well as his charismatic and strong-willed leadership, should be considered. It is true that he is compared to Napoleon (54) and goes around knocking his followers over when they show weakness (94). But the Marching Men, far from being an empire, is actually highly decentralized: “Groups formed, men laughed, the groups disappeared only to again reappear” (92). Neither do we see Beaut marching. The power of the march belongs to the men, who have become a singularity bigger and more awesome than Beaut could ever be, each one “a part of a giant walking in the world... like a drop of blood running through the

veins of labour [sic]" (99). It is precisely this quality of unity that makes the men stand out and get noticed; it is worth recalling in this context that a perceptual element is more likely to be seen as a figure if its constituent parts move together (Abrantes 181).

Moreover, the movement is doomed to failure. We learn that it did not last in Book VI, Chapter IV (which is narrated in the first person from the future, an abrupt switch in perspective that highlights the importance of the information). "Chicago is still here," the narrator intones, and "men in their offices sit in their chairs and say that the thing that happened was abortive" (102-103). Of course, Beut could not have known that the movement would fail when he chose to lead it, but Anderson suggests that he may have expected it. In the novel's closing sentences, David Ormsby compares himself to Beut, and wonders if Beut, "after looking deliberately along the road toward success in life, went without regret along the road to failure," knowing that this is the "road to beauty" (117). Whatever hunger Beut may have for personal power would have been better served by pursuing success as a lawyer (a path he starts down, then abandons) and gaining wealth and social status. The availability of this choice is presented by the text as a personal test, a choice to resist the "noisy clamor of success" (68). In choosing to lead, therefore, Beut chooses *against* his own potential for individual power.

Similarly, it is true that Beut repeatedly evinces a "seething disdain" (Dunne 24) for people in general and workingmen in particular. Yet the Marching Men movement is not an expression of this hate. It is actually the result of an epiphany he experiences after his mother's funeral, when, seeing a group fall into step, "he who had hated the miners hated them no more" (54). In fact, he imagines his thoughts moving among these men, "crying to them" and even "caressing them" as "love invaded his spirit and made his body tingle" (54).

Although it exists in the context of a very harsh depiction of American society, and is led by a man who exemplifies this harshness, the movement itself can be read as positive. As Baron points out, there is also a “male workers’ ‘world of love and ritual” which is often poorly understood (Baron 151).

The inscrutability of the Marching Men, the lack of any articulated purpose for their activity, is a kind of silence that purely expresses the essence of this male world (or in Warner’s terminology, this counterpublic). Like John Wade and the men he meets tramping, the Marching Men bond through the “forgetting of words and the doing of the thing” (24). This turning away from the exposure of speech is a near-constant refrain in Anderson’s text, which asserts again and again that “man has been defeated by his ability to say words... worn-out words, crooked words, words without power” (45). Interestingly, the “makers of laws,” who Beut implicitly allies himself with as a lawyer, are listed by Anderson as exemplars of these useless, defeated men (45). Triumph, in this text, is the preserve of men who *act*. In order to inspire and lead such men, Beut must separate from the “crooked words” of his profession, which he does by ceding most of his practice to a partner and devoting his time to “learning to talk” in a way that will “make his idea understood” (92). In this new semiotic mode, words become a tangible basis for action: they can be “shot forth” in a speech (109) or, even more powerfully, withheld in an act of silence, as when David Ormsby is “unmanned” by Beut’s refusal to speak (101). This ultimate power, the strength of a non-discursive, physical presence, is “hidden away within the breast of labour [sic], a big unspoken thought... a part of men’s bodies as well as their minds” (96); drawing it out is the key to (and the purpose of) the Marching Men movement. There are parallels here with the historical action of striking, although strikes are obviously more explicit and targeted in

purpose: “Within the ‘social text’ of late nineteenth century political culture, the strike stood ‘in place of’ more traditional utterances....it asserted a ‘counterpossibility’ to the economic silence demanded of industrial subjects within a capitalist democracy” (Schocket 73).

Similarly, Jackson notes that the members of the Hull House Working People’s Social Science Club frequently “invoked words-deeds oppositions when targeting a speakers’ hypocrisy” (78). Action, in this sense, is a cornerstone of spatial occupation and of the semiotics of the Progressive Era working-man’s counterpublic sphere.

Such action, however, is predicated on having power in the private sphere. In *Marching Men*, private power is described almost entirely in terms of a contest between men and women. Anderson explores and resolves this conflict through a love triangle between Beaut, Margaret Ormsby (a beautiful settlement worker) and Edith Carson (Beaut’s working-class landlady). His involvement with both culminates in a scene which, like the idea of marching, has been seen as puzzling or out of place – Ditsky dryly calls it “rather operatic to say the least” (112). In fact, the drama of this scene is appropriate to the significance of the topic. Effective public life requires a suitable private life; this is the essence of the liberal individual, even in the modified model of a working-class counterpublic. Shamir suggests that the nineteenth-century man faced contradictory pressures to see private space as both a passive, solitary retreat and site of sociality and reproduction that required control (27-28). This formulation may actually be more accurate at the turn of the century, when sentimental notions of manhood were being replaced by an ideal of hyper-masculinity (see Hendler, Donaldson). It certainly applies to Beaut, who finds a solution in Edith, but only after the problem is thoroughly articulated through Margaret.

Margaret is a typical New Woman, a virtual doppelganger for Kate Barrington, with an “active mind” (73), a “tall straight well-trained body,” an “intention of living her life fully and vividly,” and “the air...of being prepared for life’s challenges” (74). Beaut comes to know her after training as a lawyer and being given a high-profile murder case. Deciding that she could help him ferret out information from local women, he goes without invitation to the settlement house where she lives. In her office, he demonstrates complete mastery of their exchange, “chok[ing] back into her throat the terse sentences with which she was wont to greet visitors” by telling her “It is all very well for you to sit there...telling me what women in your position can do and can’t do...but I’ve come to tell you what you will do” (70). Beaut later visits her at her family home, where he again directs their interaction, for example announcing (rather than requesting) that they will go for a walk together (83). These intrusions are clearly meant to reverse the parallel intrusions of female reformers into working-class domestic space, which, even when well-intentioned, “proceeded from the assumption that a less privileged home was open access to a more privileged caller” (Jackson 55). The misogynist energy directed into the reversal underlines the doubled intensity of the threat posed by these women, whose authority was vested in class (a recognized, if resented, hierarchy) but also in gender (a source of status that men like Beaut would see as more properly their own). It also underlines its own fruitlessness. Beaut’s mastery over Margaret is constantly troubled, and in turn troubles Beaut’s mastery of the public sphere. After bullying her at the settlement house, he finds himself dealing with “a new hunger” (80), a longing to see her that leaves his eyes “troubled” and his vision for a social movement “disturbed and shattered by the more definite and lovely vision” of being touched by her “slender hands” (81).

With mousy, quiet Edith, he has a very different relationship. Beaut does not find it difficult to “sit absorbed in his own affairs within the walls of her house” (44). In fact, on first entering her rooms, he immediately has “the air of a man come home to his own house” (44). Edith, unlike Margaret, has no expectations of Beaut other than to serve him. She “did not see in McGregor the making of a man of genius as did Margaret and did not hope to express through him a secret desire for power” (84). Rather, “She was a working woman” and therefore “ready to give her money, her reputation, and if need be her life” for “her man” (84). Edith seems like the ideal woman for Beaut, a companion who tolerates silence in private and has no interest in competing for or co-opting his public role. Yet as an object (or more generously, a symbol) she lacks the cachet that Margaret has: marrying her will not signal a rise in status. She will not bear “beautiful children” (89) to validate Beaut’s virility. As well, she does not offer the opportunity to conquer an opposing power; she does not threaten Beaut and therefore does not need to be conquered. Hence, Beaut and Margaret decide to be married, and Edith uncomplainingly packs up to leave town.

It should be clear, however, that this resolution is unsatisfactory. Marrying Margaret on one level implies possession and sexual conquest, resolving the threat to power that she poses. But as Beaut has already seen in his other domineering actions, the resolution can only ever be partial. Margaret is not someone who can be fully possessed by him, and the unfulfilled desire for possession will always be a distraction. In any case, the status that the marriage would impart is false, an example of the “noisy clamor of success” (68). Edith is a blatantly better choice, and Beaut, dragging her to the Ormsby house, creates a situation where he can both have her and subjugate Margaret: Edith is finally provoked into action and, acknowledging the competition between herself and Margaret, puts the other woman in

her place, crying out “I deny your beauty...Beauty has to endure...It has to outlive long years of life and many defeats” (90). At Edith’s challenge to try to take Beaut away from her, Margaret’s “body trembled and her eyes looked wildly about”; turning to her father, she declares herself “afraid” (90). Beaut, satisfied, can now decide to “take Edith and go back to work” (91). With this one act “the matter of his life with women got itself cleared up” and the matter of his life in public quickly follows suit: “after the scene with Margaret and Edith in the Ormsby house came action” and “Within a week crowds began to gather in the morning to watch the Marching Men” (91). In both the private and public spheres, then, Beaut enforces his own priorities and values, repudiating the dictates of the middle class.

Exploring class in relation to gender and the settlement movement highlights some of the difficulties with “class” as an analytical object. As both a social structure and a personal identity, a set of material conditions and a set of ideologies, class is inherently paradoxical and hard to handle elegantly. Perhaps this is why it has become, in academia, “the silent member of the triumvirate of race, class, and gender” (Schocket 11). Yet it is important to struggle through: eliding class in analyses of American culture repeats the daily acts of dismissal that “the poor” (to use one fraught label) have endured and do endure in a nation of supposed classlessness. At the same time, class, race and gender are perhaps treated as a “triumvirate” for good reason: each is best considered in relation to the others, and all are usually present, even when they are not immediately obvious. It is therefore useful to look for absences not only in academic discourse, but in the cultural artifacts being analyzed. In the next chapter, textual absence is shown to be significant in the consideration of settlement fiction and its representation of race.

Chapter 4: The White City and the Black

The family as well as the state we are all called upon to maintain as the highest institutions which the race has evolved for its safeguard and protection. (Addams, “Filial Relations” 79)

During the Progressive Era, the term “race” was used in several ways. Notably, reformers used “the race” to mean “the human race,” a problematic way of summing up humanity – one whose surface inclusiveness was vulnerable to undermining by pervasive evolutionary and eugenicist discourses. As alluded to in previous chapters, racial categorization was widely used to taxonomize both private and public spaces, and to frame arguments about how those spaces should be and who should be in them. This chapter looks more closely at the spatial problematic of race in connection with Hull House, the settlement movement, and settlement fiction.

In many ways, race was conflated with class in the Progressive Era (and arguably in much of US history); one might therefore be disposed to think of race differences, along with class differences, using the figure-ground metaphor. Certainly within the novels we have seen thus far the upper/middle-class “figures” are overwhelmingly white against a racialized “ground” of ethnic immigrants. There is, however, an essential distinction between the racialization experienced by European immigrants and that experienced by blacks. Namely, racialization ultimately functioned to offer immigrants the option of assimilation and to deny the same option to blacks – in fact, black people were the standard against which new immigrants could be judged as “white” and therefore authentically American (Babb140-41, 166). In this sense, blacks were the ground of the ground: if the (white) middle/upper-class

and the (immigrant) working class formed two opposing aspects of an image of America, black Americans drew the defining borders that allowed those opposed groups to remain coherent. Or to put it in literary terms: if, as Jane Tompkins contends, American literature is “the picture America draws of itself” (201), then race can be seen as the frame.

More specifically, the themes I have been explicating of gender and class in relation to public and private spatiality are inseparable, in American history and literature, from the deployment of a white/black cultural dichotomy. I have argued that the patterns of separate spheres ideology and liberal individualism that Shamir associates with nineteenth century gender roles continued to be relevant at the turn of the century, and that these spatial and discursive patterns are implicitly class-oriented. They were also race-related: for example, “nineteenth-century abolitionist writers were explicitly concerned with elaborating the ways that the boundaries of public and private were constituted by and through discourses of race as well as gender” (Park and Wald 269). At the turn of the twentieth century, the definitive role of black/white racial distinctions was arguably even greater, as evidenced in intense, pervasive residential and public spatial segregation as well as increased attention to private behaviour (e.g. sexuality) and public rights (e.g. the right to vote). Yet paradoxically, the very ubiquity of this pattern sometimes caused it to be taken for granted, rendering it, like all truly hegemonic phenomena, imperceptible.

The phenomenon of scrapbook houses, a popular trend from 1875 to 1920 (Gleason 20) provides a striking example of the spatial interrelationships of gender, class and race. Gleason describes scrapbook houses as elaborate two-dimensional homes for paper dolls, with each page or two-page spread representing one room. They were painstakingly hand-crafted by girls and women (often to be given as gifts), using cloth remnants, doilies, and

other craft supplies as well as cutouts from magazine advertisements, product labels, and other consumer imagery. Beverly Gordon argues for scrapbook houses as both inculcating restrictive gender roles, including the woman as consumer (54), and celebrating middle-class women as the “unquestioned stars” of domestic space (53). At the same time, these houses reinscribe their creators’ classist and racist assumptions: servants in scrapbook houses “usually appear off to one side, arms folded or quietly engaged in domestic work, subordinated visually and spatially to the other objects and people in the room” while black people, even as servants, are rarely depicted at all (24).

This quality of a signifying black absence is strongly reflected in the settlement movement and in much settlement fiction. Drawing on Toni Morrison and Valerie Babb, I will examine how the treatment of blacks by the mainstream settlement movement is echoed in *Just Folks*, *The Precipice*, *Differences*, and *Marching Men*. I will then discuss a remarkable alternative treatment in W.E.B Du Bois’ *The Quest of the Silver Fleece*, and demonstrate both how this novel engages with an alternative tradition of largely unrecognized black settlement work and how it points towards possible further intersections between black writers and the settlement movement.

4.1 **Black and White Thinking and the Settlement Movement**

Hull House and the settlement movement responded to “the Negro question” in several different ways over time. Early in the settlement movement, settlements “often acquiesced to the racism of their white neighbors and failed to integrate with the partially valid excuse that they would lose their clientele if they did” (Lasch-Quinn 157). In addition to the spatial exclusion of black bodies, Valerie Babb points out that blacks were shut out of

settlement houses' representations of "ideal" art, literature, and American culture. In art shows, readings, drama clubs, and all manner of programs designed to share cultural excellence with settlement neighbors, works by black artists or about heroic black figures were overwhelmingly absent, "foster[ing] a glorification of the white race and an erasure of the presence and contributions of others" within American society (Babb 146). Many settlement leaders supported black community leaders by, for example, raising money, conducting research, or helping to found organizations that explicitly served the black community (Davis and McCree 122). Many agreed with Addams' assessment that "the problems facing blacks [rested] on both unfair social arrangements and on what she saw as the resulting weaknesses of the black family" (Lasch-Quinn 14). Yet until after WWII, most settlements mirrored these unfair social arrangements by providing only segregated services, if any, for black community members (Trolander 22).

This pattern of separation and marginalization, of course, was far from unique in Progressive Era America. In point of fact, this period has the dubious distinction of being the height of the lynching era (Terborg-Penn 148), in stark contrast to Jane Addams' claim that a re-awakened "notion of human brotherhood" defined the times (*Twenty Years* 86). Although not always so violent, the encoding of blackness as separate and inferior was pervasive in geographic and architectural spaces and in all types of discourse. Within Chicago, the initially integrated, small population of black Americans quickly became confined to clearly demarcated areas as it jumped to over 100,000 in the first decades of the twentieth century. Chillingly, this process occurred in part because white real estate salesmen overtly and deliberately encouraged racism in order to manipulate housing markets and increase their own profits (Garb 774). By 1910, "more than half the city's African American population

lived in what was called “the Black Belt” (Garb 775). Similarly, the language, spaces, and activities associated with the 1893 Chicago World’s Columbian Exposition declared that “being authentically American meant being white” (Babb 129). For example, the fair relegated representations of non-white people to sensationalist, voyeuristic displays in the Midway, while ostensibly non-racial displays of “art and culture” uniformly privileged whiteness (Babb 130-31). As well, the industrial, poor areas of Chicago came to be known as the Black City in popular discourse, in contrast with the fair’s popular nick-name, “the White City,” aligning blackness with urban decay and whiteness with the progress and cultural excellence represented by the fair (Andrews 53). These spatial and discursive dichotomies point to the function of blackness as a defining frame for whiteness in this era. To return to the settlement movement: Babb argues that the mainstream movement’s idealization of European culture and lack of commitment to serving black Americans “introduced [immigrants] to the benefit of skin color as an aid to social and economic access” and allowed them to categorize themselves together with white middle-class settlement leaders, despite “differences in class, language, ethnicity, and culture” (141).

From this summary, it would seem that the settlement movement fairly straightforwardly replicated a pattern of separation and deprivation that had no positive aspects for black Americans. Certainly, it would be inaccurate and irresponsible to minimize the often vicious racism that permeated American society. However, a slight change in perspective does suggest that marginal spaces, when fully claimed, can be the basis of creativity and strength. In her essay “Choosing Marginality,” bell hooks expresses the potential of such real-and-imagined spaces:

As black Americans living in a small Kentucky town, the railroad tracks were a daily reminder of our marginality....We could enter that world [across the tracks] but we could not live there.... Living as we did – on the edge – we developed a particular way of seeing reality. We looked both from the outside in and from the inside out. We focused our attention on the center as well as on the margin. We understood both....Our survival depended on an ongoing public awareness of the separation between margin and center and on ongoing private acknowledgement that we were a necessary, vital part of that whole. (hooks 206-207)

This imagery depicts the margin as a place where one can be oneself, and at the same time become an observer of others, both qualities that make it a space of potential empowerment.

In keeping with this perspective, Lasch-Quinn makes a compelling argument that many initiatives in black neighborhoods can and should be seen as variations of settlement work. In other words, rather than seeing the settlement movement as solely a story of exclusion and absence, it can be seen as a story of unrecognized but positive marginal sources of identity. As examples of these alternative settlements, Lasch-Quinn includes YWCA centers, southern school-settlements, and Bethlehem Houses, formed through the Methodist Episcopal Church (7). Luker goes even further, arguing that Reconstruction missionary work in the South should be credited as an “American root” of the U.S. settlement movement, together with the more commonly recognized origin point of the English settlement movement. He states that “there is not only considerable continuity of method and purpose but also some suggestive evidence of continuity of personnel between Northern missions in the South and urban social settlements” (102).

Over time, as the mainstream settlement movement and the inner-city neighborhoods it aligned itself with both underwent a sea change, racial attitudes necessarily followed. In the

1940s, the NFS [National Federation of Settlements] “realized that they had a responsibility to lead and not to follow community attitudes” resulting in an official policy of active integration (Lasch-Quinn 157). Settlements attempting to follow this new direction did experience the predicted neighborhood opposition (in particular, “interracial dancing stirred animosities kindled by a combination of racist and sexist reactions” [158]). By the 1960s, settlements had almost completely changed their leadership and composition, as “black men possessing master’s degrees in social work ... replaced white middle-class [female] volunteers as headworkers and inner-city neighborhoods had become predominantly black” (Lasch-Quinn 160). Unfortunately, this shift was partly a result of external factors that were already eroding the settlement movement, and in the face of those changes, the movement proved unable to withstand the internal changes which, under different circumstances, might have led to its renewal. After the 1960s, a loss of funding, “combined with the alienation of former supporters and settlement workers,” led to a permanent decline, and “what had been a movement became a type of professional organization” largely indistinguishable from other social service agencies (161).

The history of black presence/absence in the settlement movement suggests the critical importance of “strategic re-opening and rethinking” (Soja 81) in our exploration of settlement fiction. In beginning to define and describe this lost body of disparate works, it will be important to look for what is “not there” and to avoid reifying unhelpful distinctions and exclusions. In settlement fiction written during the height of the movement, for example, the near-total absence of black characters is itself informative, working to normalize whiteness as “the” image of the public or nation and its private persons. At the same time, attention to “alternative settlements” and to a broader range of genres, geographic settings

and historical eras offers the opportunity to leave the dominant center and learn from the perspective of the margin.

4.2 **Black Absence/Presence in White Settlement Fiction**

There is a clear parallel between the absences of black neighbors or residents in the mainstream settlement movement (represented by Hull House) and the absences of black people in the settlement fiction that I have discussed. All four novels paint a picture of America that is overwhelmingly white. Where black characters do appear, their presence is troubled – they are marginal, often archetypal figures, functioning to develop white characters and their plotlines. It may be helpful here to expand my metaphor of a black frame, from a picture frame to an architectural one. As the frame of a building invisibly determines that building's shape, and in fact is used specifically to make the shape hold, so blackness in America has historically influenced the shape of cultural formations and been used to prop up related ideologies. I am thinking here of something like Toni Morrison's description of discovering an "Africanist" presence in American literature. She writes: "It is as if I had been looking at a fishbowl...and suddenly I saw the bowl, the structure that transparently (and invisibly) permits the ordered life it contains to exist in the larger world" (17). In *Just Folks* and *The Precipice*, this kind of structuring absence/presence is primarily used to define the ideal (neighborhood) family and (new) woman in opposition to racial blackness. In *Differences* and *Marching Men*, blackness conversely functions to signify masculinity and support the working-out of related class anxieties.

In *Just Folks*, black Americans are a minor but notable presence. In all cases they function to denominate the boundaries of the neighborhood "family" by acting as an external

presence against which the values and needs of that family are defined. Within the neighborhood, there are gradations of racialization, often denoted by physical characteristics that reference circulating African American stereotypes. For example, consider the following passage:

The buzzer sounded, a bailiff ushering a big group of colored persons appeared in the side door, and another bailiff directed the Rubovitzes and Karnowitz and their needless witnesses and friends out into the front hall, where little Beth Tully, fair-haired and blue-eyed, took charge of Herman and his mother.(58)

The “colored persons” in this passage are not mentioned before or after this description. Their names, circumstances, connections to the neighborhood, and so on remain unknown. Quite simply, they serve no textual purpose except as a contrast to “fair-haired and blue-eyed” Beth.

This privileging of whiteness through opposed, racialized imagery sometimes goes to the point of directly inverting the real historical direction of exploitation. For example, black strike-breakers are blamed as one source of hardship for white characters during the eventful strike in the center of the novel (287). This reflects the historical fact that black strike-breakers and guards were used by employers in key turn-of the century strikes, but obscures the equally relevant fact that African Americans were often denied union membership and “faced discriminatory policies under a second-class status” when they were admitted (Noon 429-30). Similarly, Beth comes disturbingly close to outright endorsing Southern rationalizations for lynching when Mary’s son is suspected of killing “The Greek,” a menacing fellow who is implicated in so-called white slavery. Beth, in explaining to Mary that a judge may be lenient “if it's known what the murder was committed for,” makes

reference to the “unwritten law.” Mary’s response that “sure ’tis written in the heart of ivry man — ivry rale man — that live” is met with a chagrined silence, as Beth thinks it “best not to tell Mary what weight of sentiment there was opposed to the ‘unwritten law’” (352). The implication, that the anti-lynching movement (the “sentiment against”) could allow white women to be victimized, demonstrates a willingness on Laughlin’s part to utterly disregard documented facts¹³ in order to emphasize the moral worth of white female immigrants. Still, despite these telling examples, the most notable thing about black people in *Just Folks* is their absence: aside from passing references, all the people in the novel are white, even though Laughlin was writing in a period of increased black migration to Chicago.

There is a similar but even more noticeable absence in *The Precipice*. In a novel centrally concerned with the values of democratic association and the solidarity of women, the existence of an entire group of Americans is virtually erased. They are not mentioned anywhere, with the single and telling exception of a description of a suffrage march, which includes “all sorts, all conditions, black, white, Latin, Slav, Germanic, English, American, American, American” (91). This cataloging of diversity to represent an abstract public is repeated in Kate’s other visions of collectivity. Her first vision on the train, for example, includes a “Japanese boy,” “Armenian girl” and “Yiddish youth” along with racially non-specified (i.e. white) “women past their first youth” and “girls with heels too high” (5). Her vision after the Federation of Women’s Clubs meeting includes “far sisters...in their harems [and] in the glare of commercial, Occidental life” (224). Yet at no point does Kate actually speak with a black – or Japanese, or Armenian -- person. What emerges is akin to the mid-

¹³ Official lynching records had been kept since 1882, almost 30 years before *Just Folks*’ publication in 1910, and had been publicized in newspaper articles and pamphlets. These statistics unequivocally disproved the claim that lynchings were justified by the crime of raping white women. For an overview, see Terborg-Penn.

nineteenth century dynamic identified by Amy Kaplan, whereby domestic discourse seeks “to expand female influence beyond the home and the nation while simultaneously contracting women’s sphere to police domestic boundaries against the threat of foreignness” (187). In other words, Peattie uses racialized subjects to symbolically demonstrate the potential reach of white middle-class domestic ideals, while also confirming those ideals *as* white and middle class by excluding anyone else from really participating in the narrative.

The eugenicist discourse in *The Precipice* is of course also relevant here. Turn-of-the-century white feminists frequently embraced social-evolutionary discourses and made claims for their own rights “on the basis of ‘racial commonalities’ between white men and women” that “were interpreted as typifying ... social advancement” (Lamont 32). This ideological development, like others I have discussed, displays both historical continuity and rupture. On the one hand, it breaks with the links that had existed between the abolitionist and women’s movements (Lamont 31). On the other hand, not all prominent antebellum women believed in abolition and Ryan gives several examples of women who became politically active specifically to fight desegregation immediately after the Civil War (163). In other words, Peattie’s racism (and Laughlin’s, for that matter) are not entirely new. They do, however, demonstrate that for women in the Progressive Era, jumping scales often meant leaving black women (and other racialized women) behind.¹⁴

For men, blackness was associated with both masculinity and the working class, and could therefore serve to mediate negotiations of masculine identity in the face of class anxiety. In the Progressive Era, there was a strong but critically breakable link between class

¹⁴ In this context it is interesting to note that Elia Peattie attended the important 1902 meeting of the General Federation of Women’s Clubs, at which black women were officially excluded from membership. Peattie voted for exclusion on the grounds that including them would cause a schism among white club members (Raftery 53).

and race, such that markers of race could be used either to signify the fundamental difference of the lower class (i.e. poor=nonwhite, with the ultimate case of nonwhite being black) or to signify solidarity or sameness across class lines (i.e. poor immigrants could be seen as white and therefore not that different from the middle class). Much as interracial solidarity can be both displayed and disavowed in domestic fiction in order to bolster the claim of white women to an expanded domestic sphere, an association with blackness can be both displayed and disavowed in order to represent working class men as strong and strongly present. Symbolic or otherwise mediated blackness allows working class characters to claim stereotypically associated masculine traits such as physicality and aggression; confining blackness to the symbolic or mediated realm allows these same characters to maintain the privileged status of whiteness.

In *Differences*, the moment that demonstrates this strategy comes during John Wade's journey as a tramp. It is the key moment of bonding in which, after spending a short time with a fellow tramp, he parts from this man without learning his name, yet feeling they "seemed to know [each] other perfectly" (261). What I did not mention earlier is that this man is black – the only black character who appears in the text. As such, he stands out and takes on a symbolic resonance – which is strengthened by the fact that, although John has no name for him, the reader does: "the negro." This title, with its archetypal tone, is used repeatedly and almost exclusively across the nine pages of their shared journey (as opposed to varying evenly between "the man," "the tramp," "John's companion," etc.). The specific symbolic weight carried by this man is made clear when, seeing John freezing, "the negro put his strong arm over to shelter him" and John "did not think of the difference, covered with coal dust as he was" (257). John is, in fact "as black as his companion" (257) in this scene.

If, as I have argued, the significance of John’s journey lies in his discovery of a type of physical, masculine, working-class counterpublic, formed through anti-discursive connections that respect the individual’s need for personal non-disclosure, then this discovery is certainly made more emphatic by placing it first in these scenes of blackness. The negro, we learn, is “a big man with strong animal warmth,” a man who laughs at danger (254), a man who can guide John in the ways of the cattle cars, with their animals “wilder than lions” (259). John not only observes but takes on these traits as he becomes “as black” as his nameless ally, exemplifying “the way black people ignite critical moments of discovery or change or emphasis in literature not by them” (Morrison viii). At the same time, John does not actually become black. At the end of his journey, he can return to Chicago with all of the privileges of whiteness intact, including the possibility of asserting his mastery in the private sphere by making a white middle-class woman his “slave” (204).

In *Marching Men*, black coal again allows working-class men to be doubly represented as black and not-black. Indeed, blackness is considered “the mark of Coal Creek” (10), Beaut McGregor’s childhood home, where miners are repeatedly referred to in terms such as “dumb blackened children of toil” and a “black mass” (53). As with John’s coal-blackened skin in *Differences*, the blackness of the miners connotes physical strength, bigness, toughness – all the markers of turn-of-the-century hypermasculinity. However, Beaut’s initial and quite prolonged hatred of these men indicates another layer of complexity in the function of their symbolic blackness. The potency they gain from it does not serve to empower them, to enhance their capacity to occupy space, because it is not channeled. The male working class is a “black mass” but also “a disorderly mass” (3). This lack of order contrasts with another figuration of blackness in *Marching Men* – the blackness of the earth,

of nature. Anderson, in the voice of the narrator, writes that men, given the “black fertile land mines and forests, have failed in the challenge given them...and have produced out of the stately order of nature only the sordid disorder of man” (23). Similarly, “long corn fields... are not disorderly. There is hope in the corn...It shoots up out of the black land and stands up in orderly rows” (57). By joining in the march, workingmen will be able to harness both these aspects of blackness and become “one giant body” (111), coherent and purposeful, that will leave “a picture...stamp[ed]” in the minds of the upper class (110). At the same time, white privilege allows many of the actions leading up to the final, massive march, including Beaut’s career as a lawyer and his symbolic mastery of domestic space through the courting and ultimate rejection of Margaret Ormsby.

The analysis of blackness in (white) settlement fiction is an attempt to usefully “avert the critical gaze from the racial object to the racial subject” (Morrison 90). Morrison and others have made a strong case for the value of examining the effects of racism on white authors and their works. However, this type of analysis may prove most insightful when combined with readings of related writing by those who are racially marginalized. In the case of the present study, the patterns of conflating whiteness with a middle class ideal epitomized by the wife/mother, and blackness with aggressive manhood, are addressed full-on in *The Quest of the Silver Fleece* by W.E.B. Du Bois; the insights gained from Du Bois demonstrate clearly how the centre is a place of absence but also total exposure for blacks, and the margin a space of potential empowerment.

4.3 The “Sideworld” and the Question of Black Settlement Fiction

The Quest of the Silver Fleece is important for a number of reasons, not least of which is the fact that there is very little settlement fiction written by black authors. Although my research to date is neither exhaustive nor definitive, only three out of 60 tentatively identified novels are known to be by black authors (the other two are by Jessie Fauset; see Appendix). *The Silver Fleece* is the only one of the three that was written during the height of the settlement movement, in the years between roughly 1890 and 1914. Although not a Chicagoan, Du Bois was closely acquainted with Hull House and had extensive, mutually influential contact with settlement workers, including Jane Addams (see Deegan, “W.E.B. Du Bois”). His 1911 novel is a fascinating contrast to the works examined so far, and foresees several themes that I believe would bear further examination in later writers’ works.

Like hooks, Du Bois wrote about blackness as involving a kind of hybridity. Elliot and Hughes (24) suggest that he also saw this doubleness as a source of both pain and creativity: For Du Bois, the “two-ness of African American experience enables a new, authentically American art exemplified by the sorrow songs....The acceptance of hybridity then, for Du Bois, provides the ideological structure necessary to negotiating the ‘veil’ that attempts to partition black experiences from the dominant white culture” (24). As I have discussed, black Americans were treated as marginal (and subtextually as definitional) within the settlement movement, and within much settlement fiction. In Du Bois’ work, the space of the margin becomes both an ideal vantage point for insightful observation and a defiant rallying point to retreat to and regroup.

The Silver Fleece makes clear the extreme exposure black Americans were subjected to in the dominant, central spaces classified as white. To borrow Morrison’s memorable

phrase, African Americans were both “curiously intimate and unhingingly separate” (12), integral to virtually all aspects of the white majority’s public and private lives, while being acknowledged in none. In the U.S. depicted by Du Bois, blacks are critical to the post-reconstruction economy, and indeed to politics, yet are frequently used in both arenas only as pawns. More subtly, Du Bois shows how the public sphere is impacted by the private identities that white people forge, often in direct opposition but always in some kind of relation to blacks. Both separate spheres and liberal humanist ideologies are implicated in this exploitation.

The ideology of separate spheres is interrogated through two key female characters, Zora and Mary. Mary, a reluctant teacher at the school where Zora becomes a student, is defined by her egotistical striving to fulfill white female ideals, whether of the sentimental heroine or the New Woman reformer. Most of her actions are designed to assist or care for others, but this caring is clearly in the service of her own self-image and usually backfires. For example, she raises the applause of an audience by arguing for color-blindness at college (28), but resents the actual embodied experience of “teaching dirty children” and being forced to face the “fact of their color” (27). As a result, she is unable to bond with or truly help the children she works with: when she tries to teach Zora about honesty, for example, the lesson ends with Zora stealing her pin, justifying it on the basis that “folks ain’t got no right to things they don’t need” (79), and leaving Mary with “a conviction of utter helplessness” (80). Similarly, Mary’s decision to join the work of an urban settlement house after leaving the South is not truly an act of service, but one of ambition: she is desperate to “have a career” and escape her disinterested husband (298). As a result, her efforts are quickly given up when she becomes pregnant and no longer cares about civic motherhood

(311). Zora's plotline further challenges domestic ideology, especially as it has been leveraged in sentimental fiction. For example, Zora, the novel's heroine, initially seems to be following the well-worn path of the "fallen" woman: despite her desire to be "pure" (99), she is revealed to her upright suitor, Bles, as "notorious" (166), causing him to reject her. Both Zora and Bles seem to accept Zora's sexual past as a reflection of her character: she defends herself by claiming she did not know better at the time, and he responds that "All women know!" (170). In earlier nineteenth-century fiction, "the typical narrative solution to the fallen woman's predicament was to kill her off," didactically expressing a cultural "purity standard" that continued in modified form in much turn-of-the-century fiction (Brooks 92-93). Yet rather than jumping off a bridge, as the reader might expect, Zora continues living and in fact flourishes, grows strong, and ultimately receives Bles on bended knee with the exclamation that she is "more than pure" (Du Bois 433). This subversion of a long-standing literary convention challenges the double standard of sexual victimization whereby a white woman is deserving of protection but a black woman such as Zora (who would have been twelve years old at the time of her "falling") is not.¹⁵ Du Bois here echoes innovative New Woman writers such as Pauline Hopkins, who were rewriting conventional plotlines and depicting heroines "whose fallen status is due to corrupt social and economic forces – not a weak or immoral female nature" (Brooks 91).

Indeed, Du Bois cleverly uses another iconic sentimental figure to draw attention to the novel's real doer of sexual wrongs: Harry Cresswell, the white plantation owner's son. Beginning early in the novel, a white child born of a black woman repeatedly appears. This girl, Emma, is reminiscent of Stowe's Eva, blonde and blue-eyed, "fragile... sweet and good,

¹⁵ See Welke for an important historical analysis of this double standard and its material effects on public space.

with that peculiar innocence which peers out upon the world with calm, round eyes and sees no evil” (418).¹⁶ Yet rather than dying in order to show black men the way to Christian redemption, it is the acknowledgement of Emma’s life, and of her right to live, that redeems a dying white man. Colonel Cresswell, in the throes of death, sees in her his dead wife Nell and acknowledges that she is his granddaughter by Harry (428). There is a haunting double meaning as he stares “full upon Emma” and, addressing her as Nell, cries out that “the blood of your poor black people is red on these old hands...don’t put your clean white hands upon me, Nell, till I wash mine” (428).

In addition to its intertextual referencing of sentimentalism, *The Silver Fleece* has also drawn comparisons to realist or naturalist authors such as Dreiser and Norris, for its blunt depiction of crass political and economic maneuvering (Lee 390). However, unlike these authors, Du Bois “does not depict a world of grim determinism” (391). In fact, *The Silver Fleece* is the opposite of deterministic: structural systems in this novel, or at least their particular manifestations and consequences, are not ineluctable at all, but rather the product of individual human choices. This perspective aligns well with the liberal model of private and public, in the sense that individuals are seen as both autonomous and capable of effecting public change. However, the choices made in Du Bois’ novel serve to critique both the bourgeois public sphere and the working-class counterpublic model I have suggested.

As a point of departure, consider Colonel Cresswell. He is a classic patriarch, expecting control over his home and influence in the public sphere. Like the quintessential Habermasian bourgeoisie, he is motivated to work with other rich men to “influence public

¹⁶ This transracial child, and her sentimental treatment, also seems to continue Du Bois’ attempt to understand and mourn his own light-skinned, dark blonde, blue-eyed son, who died at age two and was discussed at length in *The Souls of Black Folk* (see Schneider).

power in their common interest” (56). In Du Bois’ novel, however, capital is corrupting as well as motivating – Colonel Cresswell thinks nothing, for example, of purchasing a political position for his son (282). Whereas Habermas glosses the antidemocratic aspect of his model somewhat, Du Bois is pointed: Colonel Cresswell at one point bluntly states “I believe in aristocracy” (416). Going even further, Du Bois demonstrates the anxiety inherent in vesting one’s power so heavily on class status. Colonel Cresswell, after entering an elaborate scheme to corner the market on cotton, is very nearly undone by the process of tracking his investment: he feels “a faintness stealing over him” and then nearly shoots his business partner (198). Race, however, serves as a remarkably unambiguous stabilizing frame. As the Colonel himself puts it, “I don’t count all white men my equals, I admit...but I know the difference between a white man and a nigger” (416).

This difference is also respected by the white working-class men of the town, to their clear detriment. The propertied class whose interests are served by their labor, including Colonel Cresswell and the Northerner John Taylor, are depicted by Du Bois as bluntly strategizing to use black-white antagonism to control them. For example, Taylor proposes to “keep wages where we like by threatening to bring in nigger labor” and the group cynically discusses whether to “vote the niggers” to limit the number of white workers elected to public office (392). Some white workers see through these manipulations; one woman remarks to Zora that the “white slaves and black slaves had out ter git together” (395). But there is enough racist antipathy in town to fuel a mob raid on the black community, providing a vision of aggressive spatial occupation that is tragically misdirected. Without discounting their differing levels of culpability, there is a strong similarity between Zora’s community, attacked by violent thugs sent by Colonel Cresswell, and the historic experience of black

strikebreakers, who were often violently targeted after being cynically deployed by white management (Noon 431). In each case, the white male working-class is shown to feed into a general system of exploitation and thereby ally themselves to their own oppressors.

Interestingly, the mob when it comes is described as “a black moving mass,” with “white and haggard faces” (423), using the same overlay of blackness over white skin that is present in *Differences* and *Marching Men*. Here, however, rather than a source of appropriated strength, the blackness of the white mob is like a shadow, unclaimed.

To this point I have discussed the insights to be gained from the perspective of the marginal observer, the perspective described by hooks as “a place in the margins where I am different, where I see things differently” (208). *The Silver Fleece* also demonstrates how the margin can be a positive space of retreat and regrouping. A key scene in this demonstration is the one in which a group of (mostly white) characters spontaneously crash the city of Washington’s black inaugural ball (as opposed to the official inaugural ball, from which black citizens are barred). Du Bois’ description of this ball perfectly encapsulates the power of the margin.

It was – the other ball. For Washington is itself, and something else besides. Along beside it ever runs that dark and haunting echo; that shadowy world-in-world with its accusing silence, its emphatic self-sufficiency. Mrs. Cresswell at first demurred. She ... had little inclination for slumming. She was interested in the under-world, but intellectually, not by personal contact. She did not know that this was a side-world, not an under-world. (304)

The “other ball,” as a “sideworld, not an under-world” is a place of both observation of the larger culture (hence the “accusing silence”) and escape from oppression and prejudice (making “self-sufficiency” possible). Various similar alternate spaces appear throughout the

text, including the private field of cotton where Bles and Zora produce the “silver fleece” of the title, as well as the settlement project that Zora eventually spearheads.

The word “settlement” is applied ambiguously to Zora’s project of community empowerment after she returns to the South. We know she has studied “settlement-work and reform movements” (297), and one of the first buildings on the land she purchases is a “centre for her settlement-work” (379). Yet this centre is completely different from the urban settlement houses whose iconic architecture is referenced in other fiction: far from a stately quadrangle à la Toynbee Hall, it is a “log cabin; long, low, spacious, overhung with oak and pine” (379). This seemingly insignificant detail signifies a qualitative difference between Zora’s work and Jane Addams’. Zora’s overall project is primarily one of economic and social self-sufficiency rather than Americanization, cross-class enlightenment, or even education. The school which will be supported by the cotton fields, like the hospital that is soon built and the farmland that the settlers work, stands as institutional evidence of a community new-formed – a settlement in the mythical sense of America’s original settlers, the sense of a bold people uniting to build a new, independent, free society in a place of forbidding wilderness. Zora is not opposed to cooperation with white neighbors – indeed, she welcomes discussion of shared class interests (395), and nurses white children in the settlement hospital, despite knowing “the suspicious temper of the town whites” (420). But she is clear that the way forward for black Americans, at least in the South, is to “have land...to be the beginning of a free community” (362). Du Bois’ intertextual referencing of the Scarlet Letter (for example in Zora’s red dress and her ability to find a new kind of purity) further “suggests that the new England project is now carried forward by black dissenters – by a new oppressed people seeking spiritual freedom” (Lee 395).

As I hope my discussion thus far has made clear, *The Silver Fleece* stands apart as a rare and insightful example of Progressive Era settlement fiction by a black author. However, Elliot and Hughes (24) note the influence Du Bois had on later writers, and I believe that it may be viable to connect his reactions to the settlement movement with later reactions to that movement's post-WWI structural and philosophical descendants, i.e. community centers, schools of social work, programs of the welfare state, and so on. How have these programs and organizations functioned to position black Americans in the margins – both in terms of physical, geographical space and in terms of semiotic spaces? How have black authors responded? There seems to be some evidence that Chicago, in particular, has produced writers interested in the development of alternate spaces. For example, in his introduction to *Black Writing from Chicago*, Richard Guzman states that “Black writing almost obsessively foregrounds the question of ...how much Blacks should ever want to be part of a larger society that continues to mistreat them. The answer, shouted in Chicago probably louder than anywhere else, was often: Not much, Not in ANY way if it can be helped” (xvi). This collection of short pieces from different genres contains several references to social services and reform movements, and may be a good starting point in identifying writers interested in these themes.

In terms of existing critical analysis, Robert Bone and Richard Courage touch on Hull House in their newly published treatment of Willard Motley and his Chicago contemporaries in the 1930s-1950s. Chura's analysis of Richard Wright is broadly (and usefully) related to the legacy of settling in its focus on the dynamics of white reformers' gaze. Outside of Chicago, Carol Batker has discussed how reform movements (including the settlement movement) relate to works by Alice Dunbar-Nelson and Jessie Fauset. In short, although a

comprehensive review is outside the scope of this project, it seems reasonable to suggest that further exploration is justified. Analysis of settling's legacy has strong potential to add to the larger intellectual project of showing how "African Americans have been shaping, mapping, and indeed *claiming* ground in America since the days of slavery, whether white Americans understood those claims or not" (Gleason 71, italics in original).

Chapter 5: Conclusions

But life itself teaches us nothing more inevitable than that right and wrong are most confusedly mixed. (Addams, "Factor" 57)

As Raftery notes, "it is not surprising that Chicago writers turned to...Hull House for inspiration. Hull-House presented the social renaissance, a creative alternative...to a city open to new and creative ideas" (58). Hull House, and the settlement movement it effectively began and represented, have often been seen as morally good or bad, heroic or destructive, brilliant or tragically misguided. What has sometimes been lost is the overriding fact that they were *interesting*. Jane Addams and her original collaborators were committed to being "ready for experiment" (Addams, *Twenty Years* 87), open to trying new things and adapting on their feet. The settlement movement, although in practice focused on women's and immigrants' issues, had a broad, even nebulous, mandate to support "social betterment" (Addams, *Twenty Years* 80) and promote "social intercourse" (64), resulting in its material and rhetorical association with a labyrinthine array of people, causes, organizations and activities. Yet upon closer inspection this labyrinth contains avenues that were, without much apparent resistance, peremptorily blocked off; black Americans, for example, found themselves on the other side of such a wall. Both the movement's diversities and its homogeneities make it a fascinating site for analysis. I believe that settlement fiction is a valuable window into this site.

In my analysis of five examples of settlement fiction, I have tried to develop a number of theoretical points. The first key point is that hegemonic definitions of privacy and publicness can and do function to create inequality and that one way to counter this

inequality is to redefine public and private; in essence, to change the playing field rather than trying to win the existing game. The second key point is that both public and private are heavily spatialized concepts and as such their negotiation involves the (re)production of space through both discursive and material/performative means. The settlement movement exemplified this process in the Progressive Era, becoming both an actor and a symbolic resource in attempts to redefine public and private. More specifically, the patterns of renegotiation discernable in the local spaces and practices of Hull House, and in the form and content of Chicago-area settlement fiction, instantiated larger social-spatial-historical patterns evolving in the city and nation. In the language of Edward Soja, we may think of Hull House as a “Thirdspace” – a uniquely dense, intensely generative locus of intersecting and sometimes contradictory cultural points that are constantly reflected and transfigured in myriad “real-and-imagined” ways. My research has focused on gender, class, and race as they intersect with ideologies of separate spheres and liberal individualism. But there are any number of directions that settlement fiction research could go in.

5.1 Unexplored Corners

As a largely untapped area of research, settlement fiction invites an extensive list of “areas for further research.” Most narrowly, the current project could easily be expanded by examining the spatial patterns suggested here in a wider array of books, looking for other spatial patterns, or looking in more detail at the production of texts and exactly how the real and imagined intertwined through production (for example, through the literary societies in Chicago that had connections to Hull House). From a more traditional literary perspective,

settlement fiction could simply be recovered and classified, for example, by genre or by geographic region (see Bremer, “Many Cities” on distinctions between North and South).

Given its focus on the height of the settlement movement, my analysis is necessarily tentative with respect to the post-WWI settlement movement and, as I have suggested, could easily be expanded to explore ties with later African American literature. One specific focus might be on depictions of black ghettos and public housing. Lasch-Quinn states that “the enduring symbol of twentieth-century race relations is the black ghetto, which, soon after conception, deteriorated into an impoverished and permanent slum” (1). The provisions for public housing brought about by the New Deal “fulfilled many settlement workers’ dreams,” representing the culmination of long-term efforts to alter the landscapes of Progressive Era tenement housing (Lasch-Quinn 154). Yet the implementation of this dream has been disillusioning, to say the least. At the same time, the failure of bureaucratic methods of cultural change has not prevented black writers, musicians and artists from using the marginal space of the ghetto to inspire innovative new forms of expression and protest. Rap and hip-hop spring to mind. Ironically, in the twenty-first century, references to “the projects” have become vulnerable to cultural appropriation as part of a valued “black idiom” that indicates “being hip, sophisticated, ultra-urbane” (Morrison 52), a striking reversal of the original cultural hierarchy of white settlement houses and “Black Belt” slums. It seems to me that much could be said on this subject.

As well, much work could be done on working-class women. Cameron documents how working-class women were inherently “in a social position at the intersection of the home and workplace” where “it was precisely their ability to monitor, regulate, and manipulate the public world of rents, prices, wages, and alien laws that allowed [them] to

fulfill female roles and obligations” (68). Mattina, writing on the Great Strikes of 1909-1913, depicts female strikers “claim[ing] public space as their own” and “empower[ing] themselves in a way distinct from women in higher social strata, utilizing their bodies and physical resistance as rhetorical strategies” (65). At the same time, Zandy argues that radical female labor leaders such as Mother Jones “did not dismiss sympathetic awareness” (42) but rather “tilted, reinvented, and upturned conventional notions of women’s roles in domestic spaces and as mothers” (44). It appears that working-class women’s experiences and responses to those experiences incorporate elements of both shifting domestic rhetoric to different scales and reversing figure-ground relationships through spatial occupation. Given the strong presence of working-class women at settlement houses, it seems likely that settlement fiction would provide useful insights into these patterns; the work of Anzia Yeziarska, who wrote about class issues from the perspective of a Jewish immigrant, may be a good starting point.

5.2 Final Thoughts

Today, Hull House’s original buildings are gone, destroyed in 1963 to make way for a new university campus, and the settlement movement as a whole is not widely known in American culture. Yet “No space ever vanishes utterly, leaving no trace” (Lefebvre 164). Aside from academics, memorial structures and associations such as the Jane Addams Hull House Museum and (until its recent closure) the Jane Addams Hull House Association continue to create pockets of memory and discussion. Jane Addams also pops up in popular media from time to time, and there are even some examples of recent historical fiction set in settlement houses (e.g. in Frances McNamara's Emily Cabot mystery series; see Appendix). Most importantly, the settlement’s social-spatial-historical traces live on in the government

offices, public housing, policy debates and many other real-and-imagined spaces of the U.S. welfare state.

I agree with Jackson that “the settlement movement, and Hull-House in particular, represents a particular brand of experience whose complexity, risk and sheer gall seem important to understand as the United States begins a new century, facing another version of ‘that between-age mood’” (7). The settlement movement’s relationship to racism, sexism, and class exploitation at the turn of the twentieth century is complex, and its relationship to those same negative ideologies as enacted by the twenty-first century American welfare state is even more so. Jackson describes the incremental process of building the Hull House complex as somewhat “accidental,” and draws a parallel between this spatial evolution and “public welfare’s series of accretions” (283). In other words, at the risk of sounding unduly flippant, sometimes hegemonic dominance sneaks up on you. Along similar lines, Warner has discussed the danger of counterpublics becoming institutionalized:

This is one of the things that happens when alternative publics are said to be social movements: they acquire agency in relation to the state. They enter the temporality of politics and adapt themselves to the performatives of rational-critical discourse. For many counterpublics, to do so is to cede the original hope of transforming not just policy but the space of public life itself. (Warner 124)

Jane Addams wrote that “The one thing to be dreaded in the Settlement is that it loses its flexibility, its power of quick adaptation, its readiness to change its methods” (*Twenty Years* 87). My sense, based on the limited and imperfect insights of the current study, is that she was right. Whenever settlers took on a too-narrow focus or too-rigid ideas about themselves or their neighbors, they lost the “recombinatorial and radically open perspective” of

Thirdspace. The inability to envision settlement houses as racially integrated spaces is a prime example of this kind of failure of the imagination having an impact on the real.

Perhaps the important lesson to take away, then, is the nontrivial nature of maintaining an exploratory, multi-faceted, even sometimes messy approach – whether we are approaching a seemingly intractable social problem or an academic question. As Soja emphasizes, this type of “trialectical thinking” is both challenging and valuable precisely because it is “disorderly, unruly, constantly evolving” and “never presentable in permanent constructions” (70). Playing with a range of different ideas, techniques, analytical frameworks, metaphors, and so on can spark better insights and prevent epistemological ossification. Fiction, in my opinion, is a rich resource on this journey precisely because of its simultaneous status as “real” – embedded in material historical circumstances of production and reception – and “imagined” – a space of possibility, capable of generating an infinite number of interpretations. Having started this project with Jackson’s eloquent exploration of real physical spaces in her quest to understand the now-absent material space of Hull House, I would like to end with a call to spend time in the spaces of the imagined:

Maybe it is a good thing for us to keep a few dreams of a house that we shall live in later, always later, so much later, in fact, that we shall not have time to achieve it. For a house that was final, one that stood in symmetrical relation to the house we were born in, would lead to thoughts—serious, sad thoughts—and not to dreams. It is better to live in a state of impermanence than in one of finality. (Bechlard 61)

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Appendix: Annotated List of Settlement Fiction

Novels in which the settlement movement is considered more central are organized into three time categories: 1890-1899 (the formation period), 1900-1914 (the height of the movement) and after 1914 (as period of decline). Within each category, entries are alphabetical by author's last name. Selected examples of more glancing references to the movement, as well as sample works in other genres, are listed separately. Works available at Project Gutenberg (www.gutenberg.org) or the Internet Archive (www.archives.org) are noted with [PG] or [A] respectively; these notations are accurate as of April 2012.

1890-1899

Altgeld, Emma Ford. *Sarah's Choice or the Norton Family*. Chicago: Laird, 1887. [A]

- Identified in Gallagher (202)
- Story of a devoted school-teacher who exemplifies domestic ideology. One of her charges goes to work at a Philadelphia settlement house against the teacher's advice.

Chatfield-Taylor, Hobart . *Two Women and a Fool*, Chicago: Stone, 1895. [A]

- Identified in Szuberla "The 'Settlement House' Novel" (61) and Raftery (41).
- First-person narrative of a man interested in two women: Dorothy (a sweet-yet-stylish settlement worker) and Moira (her antithesis).
- Illustrated by Charles Dana Gibson of "Gibson Girl" fame.

Friedman I.K. *By Bread Alone*. New York: McClure, 1901. [A]

- Considered a seminal radical novel. Book revolves around a strike; settlement work is used as a point of contrast to other ways of addressing social problems.
- Author was involved in settlement work in Chicago.

Fuller, Henry. *With the Procession*. New York: Harper, 1895. [A, PG]

- Identified in Szuberla "The 'Settlement House' Novel" (61).
- Key female character (Jane) interested romantically in a male settlement worker.
- Settlement work is portrayed as silly, faddish.

Griswold, Hattie Tyng. *Fencing with Shadows*. Chicago: Morrill, 1892.

- Identified in Gallagher (125).
- About reform work, including the founding of a settlement house, in New York

Powell, Tallulah Matteson. *An English Girl in America*. Chicago: Neeley, 1892.

- Identified in Gallagher (202)
- One of the characters works at Hull House

Sherwood, Margaret Pollock. *An Experiment in Altruism*. New York: Macmillan, 1895. [A].

- Identified in Lock (Chap. 3)
- Narrative of a new city-dweller discovering various “types” through involvement in settlement work and other causes

White, Hervey. *Differences*. Boston: Small, 1899.

- Follows the relationship between a settlement resident and a workingman.
- See analysis in Chapter 3 above.

1900-1914

Abbott, Jane. *Red-Robin*. New York: Grosset, 1921. [A, PG].

- Tenement fiction, set outside New York City
- Settlement house serves as moral example

Converse, Florence. *The Children of Light*. London: Dent, 1912. [A].

- Identified in Lock (Chap. 3)
- A girl raised in an experimental “co-operative community” grows up to explore various avenues of reform, including settlement work.
- Southern setting.

Cooper, Elizabeth. *Drusilla with a Million*. New York: Burt, 1916. [A, PG].

- Made into a movie in 1925.
- Drusilla Doane, a charity case, finds herself a millionaire. After a mother deserts her baby on Drusilla's doorstep, she decides to open her home for more abandoned babies and finds her true life's purpose.
- A settlement worker befriends Drusilla and tries to convince her to donate money to the settlement house, but is rejected.

Douglas, Amanda M. *A Modern Cinderella*. Chicago: Donohue, 1913. [A, PG].

- A settlement worker takes in a “bound-out” orphan after she falls ill from overwork (“bound-out” refers to a system in which those cared for by the state or municipality are transferred to the care of private citizens, essentially as indentured servants).

Du Bois, W.E.B. *The Quest of the Silver Fleece*. Chicago: McClurg, 1911. [A, PG].

- Urban settlement work and interaction with white settlement workers influence the heroine, Zora, who starts a similar project in her rural home community.
- See analysis in Chapter 4 above.

Fillmore, Parker. *The Rosie World*. New York: Holt, 1914. [A, PG].

- Story of a working-class girl (Rosie); settlement house is a minor element but significant in terms of plot development.

Furman, Lucy. *Mothering on Perilous*. New York: Macmillan, 1913. [A, PG].

- About a rural “settlement school” in the mountains.

Furman, Lucy. *Sight to The Blind*. New York: Macmillan, 1914. [A, PG].

- About a settlement in the rural Kentucky mountains.
- Introduction by Ida Tarbell, a well-known Progressive Era journalist; claims that “A more illuminating interpretation of the settlement idea than Miss Furman's stories ‘Sight to the Blind’ and ‘Mothering on Perilous’ does not exist.”

Harrison, Henry Sydnor. *V. V.'s Eyes*. Boston: Houghton, 1913. [A, PG].

- Plot focuses on raising money to start a settlement and on related romantic entanglements.
- Main female character is portrayed as flighty, but becomes less so through her work.

Harris, Corra and Paul Elmer More. *The Jessica Letters: An Editor's Romance*. New York: Putnam's, 1904. [A, PG].

- Epistolary novel about a young female book reviewer who becomes romantically involved with her editor.
- Hull House is used to represent Progressive Era reformers in general (who are a bone of contention between the correspondents). Interesting comments specifically on novels about social reform.

Havens, Munson. *Old Valentines: A Love Story*. Boston: Houghton, 1914. [A, PG].

- Although the story is set in England, the settlement is referred to as “Saint Ruth's” (in apparent homage to Jane Addams' nickname of “Saint Jane”).

Jackson, Charles Tenney. *My Brother's Keeper*. Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill, 1910. [A]

- Identified in Szuberla “The ‘Settlement House’ Novel” (61-62).

Jacobs, Caroline and Lela Richards. *Blue Bonnet in Boston or, Boarding-School Days at Miss North's*. Boston: Page, 1914. [A, PG].

- Part of the popular Blue Bonnet series for young readers. Reprinted 11 times (last reprint recorded on inside cover is 1921).
- The eponymous heroine engages in settlement work as part of a girls' club.

Kelly, Myra. *New Faces*. New York: Dillingham, 1910. [A, PG].

- Focuses on a play put on by a settlement.

Klein, Charles and Arthur Hornblow. *John Marsh's Millions*. New York: Grosset, 1910. [A, PG].

- Heroine is a Parisian art student who becomes involved in settlement work after returning to New York to collect an inheritance.

Laughlin, Clara. *Just Folks*. New York: Macmillan, 1910.

- Beth, a Chicago-based Juvenile Court officer moves to the Nineteenth Ward to get to know the people there. Uses Hull House resources but is not a resident.
- See discussion in Chapter 2 above.

Laughlin, Clara. *The Penny Philanthropist*. New York: Revell, 1912.

- Identified in Andrews (110).

Lewis, Sinclair. *The Trail of the Hawk*. New York: Collier, 1915. [A, PG]

- Settlement work used as a way to talk about female character's search for meaning, and also about class relations and social problems generally.

Lovett, Robert Morss. *A Winged Victory*. New York: Duffield, 1907. [A].

- Identified in Andrews (110).

Merwin, Samuel. *The Whip Hand: A Tale of the Pine Country*. New York: Doubleday, 1903. [A].

- The head of a lumber firm based in Wisconsin courts a Chicago settlement worker.

Meyer, Lucy J. *Mary North*. New York: Revell, 1903. [A].

- Identified in Andrews (110).

Montgomery, Louise. *Mrs. Mahoney of the Tenement*. Boston: Pilgrim, 1912. [A].

- Identified in Andrews (110).

Peattie, Elia Wilkinson. *The Precipice*. Boston: Houghton, 1914. [A, PG].

- A recent graduate lives in Chicago and explores various New Woman issues, in part through settlement work under Jane Addams.
- See analysis in Chapter 2 above. Note reprint edition in Works Cited.

Read, Opie. *The New Mr. Howerson*. Chicago: Reilly, 1914. [A].

- Identified in Andrews (110).

Scudder, Vida Dutton. *A Listener in Babel*. Boston: Houghton, 1903. [A].

- Identified in Lock (Chap. 3).
- Scudder helped to establish the College Settlement Association (CSA), which founded the Rivington Street Settlement in New York in 1889 (two weeks before Hull-House opened) and Denison House in Boston in 1891.

Sheldon, Charles M. *The Reformer*. Chicago: Advance, 1902.

- Identified in Andrews (110) and Szuberla “The ‘Settlement House’ Novel” (61)
- After touring Europe, a young man moves into Hope House and works on improving housing laws and their enforcement.
- Preface refers to Hull House and Chicago Commons.
- Note Sheldon was a bestselling author of *In His Steps* (1899).

Teller, Charlotte. *The Cage*. New York: Appleton, 1907. [A]

- Identified in Andrews (110 [author misidentified as Laughlin], 108).

Warren, Maude Radford. *The Main Road*. New York: Harper, 1913. [A].

- A young woman from Wisconsin enters college at the University of Chicago. Has several adventures including her experiences at college and living in a settlement house.

Webster, Henry Kitchell. *The Duke of Cameron Avenue*. New York: Macmillan, 1904. [A]

- Identified in Szuberla “The ‘Settlement House’ Novel” (61)
- Centers on a political battle between a male settlement worker and a corrupt ward boss (essentially recasting the real effort that Jane Addams made to get a non-corrupt candidate elected in the Nineteenth Ward)
- Unusually male-centered for settlement fiction.

1915-Present

Anderson, Sherwood. *Marching Men*. New York: Lane, 1917. [A, PG].

- Beaut McGregor, an angry son of a miner, leaves for Chicago, where he eventually starts a “Marching Men” movement.
- A settlement worker is significant as a love interest and symbol of the upper class
- See analysis in Chapter 3 above. Note reprint information in Works Cited.

Beckly, Zoe. *A Chance to Live*. New York: Macmillan, 1918. [A]

- A working class girl goes to a settlement house and finds it alienating. This experience becomes a touchstone throughout her personal journey, which ends with her devoting herself to the “People’s House,” a settlement founded and run by working-class people.
- At least one scholarly reference: Nan Bauer Maglin. “Early Feminist Fiction.” *Prospects* 2 (1977): 167-191.

Calkins, Clinch, with Helen Hall. *Some Folk Won’t Work*. New York: Harcourt, 1930.

- A retelling of actual case histories from the Henry Street Settlement (where Hall was a leader). The extent to which these stories were fictionalized is unclear.

Converse, Jane. *Settlement-House Nurse*. New York: New American Library, 1965.

- Story includes a love plot and female gang activity.

Fauset, Jessie Redmon. *There Is Confusion*. New York: Boni, 1924.

- Character’s work with the YMCA could be seen as an example of the type of “alternative” settlement work described by Lasch-Quin.

Fauset, Jessie Redmon. *Comedy, American Style*. New York: Stokes, 1933.

- Batker argues that many elements of the plot reflect/critique settlement ideology; one of the main characters is “constantly in the company of white club women, who perform welfare work” (84).

Lewis, Edwin Herbert. *Those About Trench*. New York: Macmillan, 1916.

- Identified in Andrews (110).

Lewis, Sinclair. *Ann Vickers*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1933.

- Satire of social worker/settlement worker.
- Touches on many controversial issues including abortion and adultery.
- Made into a movie the same year.

Maniates, Belle Kanaris. *Penny of Top Hill Trail*. Chicago: Reilly, 1919. [A, PG].

- A former urban settlement worker now lives in the backwoods and reforms people there in an unofficial capacity
- The story revolves around the titular Penny, who is an object of these reform efforts.

McNamara, Frances. *Death at Hull House*. Chicago: Allium, 2009.

- A sequel to *Death at the Fair* (below). The main character goes to work at Hull House, where she solves the murder of a man who works for a sweatshop owner.

---. *Death at the Fair*. Chicago: Allium, 2009.

- A mystery set in 1893 Chicago; includes references not only to settlement work but to the World's Columbian Exposition, the University of Chicago, corrupt politicians, a lynching, and investigative assistance from Ida B. Wells.

---. *Death at Pullman*. Chicago: Allium, 2011.

- Emily and Dr. Chapman to the factory town of Pullman to run a Hull House relief center during the strike brought on by layoffs and high rents.

Mitchell, Ruth Comfort. *Jane Journeys On*. New York: Appleton, 1922. [A, PG].

- Male and female settlement workers interact with a kind of Carrie Meeber character (the protagonist). There is a love triangle.
- Set in New York.

Norris, Kathleen Thompson. *The Story of Julia Page*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1915.

[A, PG].

- A young girl “ruins” herself, but then joins a settlement house and marries an upper-class doctor. The second half of the novel details her struggles to fit into his world.
- Norris uses settlement houses in her other books as well, but more incidentally.

Ornitz, Samuel. *Haunch Paunch and Jowl*. New York: Boni, 1923. [A]

- First-person narrative that discusses Jewish versus gentile settlements.
- Subtitled “an anonymous autobiography” but listed in the Internet Archive as fiction.

Roberts, Edith. *Little Hell – Big Heaven*. Indianapolis, IN: Bobbs-Merrill, 1942.

- A rich brother and sister become involved in reform efforts in Chicago, including settlement work, after the brother injures a woman in a drunk-driving accident. Main settlement worker character is male and becomes the sister’s love interest.
- Reviewed in *Book Review Digest*, 1942, p. 650.

Sangster, Margaret. *The Island of Faith*. New York: Revell, 1921. [A, PG].

- Overtly sentimental novel about a settlement house in New York.
- An idealistic young girl inspires a doctor to give up his cynicism. In the end they are married in the Settlement House itself.

Shumway Smith, Fredrika. *Rose and the Ogre*. Boston: Christopher, 1948.

- Historical novel (set in 1892/1893 Chicago). Depicts various key events including the World's Fair and the Pullman Strike. Heroine volunteers at a settlement house.
- Brief description available in *Illinois! Illinois! An Annotated Bibliography of Fiction*, online edition, at <http://mccoy.lib.siu.edu/illinois/chap3-s.htm>.

Tobenkin, Elias. *The Road*. New York: Harcourt, 1922. [A].

- A pregnant girl flees Chicago, while her lover enters social reform work and marries a settlement worker.

Train, Arthur. *Tutt and Mr. Tutt*. New York: Scribner's, 1919. [A, PG].

- Detective novel in which a settlement worker at "Hudson House" acts as a dupe in testifying on behalf of a Chinese criminal, "Mock Hen."
- Many negative racial stereotypes.

Wentworth, Edward C. *The Education of Ernest Wilmerding*. Chicago: Covici, 1924.

- Identified in Andrews (110)

Yeziarska, Anzia. *Salome of the Tenements*. 1923. Boni. Urbana, IL: U of Illinois P, 1995.

- A poor immigrant Jewish woman falls in love with a wealthy Protestant settlement worker.
- Available through the Harvard Open Collections Program, at <http://ocp.hul.harvard.edu/dl/ww/002122899>.

Yeziarska, Anzia. *The Arrogant Beggar*. 1927. Doubleday. Durham, NC : Duke UP, 1996.

- A critique of charity-run boardinghouses.
- A settlement house is represented as a force of Americanization.

Additional References

Ades, George. *Fables in Slang*. Chicago: Stone, 1900. [A, PG].

- Settlement work is opposed to the condescending work of other charity women.
- Mentioned in Szuberla, "The 'Settlement House' novel" (59).

Antin, Mary. *The Promised Land*. 1912. New York: Penguin, 1997. [A, PG].

- Memoir which mentions settlements from the perspective of immigrant women.
- Discussed in Babb (119-25) and Lock (201).

Dos Passos, John. *The Big Money*. New York: Harcourt, 1936.

- Contains a passage where a character goes to work at Hull House (91-104).

Ferber, Edna. "The Gay Old Dog." *Cheerful by Request*. New York: Doubleday, 1918. 38-72. [A, PG].

- A short story about a "Loophound" in Chicago whose "leathery" sister is obsessed with settlement work to the detriment of her family.

Gilman, Charlotte Perkins. *Benigna Machiavelli*. Self-published, 1914.

- Benigna at one point goes to Chicago and attends "Settlement Classes and Clubs."

Henry, O. *Options*. New York: Doubleday, 1920. [A, PG].

- Flippant use of settlement imagery, e.g. "If I don't marry this season I honestly believe mamma will force me into settlement work or trimming hats."

Herrick, Robert. *The Common Lot*. London: MacMillan, 1905. [A].

- Settlement work is mentioned as something a female character gives up in order to fit in with her husband.

Herrick, Robert. *The Web of Life*. London: MacMillan, 1900. [A, PG].

- Settlements come up in male-female dialogue.

Kander, Lizzie Black. *The Settlement Cook Book*. Sandusky, OH: American Crayon Co., 1910.

- An example of the presence of the settlement house movement in popular culture: this book was reprinted forty times and has sold over 1.5 million copies. See Fritz, Angela. "Lizzie Black Kander & Culinary Reform in Milwaukee," *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, 87.3 (2004): 36-49.

Lewis, Sinclair. *Kingsblood Royal*. New York: Random House, 1947.

- A settlement house is called a "Marxian nunnery" and a character claims to have learned from settlement work that "darkies" were protected by segregation.

---. *Main Street*. New York: Harcourt, 1920. [A, PG].

- Settlement work portrayed as faddish, a passing interest of one of the female characters.

London, Jack. *The Assassination Bureau*. New York: McGraw, 1963.

- An unfinished novel, published posthumously, about a shadow government that uses violence to solve social problems.
- Refers to Hull House in dialogue about the failure of other “ameliorative devices.”

Polacheck, Hilda Satt. *I Came a Stranger: The Story of a Hull-House Girl*. Urbana: U of Illinois P, 1991.

- Similar to Antin, above; also identified by Lock (201).

Stein, Gertrude. *Tender Buttons*. New York: Claire Marie, 1914. [A, PG].

- Contains the line “Excellent not a hull house.”

Sinclair, Upton. *The Jungle*. New York: Doubleday, 1906. [A, PG].

- A settlement worker calls on the primary characters of the novel (an immigrant family) of the novel and assists them.
- She is characterized as rich and somewhat naïve.

Viele, Herman Knickerbocker. “The Girl from Mercury.” *On the Lightship*. New York: Duffield, 1909. [A, PG]

- A science fiction story in which a girl from another planet is assisted by a settlement house to acculturate to Earth.

Zangwill, Israel. *The Melting Pot*. New York: Macmillan, 1909. [A, PG]

- A seminal play about acculturation of American immigrants; a settlement house is used as a key setting.
- Identified in Szuberla, “Melting Pot.”