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CHARISMATIC AUTHORITY AND THE BOARD OF THE HULL HOUSE ASSOCIATION, 1895-1935¹

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Discussions of boards in the third sector literature usually proceed from assumptions grounded in Weber's rational-legal authority and international management principles like those of Henri Fayol. The generalizations made about boards are based on rational-legal views of the board as the principal governing body of a nonprofit organization. Much less frequently examined are the roles and functions of boards in organizations grounded in other forms of authority. In particular, the relationship between charismatic authority and boards has seldom been studied. This paper will examine the role of one such board, the Board of Trustees of the Hull House Association through a critical reading of more than 40 years of board minutes and related documents. It concludes that the Hull House board existed primarily to manage the properties of the social settlement and was never a source of institutional legitimation or authority. Hull House was successful and effective primarily because legitimation and authority came from its charismatic leader, Jane Addams, and such a role for the board would have been redundant or conflictual. The Hull House Association Board does raise questions of how far this model of charismatic boards may extend whether it may account for at least some of the behavior attributed to "weak" boards today.

Introduction

At a recent conference on nonprofit governance in Kansas City, Richard Chait, Judith Saidel and a team of colleagues issued an open challenge to the international third sector research community to rethink conventional models of board governance (Chait & Saidel, 2000). This paper is one response to that challenge. It deals with a significant, highly celebrated, yet in some respects, quite unknown departure from the ideal type of the typical nonprofit organization board.

Hull House is part of the historical record of American culture. Yet, the customary role assigned to the well-known settlement house in Chicago is to serve as a backdrop or scene for the luminous personalities who passed through there. These included not only founder Jane Addams but also the philosopher John Dewey, noted architect Frank Lloyd Wright, and Julius

¹ An earlier version of this paper was presented at the Bi-annual meeting of the International Society for Third Sector Research in Dublin, Ireland. July, 2000.

Rosenwald, the one-time CEO of the mail order company Sears and Roebuck, along with hundreds of others. To serve as the stage for celebrities and charismatic personalities may be the general fate of social institutions such as Hull House in a modern individualistic culture that venerates celebrity. At any rate, visible above all else at Hull House is the towering persona of Miss Addams, one of the most celebrated of American humanitarians in her own time and still widely recognized today. Addams was the principal co-founder of the settlement house, and a moving force in the American settlement house movement for decades, as well as a 1935 co-recipient of a Nobel Peace Prize; the first woman so recognized.

Jane Addams of Hull House in Chicago is one of a relative handful of 19th and 20th century figures to achieve international renown as a humanitarian, along with Leo Tolstoy, Albert Schweitzer, Gandhi, Mother Teresa and a few others. Addams' life has been the subject of numerous biographies. (Brown, (2004; Diliberto, 1999; Elshtain, 2002; Fischer, Nackenoff, & Chmielewski, 2009; Harvey, 1999; Kishel, 2007; Knight, 2005; Linn, 1935; Linn & Scott, 2000; Parks, 1999; Raatma, 2004; Raum, 2004; Rosenberg, 2004; Stebner, 1997; Sytz, 1960; Tims, 1961; Wise, 1935) However, the institution she founded and led for more than 40 years remains largely unexamined in the conventional institutional and organizational frames of third sector studies. The handful of published articles with 'Hull House' in the title are mostly accounts of the role of the settlement house program in the largely immigrant neighborhood of South Halsted Street, or of broad social policy or practice issues (Abbott, 1952;).

One of the only exceptions to this general lacuna is the text accompanying Davis & Bryan's pictorial account of the Chicago settlement house (Davis & Bryan, 1993). Another source which I discovered after the first draft of this paper was finished is Bamberger (1989). At one time, this situation was understood as part of a vast oral culture surrounding Hull House, associated with its sometimes controversial position in American life. But 75 year-old controversies fail to move us today as they once did for our grandparents. Another possible explanation for the lack of attention to the institutions and organizations of Hull House might be that it confounds so many of the conventional assumptions about third sector organizations. It is genuinely hard to treat this settlement in conventional terms, either as a typical settlement house or as a nonprofit, nongovernmental or voluntary organization.

One of the areas where this is certainly true is in the area of board governance. The board of the Hull House Association during the 44-year career of Addams (1889-1935) is a case study of exceptions to nearly all of the general rules of boards. It offers a singular case study of the role of boards in a philanthropic establishment dominated for a life-time by a charismatic founder and leader. It also offers an interesting test case of the role of a board

of directors in legitimating a nonprofit organization, and in particular, the unnecessary performance of major aspects of that role by the board in cases where legitimacy is vested in the charismatic leader's personality instead. (Note: The American term "nonprofit" is used throughout this paper, even though it does not fit Hull House particularly well. In most instances, the British term voluntary organization, Richard Cournelle's term independent sector organization, the international term nongovernmental or the growing usage of civil society organization would do as well or better. The issue of the extent to which Hull House is better termed an organization, a community, an establishment, a neighborhood institution, an associative network of groups and organizations or some other form of human association is a complex one that is beyond the scope of this paper and deserves to be pursued separately. The reader may safely assume for purposes of this paper that under the guardianship of Ms. Addams and the nominal leadership of the board, Hull House was, at various times, all of these things.

Close examination of the archival record of Hull House over a number of years from the vantage point of a management and policy scholar supports the following major conclusions:

- Hull House departed from recommended third sector practice today in that the settlement house was already five years old when the board was first created in 1895.
- Hull House also departed from conventional third sector practice with respect to both board size and turnover. For Addams' entire career, the board size was no greater than 7 board members, and once appointed they frequently served continuously until their deaths.
- Hull House also departed from conventional wisdom in that the role of the board in setting policy for the organization was negligible. Programs were created and dissolved largely without board oversight for a period of over 40 years. It would appear that Addams' personal, charismatic authority was sufficient to legitimate organizational change without the board.
- Although financial arrangements were discussed regularly by the Hull House Board, there is no evidence that a monthly, yearly or quarterly budget was ever presented to the board for their adoption or approval. Financial oversight was vested primarily in Addams and the board treasurer, who was also the largest patron of the organization.
- There is no clear delineation between board and staff roles. Several of the board members were, at times, also residents at Hull House and Addams served for her entire career as both President and

Head Resident (the C.E.O. of a Settlement House). For the first 10 years of board life, she was also Treasurer.

- There is little evidence of controversy or of the board ever overturning Addams on any decision. This is not the same as saying no controversies existed. The absence of controversy is emphatically not because the board could be characterized as weak. It included, among others, the philosopher John Dewey, the CEO of Sears, Roebuck, and a number of wealthy Chicago activists. Particularly late in Addams' career, the lack of recorded controversy may be due primarily to the role of the board in managing the image of Hull House and showing solidarity with Addams, who was often embroiled in controversy nationally and internationally.

The Limits of Minutes As Evidence

Before we examine each of these points in greater detail a few words must be said about the limits of the evidence upon which these claims are made. What follows is based largely on an examination of the board minutes of the Hull House Association and related records found in the Jane Addams Papers, as well as archival work at the Hull House Archive at the University of Illinois, Chicago, and the Swarthmore College Archives.

I am not by training an historian and I do not approach this topic from the standpoint of conventional historiography although I have tried to be mindful of the practices of that discipline. My approach is better described as that of a historically-minded social science scholar of nonprofit management, leadership and policy practices. As such, this study is grounded in my own incremental/strategic perspective on policy development and management, which in my view points directly toward an historical grounded understanding and in the unfolding critique of the social science 'myth of modernization' put forth in recent decades by social historians.

The continuing development of social welfare and third sector history in our time has powerful implications for nonprofit management, leadership and policy. (Hall, 1987; Hammack, 1998) One of these which is most important, for example, is the undermining of the "cult of the new". The notion that every departure from everyday routine is a new innovation worthy of note is pervasive today. Even more important, however, may be the emphasis in history on particularity, specific instances and individual cases, which counteracts some of the worst abuses of overgeneralization to which the macro-social sciences in particular are prone. Students of the social sciences need constant reminding that the world is what it is today not because of the unaccountable actions of abstract social forces, but because of the actions and interactions of specific human actors, both individual and collective.

From this vantage point, social, economic and political history represent basic, constitutive disciplines underlying any adequate understanding of nonprofit management, leadership and policy. It is the on-going history of unfolding day-to-day practice that shapes and forms the context within which nongovernmental organizations are formed and develop. Recasting these mundane events of daily life into abstract models and the discrete research findings of the other management sciences may be necessary or inevitable, but it is also a little bit like dehydrating meats and vegetables. The essence may still be there and easily reconstituted at least by the skilled and knowledgeable, but things really only take on their full, zesty meaning when set within a proper historical setting. As such, this paper is one preliminary step in the larger process of sorting out the historical record on Hull House, and the lessons to be gained from this unique social institution.

The Hull Household

In the earliest years, Hull House was quite literally, a household only gradually taking on the less intimate aspect of a philanthropic establishment or what today is often characterized as a "social service agency". A household, in this sense, consists fundamentally of a group of persons living together in a single residence. In organizational essentials, the early Hull House may not have been all that different from the large Edwardian households of Fifth Avenue in New York, the Back Bay in Boston, Euclid Avenue in Cleveland, or the Gold Coast in Chicago. In its very earliest days, Hull House was the residence of two unmarried young women and their housekeeper. As the idea grew and spread, they were eventually joined by an assortment of additional "social settlers" – young women and men dedicated to an experiment in group living, democratic action and, broadly speaking, social service.

It is largely because of these household qualities that the early Hull House residents went to great pains to distinguish themselves from what they deemed to be quite different "institutions" of charity (e.g., almshouses, public hospitals and workhouses). Reigning above all at Hull House as it grew and expanded its program of services in several novel directions was the grand dame of the house, Ms. Addams. Her role was a mixture of founder, patron, intellectual guru, movement leader, media celebrity and sometime social pariah seeking refuge among her familiars. At all times, however, until her death in 1935 Hull House was Miss Addams and vice versa.

It is, in fact, relatively easy to develop a case for Jane Addams as a charismatic personality in the terms set forth by Max Weber's notion of charismatic authority. Such a case, however, would be mostly a distraction in a paper devoted principally to the Hull House board. Instead, I rely primarily on the indigenous notion of charisma that informed many in the historical settlement house movement. In its fundamentals, this was a notion of great or superior personalities inspired by the writings, for example, of the English

essayist Thomas Carlyle. In her time, Ms. Addams was widely regarded as just such a personality.

Hull House, like its prototype Toynbee House in London was built largely on the personal charisma (or “superior personality”) of its founder. For information on the formation of Toynbee House and its impact on the American settlement House movement in general, see (Vincent & Plant, 1984). The charismatic form of settlement house organization carried with it its own Carlylean conception of method that also points to one of the central vulnerabilities of the settlement house movement, according to Carson (1992, 196). Arnold Toynbee (not the historian of the same name) was a young Cambridge University man for whom the original English settlement house was named, but the real charismatic personality of Toynbee House, as Vincent and Plant (1984) point out, was the British idealist philosopher T.H. Green, who inspired the East London settlers – most of them Cambridge University students or recent graduates – under the leadership of Canon Samuel Barnett, his wife and a handful of others.

In speaking of Addams, Albert Kennedy claimed in 1936 that the settlement idea was “above all a method”. (Carson, 1992, 195) It appears to have been what might be termed the method of charisma to which he referred. “We have preferred to trust in the hunches of a certain number of admittedly superior and unusual minds such as Jane Addams and Robert Woods. The settlement movement, more than any other technique I can think of, has been one of action by superior personalities.” (Carson, 1992, 195-196)

Although it has seldom, if ever, been commented on in the third sector literature, this “method of charisma” has a number of systematic implications for third sector establishments and the institutions of civil society. Not the least of these is a significantly limited and circumscribed leadership role well short of genuine governance for a board of directors. In most cases, the authority of a nonprofit, nongovernmental or voluntary organization to organize, to engage in social criticism, and to act is grounded in models of democratic representation. In this view, the board is acting for or on behalf of a membership, constituency or community. In the case of charismatic establishments like Hull House during the era of Addams’ leadership, an altogether different process unfolds. The role as anchor of institutional legitimacy is carried instead by what Kennedy called “the great personality” of the charismatic leader.

Hull House during the life of Jane Addams thus offers an exceptionally clear case study of the role of a board of directors in a legally conventional but organizationally distinctive philanthropic institution under such charismatic leadership. It began as a large household, was not strictly speaking a nonprofit, strived not to become “an institution” in the residents’ terms and in most respects conformed to an essentially charismatic mode of organization.

Almost immediately upon Addams' death in 1935, Hull House began a major transformation into a more recognizable civil society institution. An important part of that transformation was a series of major changes in the size, role and mission of the board.

Why Establish a Board At All?

The conventional wisdom of nonprofit practice (in fact, a “best practice”), derived largely from observation of non-charismatic organizations, is roughly thus: *In establishing a nonprofit organization, first create a board of directors or governors. They will define the mission and hire a professional staff to act as their agents in creating an organization and establishing a program.* This model, to greater or lesser degrees, is enshrined in legal codes, tax policy, third sector practice and the conventional wisdom of management consultants and teachers world-wide. To the extent that there are departures from this conventional wisdom, they are usually clearly delimited as such. The universal function of boards in such civil society organizations is usually captured by the phrase governance and oversight.²

At Hull House, things actually worked in reverse. Jane Addams' account in *My Twenty Years at Hull House* of how she and her associate Ellen Gates Starr tells of how they located the "charming little brick farmhouse" on South Halsted Street and set up housekeeping there among their new neighbors. Her account makes no mention at all of either creation of a board of directors or the incorporation of the largely fictitious Hull House Association that occurred six years later. The seeming insignificance for Addams of creation of the board and incorporation of the Hull House Association give rise to the impression that such actions were mere technicalities of little real importance to the principals involved. The also raise the question of why, after six years without a board, was one created at all?

According to Farra, pre-1930's settlement houses in New York City were organized on three bases: as limited corporations, as membership organizations or as auxiliaries of other organizations (Farra, 1934, 486). A more contemporaneous account published during Addams tenure and not at its very end says that the general practice of settlements on the question of incorporation was mixed. Some were and others weren't legally incorporated. (Holden, 1922, 205). Hull House began with two friends living together with their housekeeper and evolved into a purely informal group gathered together in Ms. Addams' household. Hull House made the transitions to something resembling a conventional formal organization and corporation only after several years of operation. Addams and Starr opened Hull House in October, 1889, but the Hull House Association was not incorporated until

² I speak with some authority here, having served for a decade as editor of *Nonprofit Management and Leadership*, the first, and still the leading academic journal on the subject of nonprofit governance.

nearly six years later on March 30, 1895. Thus, for the first five and a half of Addams' 44 years at Hull House, it appears to have the legal status of an unincorporated association and the social structure of a small group.

Likewise, the settlement was apparently without a formal mission for that same period. One of the standard responsibilities of a board of directors, as noted above, is defining an organizational mission. The mission for which the Hull House Association and a formal board were created was set forth apparently for the first time in the 1895 Articles of Incorporation. "To provide a center for a higher civic and social life, to initiate and maintain educational and philanthropic enterprises and to investigate and improve the conditions in the industrial districts of Chicago." This statement clearly reflects the influence of Addams' Toynbee Hall experience on her view of Hull House, and to the existing program of the social settlement. It is doubtful that many others associated with the enterprise had had the same opportunity to visit London and observe "the higher civic and social life" in the years before 1895.

No indication is given in the incorporation documents or contemporaneous minutes why Addams, et. al. chose to incorporate and create a formal board of directors at that particular time. Nothing particular about the last days of March in 1895 stands out in the larger historical record, for example, which might give us a clue in this regard. One possible reason for creating a board earlier might have been for purposes of fundraising. As Carson says, "Though Addams and Starr had enough money to open Hull House, thanks to Jane's inheritance, they strenuously sought the goodwill of philanthropic agencies and influential individuals, particularly important if they were to succeed in drawing the fellow workers they desired: society's cherished daughters" (Carson, 54-55). Without any institutional support, Addams and Starr "laid a ... groundwork of support by working with Chicago philanthropists, churches, and socialites for eight months before moving into the old Hull mansion on lower Halsted street in September, 1889" (Carson, 54). Carson fails to note that such fund raising practices among the elite women of Chicago also continued long after they moved in. But, by 1895, their early formal fund raising was already well established and more systematic efforts did not appear until later. In particular, Hull House had to change a number of its management practices after 1910 in response to its growing involvement in the Chicago federated funding system.

The most plausible explanation for incorporation in 1895 is that Addams already had some commitments for gifts of property, and planning was already underway for the construction of buildings that were to be erected in the next few years. Incorporation was probably recommended as a prudent and necessary legal action in anticipation of these developments. One of the reasons to believe this may be the case is simple precedent. Toynbee Hall in London, on which Hull House was modeled, had been incorporated as a joint-

stock company (for-profit corporation) prior to construction of a new residence building in 1884.

At any rate, shortly after incorporation of the Hull House Association, board member Helen Culver made the first of several gifts of property to the association that was, in fact, an association limited to the board members for the rest of Addams' lifetime. Although Ms. Culver could easily have given the properties directly to Addams (many other such gifts of money and tangible assets from her and others are evident), she or more likely her attorneys may have encouraged incorporation as a prudent legal step to facilitate the transfer. Thus, it appears that the Hull House board was originally created as a property management committee.

Another possible reason might be that *Hull House Maps and Papers*, a collection of descriptive writings on the neighborhood, was published in 1895 under the collective authorship of "Hull House residents". There may have been concern about assuring that royalties would flow to Hull House and incorporation may have been encouraged as a legal solution to that problem as well. In this case, the result is the same: The Hull House board would serve to manage collective properties, in this case, royalties.

Whether or not these were the actual reasons for incorporating, it is certainly clear that a board of trustees for Hull House was created in 1895 only to facilitate the incorporation. Even the mission of Hull House seems to have been articulated solely for purposes of facilitating the incorporation. There is no reason to believe that incorporation, board creation or the mission statement had anything whatever to do with the usual governance and oversight arguments advanced in nonprofit law or scholarship. All three were most likely set forth as purely legalistic acts necessary to carry out the transfer of property to some collective recipient. I have been able to uncover no evidence of a perceived governance, legitimacy or mission gap such as might be predicted from the conventional third sector wisdom. Charismatic authority was performing its role, but some adaptations to the Lockean individualistic assumptions of the American legal system was needed.

It is interesting to note that the state of Illinois at the time had no nonprofit corporation statute or separate nonprofit incorporation procedures or forms. The original incorporation certificate in the Jane Addams papers at the University of Illinois, Chicago shows what appears to be an ordinary business incorporation certificate on which the word "Directors" is scratched out in two places and the word "Trustee" handwritten over it. The original of this incorporation certificate is in the Hull House Association archives at the University of Illinois-Chicago. Consistent with this, there are a number of entries in the journals which support the preliminary conclusion that Hull House was not tax exempt in this early period, and paid a variety of state and local taxes. Whatever particular meanings "nonprofit" was to take on in the

American context appear to have evolved sometime after the incorporation of Hull House.

A Self-Perpetuating Board of Long Duration

It has long been known that the Hull House board was very stable and self-perpetuating. Holden remarked on it in a book on the settlement movement published in 1922. The original incorporators of the Hull House Association were three of the original seven members of the board: Jane Addams, Mary H. Wilmarth and Allen B. Pond. When speaking to the board of the Armour mission in Chicago, Addams met the young architect Allen Pond, who assured her that she had ‘*voiced* something hundreds of young people in the city were trying to express.’ (Carson, 55) Their association turned out to be a life-long one.

Given the usual citations of Ms. Addams and Ellen Gates Starr as co-founders of Hull House, it is interesting that there is no mention of Ms. Starr in the incorporation of the Hull House Association. Her name never appears among the incorporators or directors, and it is found only once in the minutes of the association at any time up to 1935, the year Addams died. She is not listed as an attendee at any board meetings, and after her departure from Hull House, she was apparently never consulted on any of matters to come before the board. In fact, to call Starr a co-founder, while the housekeeper who also moved in with them originally is never mentioned strikes one as a rather peculiar anomaly. Both the friend and the housekeeper were mostly parties in the Addams retinue.

Starr left Hull House after only a few years and is seldom mentioned again. After a long absence from Hull House, Starr may have been adversely affected by the Great Depression. At any rate, during the 1930's the Hull House Association board sought to work out an adequate financial settlement for her. The Hull House Board first granted her a pension of \$50/mo from a \$1,000 gift, then accepted bonds from her with par value of \$3,000 in exchange for increasing her pension to \$75/mo. Given the year, the bonds may have been entirely worthless at the moment.

From all indications, the necessary oversight and governance of the Hull House operation were, from the very beginnings under the personal control of Miss Addams, and why not? It was her idea, she was responsible for raising much of the money including a good deal of her own and influencing her friends and acquaintances to participate as Allen Pond noted. Under such conditions of legitimate individual, charismatic control, there was simply no need to create a governing board for any of the conventional reasons. When a board was created, after several years of successful operation without one, it appears not to have been a major event in the life of the settlement house,

but rather a simple legal transaction, akin perhaps to signing a lease or mortgage.

The Hull House Board

And what a unique board it was! Settlements generally were operated by independent boards of trustees or directors whose members were expected to serve fixed terms. (Ferra, 1934, 487) Hull House was administered by a seven member, self-perpetuating board. (Holden, 1922, 205) Not only was this the case, four of the original seven members of the original board, including Ms. Addams and architect Allen Pond served life-terms on the board.

Yet, in many ways, it was a very limited board. Strictly speaking, the Hull House board never performed anything approach an oversight function with all of Hull House or its programs during Addams' lifetime. Rather, it was the board of that largely fictitious entity called the "Hull House Association", a seeming membership organization separate and distinct from all the other various clubs, groups and associations operating out of the settlement and whose only members were the trustees themselves. This is an essential point in understanding one coherent rationale for the long tenure of most board members. It is also understandable as a strategy to preclude losing control over properties and endowment funds donated in large part by these same board members. Given the several periods of controversy that swept over Hull House, such action must have seemed to the trustees entirely prudent and protective both of Addams personally and of the Hull House institution. It also offers a primary example, however, of what later nonprofit lawyers and tax officials mean by "self-dealing" and "arms length" relationships.

Above all else, the Hull House Association board of directors during Jane Addams' lifetime was characterized by small size and long-term stability. Indeed, the Hull House board during the life of Jane Addams may have been the very archetype of a self-perpetuating board. Ms Addams maintained dual control as Head Resident and President of the Board until her death in 1935, During the first ten years, 1895-1905, Addams was also Treasurer of the corporation. Another of the incorporators Allen B. Pond, at times a Hull House resident, remained as Secretary of the Corporation from its creation until his death in 1929.

Table I shows the membership of the board during and immediately following Jane Addams' entire 40-year career at Hull House. There were only 19 members of the Hull House board in the 40 years from 1895-1935. The average term of office for the 17 board members appointed before Jan. 1, 1935 was 16.4 years.

Table I
Board Members of the Hull House Association
During the Life of Jane Addams

Name	Apted	Term	Yrs	Reason
Jane Addams	1895	1935	40	Died
Edward Butler	1895	1912	17	Replaced (Term Expired)
Helen Culver	1895	1920	25	Resigned
W.H. Colvin	1895	1897	2	Died
Allen Pond	1895	1929	34	Died
Mary R. Smith	1895	1934	39	Died
Mary Wilmarth	1895	1907	12	Resigned
John Dewey	1897	1903	6	Resigned
Louise deK Bowen	1903			
Charles L. Hutchinson	1908	1924	16	Died
Julius Rosenwald	1912	1931(?)	19	Died
Charles Hull Ewing	1920			
Sewell L. Avery	1926	1936	10	Resigned
Mrs. Wm. McCormick Blair	1929			
Harrison A. Dobbs	1932			
Ms. Dorothy North Haskins	1934	1935	1	Resigned
William H. Regnery	1934			
Grace Abbott	1935			
Henry P. Chandler	1935			
Amelia Sears	1936			
James Britton	1936			
Rosecrans Baldwin	1936			

Service on the Hull House Board was frequently a life-time commitment. Four of the original seven board members served until their deaths, and six of 10 board members who died before 1935 died while serving on the board. There were also no extended vacancies on the Hull House board in the first 29 years. Board members who died or left were immediately replaced. This record was broken after the death of C.L. Hutchinson in 1924, when the board failed on several successive meetings to name a replacement. It was nearly two years later, in October, 1926 that Sewell Avery was elected as a replacement. By the 1930's, there were signs that the original model of charismatic authority was breaking down. Ms. Addams was in her sixties and diagnosed with cancer and must already have been playing a lesser public role overall. Jane Addams finally submitted her resignation as Head Resident in 1934 because of ill health. Also in 1934, William H. Regnery was added as an eighth trustee and the board was looking for a ninth member, in accord with an amendment of the by laws adopted in 1929 but never implemented, allowing for up to nine trustees. Addams must have been the glue that held things together in this surprising manner. At any rate, by early 1936, shortly after Addams' death the board was expanded to 10, but there were five vacancies at one point. Within a few years, in the early 1940's the board was reorganized and eventually blossomed to more than 40 members.

The transition from founders is tough in any third sector establishment, but the transition from a charismatic founder appears to be particularly difficult. In the case of Hull House, it resulted in a period of indecision and uncertainty for the board, since there was no longer anyone to sustain the authority, legitimacy and governance it had never provided. The board tabled Addams' resignation when it first came up, despite the fact that she was quite ill. Mrs. Bowen, who had long been the largest financial contributor and the only Treasurer other than Addams, refused to accept the office of President after Jane Addams' death in 1935. So the Board appointed her Acting President. The minutes are unclear whether this was out of respect for Addams, the only prior holder of the office, or a sign of collapsing authority and board conflict. Bowen was named President again in 1936 and resigned, but the board refused to accept her resignation.

It would appear that the primary role of the board of Hull House Association was to actually provide for management of the affairs of the corporation, but not for the organization as a whole.

Board Meetings

Under its 1895 by-laws, the Hull House board was expected to meet quarterly. They did so when a quorum could be achieved, which was roughly

three-quarters of the time. Table II shows the dates of all official board meetings held between incorporation of the association in 1895 and Ms. Addams' death in 1935. During that period, there were 161 quarters for board meetings from incorporation in April, 1895 to Addams' death in May, 1935. In 43 of those quarters (26.7%) the minutes indicate that a board meeting was postponed or cancelled because of lack of a quorum. In 15 (9.3%) of those quarters, an unsuccessful meeting was followed with a meeting at which a quorum was achieved. In another 22 quarters (13.6%) minutes indicate either that no business was conducted or no minutes exist. The official business of Hull House Association was conducted in the remaining 98 regular (61.1%) quarterly meetings and the 15 recalled meetings.

The eminent philosopher John Dewey was added to the board for a three year term on April 13, 1897 to replace William H. Colvin, one of the original incorporators, who had died in office. In 1900, Dewey was re-appointed to a seven-year term, although he appears to have missed all of the board meetings held during his second term. Although settlement house and social work folklore has it that Dewey was President of the Board for a time, and that Dewey's colleague at the University of Chicago George Herbert Mead was also a member of the board, both of these assertions appear to be false. Mead's name does show up as a \$100 contributor on a 1910 list of donors. But he was never among the board members of Hull House. He was, however, an active board member of the University Settlement in Chicago. After a record marked mostly by his non-participation, Dewey resigned from the Hull House Association board in 1903 when he moved from Chicago to Columbia University in New York City.

Table 2
Hull House Association Board Meetings
1895-1935

n.m. = no minutes

n.q = no quorum

n.b. = no business

adj. = adjourned to a later date

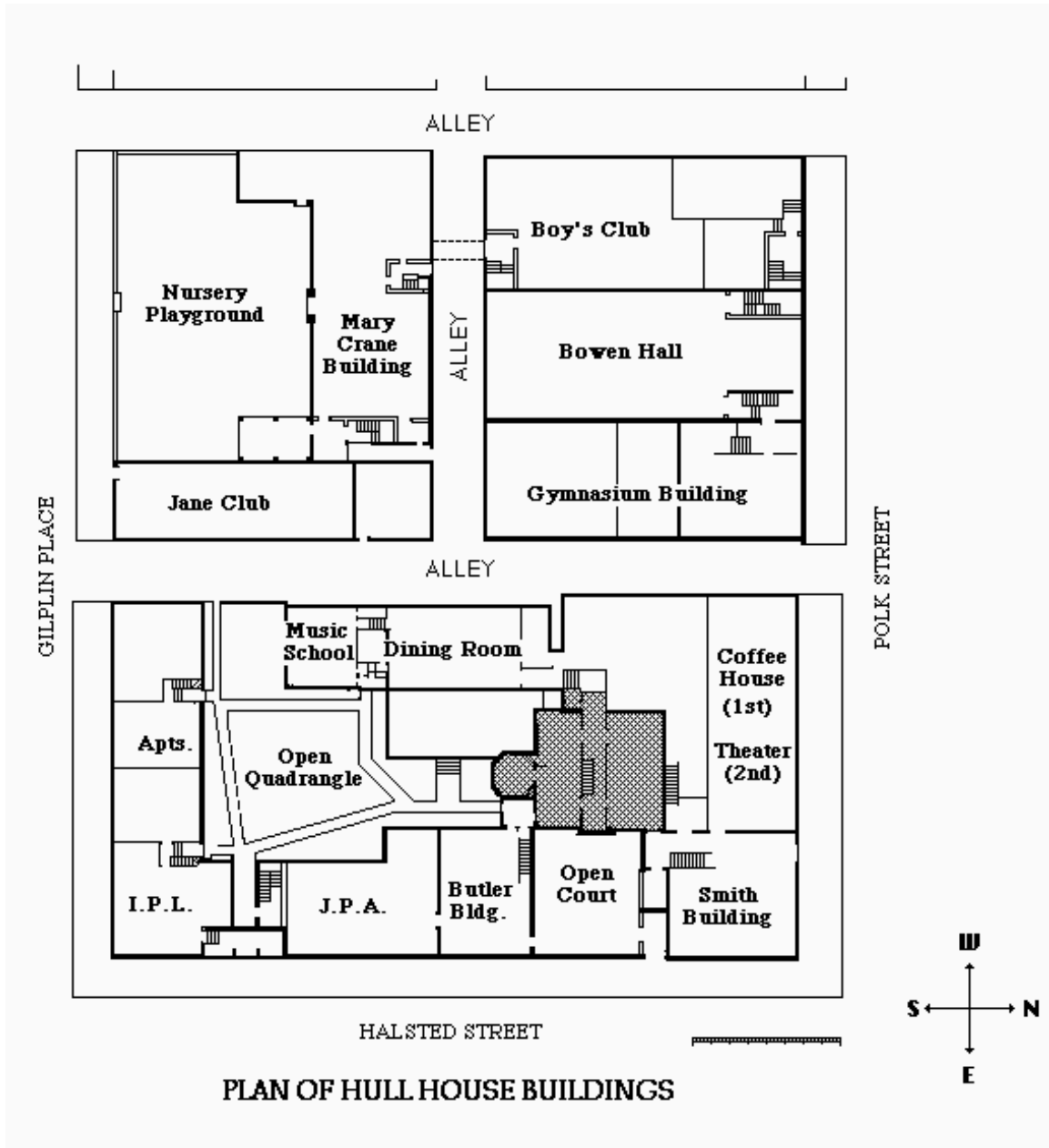
Year	January	April	July	October
1895		4	n.m.	7
1896	6	5/n.m.	n.m.	n.m.
1897	n.m.	5	7/n.b.	5/n.b.
1898	n.q.	5	n.m.	n.m.
1899	n.q.	5	3(n.q.)	4
1900	6	4	n.q.	6
1901	5/n.b.	n.q.	4	6
1902	(3)n.q.	4	n.m.	4
1903	4	4	4	5
1904	4	4	4	5
1905	6	4	4	4
1906	n.m.	n.m.	4	5
1907	5	6	n.q.	5
1908	6	4	n.q.	5
1909	5	4	4	n.q./6
1910	n.q.	n.q.	5	5
1911	n.q./6	5	n.q.	7
1912	5	4	n.q./n.q.	5
1913	4	n.q.	n.m.	5
1914	4	6	6	n.q.
1915	5	4	4	4
1916	4	5	n.q.	5
1917	n.m.	5	n.q.	4
1918	4	n.q.	4	4
1919	4	6	n.q.	6
1920	n.q.	5	6	5
1921	5	4	5	n.m.
1922	5	6	n.q.	5
1923	n.q.	n.q.	n.q.	6

1924	n.m.	6	n.q.	n.m.
1925	4	4	n.m.	5
1926	n.m.	4	n.q.	4
1927	n.q./4	5	n.m.	n.m.
1928	n.m.	6	n.q.	7/6
1929	n.q./3	4	5	n.q./4
1930	n.q.	n.q./5	n.q.	n.q./4
1931	n.q./4	n.m.	n.m.	n.q./5
1932	n.q.	5	n.q.	5
1933	n.q./5	n.q./4	5	n.q./5
1934	n.q./3	n.q./4	n.q.	n.q./5
1935	5	3(2)		
Success	19	29	14	26
Followup Success.	6	3	0	6

Board Size and Turnover

Hull House departed in several major ways from conventional third sector practice with respect to both board size and turnover. For Addams' entire career, the board was no larger than 7 members and those board members customarily served until their deaths. The seven members of the original board of Trustees were (listed in alphabetical order): Jane Addams, William H. Colvin, Helen Culver, Allen B. Pond, Mary Roset-Smith, and Mary H. Wilmarth. In an article published in *Charities* during the 1930's, Ms. Addams referred to this original board as composed of club women and business men. (Jane Addams Papers, Reel 50) Ms. Culver was the niece (and heir) of C.J. Hull. She had inherited the house and 40 acres of land from her uncle. Pond, secretary of the association for 34 years prior to his death, was an architect and partner (with his brother) in the firm of Pond and Pond. The Pond brothers designed many of the buildings constructed at Hull House and may have been responsible for the overall campus plan as well (see Figure 1). Both he and his brother were long-time supporters of Hull House, and residents there for an indefinite period of time.

Figure 1
Hull House Site Plan



Hull House Association By-Laws

There is no evidence that the 1895 Articles of Incorporation of the Hull House Association were augmented by formal operating rules or by-laws at any time prior to the 1940's. The 1944 By-Laws appear to follow established practices in many ways. For example, regular monthly meetings were called for, except in June, July and August. Board minutes suggest that the original board size of seven trustees was continued until 1944, when an increased board of 25 Trustees were authorized. In 1949, this was revised again to 35, with a quorum consisting of one-third of the Trustees. It is interesting to speculate on whether these were both belated attempts to compensate for an authority vacuum left by Addams' death, or merely responses to the conventional wisdom about boards at the time. In truth, there is really no way to tell.

At any rate, the 1944 By Laws appear to formalize the Hull House Association as a membership organization. They call for three classes of members: Trustees, Associate Members and Contributing Members. Trustees "...constituting the Board of Trustees, charged with responsibility for management of the Association and control of its programs and assets". Only Trustees have voting rights. Associate Members included residents and other active supporters registered as Hull House Associates. The third class of members was Contributing Members.

The Absence of Policy and Oversight

One of the standard roles assigned to third sector boards which grows directly out of their role in mission definition is responsibility for policy development and oversight. What was the role of a typical settlement house board during the Addams' years? One might expect that Hull House board might conform to typical expectations, given Addams' role as a leader in the settlement movement. Yet, this is not the case. "Upon the board devolves the responsibility of paying the bills and maintaining the staff of professional residents along with the diversified activities." (Holden, 1922, 98)

Holden further summarized board duties as follows:

To assign rooms, to apportion and collect house rents, to regulate interclub affairs and the relation of the House with other neighborhood Houses--to undertake and encourage improvements in the neighborhood, to establish a court in the house, to make house rules, to suspend or expel any club, to grant or take away the privileges from any club. (Holden, 1922, 102)

There is scant evidence that the Hull House board ever performed any of these roles. Instead, it appears to have been simply one of many groups operating within the Hull House institutional umbrella. While others addressed concerns of program, house relationships, community relations and other matters, the board concentrated primarily on managing the Hull House properties and the growing endowment fund. Upon whom did these other (and particularly nonprofit management, leadership and governance) responsibilities fall at Hull House?

It would be tempting to say that Miss Addams did it, but the truth lies elsewhere. Particularly in her mature years, Ms. Addams traveled a great deal and maintained a heavy speaking schedule. Therefore, it would appear likely that although she was the acknowledged "leader", a great many others must have carried the day-to-day burdens of the actual management of the Hull House organization. But upon whom the day-to-day management, leadership and governance responsibilities fell is presently difficult to say. Most existing accounts take a *deus ex machina* approach to the matter. Even while she was in London, Copenhagen, Los Angeles, Budapest, Boston and points beyond, Ms. Addams is usually credited with keeping her firm hand on the Hull House tiller, and when problems arose, solutions followed shortly. Despite a considerable archival record, the day-to-day operations of 16th century Catalonian charities and French asylums have been more carefully reported on than the administrative operations of Hull House. (Brodman, 1998; Friedlander, 1962) Most likely, they were individuals (including both paid staff and volunteers) whom Ms. Addams respected and trusted, and who were thus covered by the protective shield of her personal authority. One social welfare historian notes, ""When you look at her enormous correspondence, its clear others must have authored some of it and signed her name." (John Herrick, personal correspondence, August 10, 2000.) What is most important here is that they were almost certainly acting on behalf of Ms. Addams and not agents of the board with explicit portfolios of responsibilities, task charges or job descriptions, as the nonprofit legal model would have it.

It would appear, further, that the Hull House Board played little or no role in financial oversight for much of Addams' career there. This is the impression gained from reading the minutes, which make little mention of budgets or financial reports. As nearly as I can determine, the financial records of Hull House were not audited at any time prior to 1912, when the offer was accepted from the Safeguard Account Company, 159 LaSalle St. "to perfect our bookkeeping system, free of cost". After this, a Mr. Martin was said to have installed a new ledger. Martin also pronounced the voucher system installed the previous year "precisely what was necessary."

The unnamed auditor also reports turning over to Safeguard "the report by Mr. Pond on the inventory of buildings and grounds and his future reports

on costs in this connection will be at his request incorporated in the new books at the House." Despite the weaknesses in bookkeeping, the formal audit by Safeguard, covering the period from January 1 to April 1, 1912 proved to be pretty routine. It concluded that the petty cash fund balanced at \$200, and that bank balances were off by 10 cents and should be adjusted. It noted also that the trial balance did not agree with the control account, that the Schedule of Unpaid Bills did not agree with the balance in Accounts Payable and noted a couple of specific errors in Accounts Payable. Another audit for the period from April 1 to July 1, 1912 noted that the Trial Balance and Schedule of unpaid Bills did not agree again, and that an error of one cent had been made by the bank. (Hull House Association Papers, Folder 97) Once started, however, the practice of financial audits apparently continued. In 1914, the firm of Arthur Young took over the auditing and continued at least through 1925 when this series of records ends.

No Budgets?

It is probably not an exaggeration to say that Hull House was operated with no precise knowledge of its financial condition during Jane Addams' entire tenure there. No annual budgets, balance sheets, statements of income and expenditures or other annual summary financial or budget statements survive. For many years after the founding, it seems quite likely that this is because none were ever prepared.

Even when statements were prepared and distributed, they may have been handed fairly casually. This is certainly not uncommon among third sector organizations even today! Quarterly financial statements are referred to at various points in the minutes of the Hull House Association board, but none were included with the official minutes, and none of these appear to have survived in the archival record. There are no mentions of annual or quarterly budgets in the minutes prior to the early 1930's.

The absence of an annual budget would seem particularly noteworthy since, from the start, Hull House has been thought of as a largely donative organization. Yet an examination of donations for a single year (1910) shows this to be something of a misunderstanding. Donations made up roughly 20% of the reported total revenues that year. Donations to Hull House were received year round, with the largest totals coming in December and January. Donations were also received at all amounts, with the smallest \$1 and the largest over \$15,000. However, the eight largest donations made up nearly 2/3 of total donations. Three of the 8 largest donors were board members, and most other board members names appear among the donors list. The majority of the nearly 250 donors in 1910 were men (just over 50%) with roughly 40% women, 2% from couples and 8% from businesses. The three largest donors, and four of the top eight largest donors were women.

If donations only account for one fifth of the revenues, where did the rest of the money to run the settlement house come from? The general answer is that, contrary to the conventional stereotypes, Hull House was from a very early time an almost archetypal example of a multi-funded agency. In addition to donations, rents, revenue from a coffee shop started to compete with the saloons of the neighborhood, and even an electric generating plant made up the other 80%. This is a rather complex topic taken up elsewhere. (author)

In this, as in other areas, the Hull House Association Board and Hull House generally conform to few of the usual third sector agency stereotypes. Hull House was never funded primarily or exclusively by a single grant or donations. It was “non-profit” and “tax exempt” only in a figurative sense, often paying municipal and state taxes. It was truly a gift to the community (if the mission statement is believed, to the human community), but was not community governed in any sense. Instead, the gift was tightly controlled by a self-perpetuating elite board.

Further, there appears to have been a considerable amount of commingling of Ms. Addams’ personal and Hull House Association funds – always to the advantage of Hull House, it should be remembered. This is complicated by the fact that in available lists, Ms. Addams name does not appear among the list of donors. Yet, she must have been one of the largest donors through her consistent payment of the highest rent as well as donations of what must have been substantial sums of money from her inheritance, royalties, speaking fees and other sources of income. This may explain frequent discrepancies between reported revenues and (always much larger) expenditures in many surviving Hull House financial reports.

Finally, there appears to have been no provision at all in the Hull House bookkeeping system for recording “in-kind” contributions of board members or others, whether the extensive architectural services of Allen Pond or the assorted luminaries who appeared as guest speakers. On the other hand, all board members appear to have been expected to contribute in some form and most did so, even if some sometimes did so grudgingly. (Louise DeKoven Bowen, Julius Rosenwald and others raised periodic complaints along these lines.)

A Blurry Division of Labor

There was at Hull House no clear distinction of administrative and governance roles. Indeed, the very logic of the social settlement dictated against the kind of division of labor that characterizes an “agency” model. Instead, we see the rhetoric of “settlement”, “neighbors”, “residents”, etc. We also see Addams in the early years as simultaneously principal administrator (Head Resident), Board President and Treasurer. What we don't see is the

kind of grumbling that such an accumulation of offices and powers would ordinarily generate. The reason for such quiescence is most likely to be either that others were intimidated into silence by Addams, or more likely that they were simply in awe of her and her peculiar abilities and accomplishments. After Addams' death, Elizabeth DeKoven Bowen, the only other person to serve as Treasurer during Addams' lifetime and the single largest recorded donor to Hull House attempted the same feat as President and Treasurer. The result, as reflected in the minutes, is uncertainty, inconsistency and a rare note of acrimony in the board minutes. With the charismatic Addams out of the picture, a more normal division of labor was in order.

A Lack of Controversy?

With the prevailing practice of a Board of Directors who were expected to raise funds and one or more Resident Councils who were expected to advise on program matters, it is more than likely that conflict occasionally arose over who hired staff. Generally, under the law, the board would have the upper hand. However, in at least one case, the constitution of the House Council of the Hudson Guild of New York gave it the power to "impeach" the Headworker by a 2/3 vote, although there is no mention of this power ever having been exercised. (Holden, 1922)

There is no evidence of the Hull House board as a body ever interfering in day to day operations. There are also no signs -- even for an expert reader of minutes -- of overt conflict among board members, or of unsuccessful attempts to overturn the board on any decision, or of dissatisfaction with Addams leadership. Of course it must be kept in mind that board minutes are never verbatim and often sanitized. Nonetheless the relative absence of discord or strife of any kind in the Hull House board minutes prior to 1935 is noteworthy. There is a reference to limits on purpose in the original lease that could be read to preclude the kinds of social action in which Hull House was routinely engaged. Yet, there is no evidence that board members ever formally sought to constrain or limit Addams or other staff members or residents. There is nothing in the minutes to suggest that this limitation was ever invoked, however.

The lack of controversy in board matters prior to Addams death and the apparent conflict after she died over the Presidency as well as a number of later controversies that are beyond the scope of this paper. They are almost certainly not due to the absence of controversy surrounding Ms. Addams or Hull House. Carson has this to say, for example, regarding Addam's participation in the Progressive Party Convention in 1912, "Characteristically, she had consulted some of the Hull House trustees about the propriety of her partisan stance before attending the convention. (Carson, 1992, 148) Even more traumatic may have been Addams' recurrent conflicts with city officials and saloon owners in the neighborhood. Or, the

involvement of Addams, Hull House and other progressives in the Red Scare of 1918, and the events surrounding Addams involvement with Emily Balch and others in the Women's Peace and Freedom Party. Yet, there is no sign of such concerns in the minutes of the Hull House Association.

In particular, the Board appears to have stayed loyal through all of Addams controversies during and after WWI (Davis & Bryan, 1969). This must have required some considerable dedication. Many settlements were similarly affected. "Graham Taylor reported in 1921 that the 'reaction and unrest' (of the past few years) had affected a few large subscriptions to Chicago Commons -- though he did not specify whether the donations were withheld on political grounds or simply dried up in the general economic dislocation." (Carson, 1992, 164)

She goes on to note that "The settlement worker who suffered the most sustained and varied campaign of abuse was, not surprisingly, the one who had come to symbolize the settlement spirit to the American people in the postwar period -- Jane Addams." (Carson, 1992, 164) What conversations among board members may have occurred outside the precincts of the board will mostly never be known. Given the circumscribed role of the Hull House board as property and assets manager, however, there would have been no reason to bring these controversies to the board meeting. Nor would there have been any reason to record passing, or occasional comments that may have been made in that context.

Conclusions

Jane Addams remains a figure of great importance to world philanthropy, and the Hull House settlement that she founded on South Halsted Street in Chicago is similarly unique in the annals of the third sector. During her lifetime, Hull House appears to have existed under a regime describable as charismatic authority with Ms. Addams functioning as the principal authority figure. This pattern, which did not long survive her death of cancer in 1935, had a number of major implications for the board of directors of the Hull House Association.

No true governing board in any conventional sense existed during Addams' lifetime tenure at Hull House. Rather, a board was created in the fifth year after the founding of Hull House, for the seemingly legal-technical reason of facilitating a transfer of property from the owner of the Hull House mansion and several adjoining lots to the settlement house. Although that board was vested, in the normal manner of American law, with articles of incorporation and bylaws which included a full, indeed, rather grandiose, mission statement, the board of the Hull House Association never took on a real governing function for the settlement house. Such a governance function was not assumed by the board until the 1940's, several years after Ms.

Addams death, at which time it was accompanied by several major increases in size.

During Addams' career, the board (which was also the membership) of the Hull House Association, remained small, with little turnover and members, including Addams, often served until death. According to the minutes, the board exercised little if any policy oversight of the programs of Hull House, and the oversight of financial affairs was apparently not coordinated by a budget or the presentation of regular financial statements until very late in Addams' life.

There was, in conventional terms, no clear division of labor between board members and their agents with a high degree of what current American tax law fashions as self-dealing and lack of "arms length relations". It must be noted again, that there is nothing in the Hull House record either to suggest that such dealings were self-serving to the financial interests of Addams or any of the other principals involved. In fact, in Addams case it was notably the opposite. There was substantial commingling of her personal funds (including income from inherited properties, royalties, speaking fees and the like) with settlement house funds. But there is no evidence that this was anything but to the advantage of Hull House, to which Addams gave both her life and her fortune.

Finally, there is a notable lack of controversy in the minutes of the Hull House Association. In part, this may be due to the style of minute taking. This may also have been due to Addams' status as a celebrated international figure and a wish on the part of the others involved to protect her from injury to her reputation.

Taken all together, these findings point to the conclusion that the Hull House board, during the lifetime of the charismatic leader Jane Addams departed in important ways from the ideal type of third sector governance and leadership by a board of directors. Yet, the settlement house they ostensibly in the eyes of American law governed functioned effectively, even thrived, over a period of more than 40 years. Yet in the end, the most telling criticism of this model of charismatic authority and its implications for board behavior is the series of crises in governance that beset the settlement house after Ms. Addams' death in 1935. But that is a topic for another paper.

So, what conclusions can we draw from the example of the Board of the Hull House Association? It is certainly not my intent to suggest that charismatic authority represents an alternative model to the conventional model of third sector boards. Charisma is simply too gossamer and unreliable as a social force for that.

It is important, however, to note for the record that early 20th century third sector practitioners in the settlement house movement thought the "method of charisma" important enough to incorporate into their thinking

and their practice. It is important also that Hull House under Jane Addams appears to constitute a major case of the implementation of this method (there were others). Further, the Hull House case clearly shows that the method of charisma had a very clear and systematic impact on the role of the board of directors at Hull House. In instances where a single leader is willing and able to successfully shoulder the obligations and challenges of the method, it offers a very clear alternative to more conventional models of board governance. The principal weaknesses of the method of charisma, based on the Hull House case, appear to be two:

- 1) It places great – many would argue too much – reliance on the personal integrity of the charismatic leader, and personal integrity is too unreliable. In our own cynical age, many would prefer to believe that Jane Addams must have "used" Hull House to enhance her own reputation, or her own financial gain (but apparently just wasn't very good at it!) Moreover, it is impractical to construct law and management methods on such a seemingly shaky foundation.
- 2) Not even charismatics can expect to live beyond a normal human lifespan, and this raises the inevitable prospect of a crisis of leadership succession with the passing of the charismatic leader. The circumstances here may not be as dire as they are sometimes portrayed, however. The question the Hull House case raises is whether it will ever be humanly possible to do much better with organizations than a 44-year record of success, followed by a period of crisis and eventually by an additional 45-year career as a dramatically different organization. "Hull House" still exists in Chicago today, although the institution and board I've described in this paper can literally be said to have been supplanted by a successor of the same name sometime after the death of Jane Addams.

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