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Florence Kelley and the Anti-Sweatshop Campaign of 1892–1893

Joan Waugh

On July 1, 1893, Illinois Governor John Altgeld signed the state's first factory inspection law. It was designed to regulate working conditions in Chicago's garment industry sweatshops. A key provision of the law limited the work day to eight hours for women and children, and set fourteen as the minimum age at which children could be employed in industrial work. This "anti-sweatshop" law, which one historian has called an important prelude to the widespread state labor protection movement in the early twentieth century, was passed through the efforts of a coalition of women's groups and labor organizations led by Hull House resident Florence Kelley.[1]

The role of Kelley in social welfare reform has been generally acknowledged. United States Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter, for example, referred to Kelley as the "woman who had probably the largest single share in shaping the social history of the United States during the first thirty years of this century."[2] Historian Allen F. Davis has shown how Florence Kelley and other settlement house workers, especially those associated with Hull House, were in the vanguard of the professionalization of social welfare. Kelley's current biographer, Kathryn Kish Sklar, also has stressed Kelley's impact on social reform:

> [T]he single most important historical significance of Kelley's life was her contribution to the passage of state and federal labor legislation and

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> social welfare legislation, which made her one of the most important creators of the social welfare state in the United States.[3]

Florence Kelley and Hull House reformers, along with other progressives, thus played a crucial role in changing the "relation of public to private power [and] of the government to the economy."[4]

Historians have portrayed the 1892 anti-sweatshop campaign as indispensable to the early development of social welfare legislation.[5] Lynn Gordon has stressed the importance of the coalition of middle class and socialist women's groups in the passage of factory legislation. Meridith Tax has argued that socialist groups were more crucial in determining the success of the campaign. Yet historians have not examined sufficiently the day-to-day political strategy women reformers used. A closer look at the politics of Florence Kelley and Hull House women in the anti-sweatshop campaign confirms Gordon's coalition thesis and shows how these women united upper, middle, and working class support for factory legislation through tireless research, speechmaking, and lobbying. Only such a widely-based union could command the response of public officials who were not inclined to favor the notion of state intervention. These women overcame legislative reluctance through an effective combination of research, publicity, public pressure, and coalition politics.

The anti-sweatshop campaign stressed two key issues: the desirability of protection for women and children in an industrializing society, and the danger to public health posed by production of garments in "disease-ridden" sweatshops. The publicity engendered by these issues helped create a favorable atmosphere for the state legislature to pass laws for the protection of citizens. It was the middle-class female reformers associated with the settlement house movement who especially stressed these issues. The anti-sweatshop campaign thus supports Marlene Wortman's contention that "[s]ocial activists of the day believed that women had a distinctly different social consciousness due to their domestic orientation and that women were an important force in determining the direction of urban reform."[6]

In part, this consciousness was reflected in the different paths that male and female progressives followed on the way to reform. Male progressives focused on the city as a business and cultural center, and their reforms were more likely to address political and business conditions. Female progressives looked at the city as a place where people lived and worked within a community, and their reforms focused on meeting the needs of the neighborhood and correcting social problems. Since women

reformers could not participate in or control the overt political and economic life of the country, they had to rely heavily on the tactics of "personal persuasion, stimulating guilt, exposé, and social survey to arouse public sentiment in favor of social causes.[7] In this way they left a deep imprint upon the public policy of the Progressive era, particularly in legislation dealing with women and children.[8]

A major concern of female settlement house workers was how to meet basic community needs, especially those of the family. From the beginning of the settlement house movement in the late 1880s, it was painfully clear to the residents that neither they nor traditional charities alone could cope with the massive housing, health, education, and employment problems of the immigrant-filled cities. They felt that governmental regulatory powers would have to be expanded to help ameliorate the conditions created by a capitalist economic order.

The state governments of the early 1890s were the most obvious targets for expansion of government regulatory power as the resources of the cities proved inadequate. The federal government still clung tenaciously to a policy of laissez-faire.[9] Nowhere was this more clear than in industrial Chicago where the women of Hull House set the pace for the rest of the nation's settlement houses, and "served as initiators and organizers and helped to extend the social welfare function of government in the city, state and nation."[10] One resident in particular, Florence Kelley, helped to direct the energies of Hull House toward social reform.

Florence Kelley's arrival at Hull House in the winter of 1891 marked the beginning of a wider, more politically-charged influence for the young settlement house, which was founded by Jane Addams and Ellen Gates Starr in 1889. Davis asserts that Kelley, more than any other person, "was responsible for making Hull House a center for social reform, rather than a place to study art and hear lectures. . . ."[11] Divorced with three young children, Kelley had been active in socialist and labor causes for many years. Her major concern was the abolition of child labor, an interest that blossomed during her college days at Cornell University.

At Cornell, Kelley learned basic social research skills while working on her 1882 B.A. thesis, "On Some Changes in the Legal Status of the Child Since Blackstone." It was at the university in Zurich, Switzerland, however, that her sympathy for the plight of the working class led her to join the European Socialist movement and translate her academic interests into concrete actions. Kelley also met Friedrich Engels in Europe and initiated a correspondence with him that continued for many years.

Prior to coming to Chicago, Kelley resided in New York City with her husband and children. There she worked as a member of the New York Socialist Labor Party. During her years with the party she published her translation of Engel's *The Condition of the Working Class in England in 1844*, and wrote and published a pamphlet entitled "Our Toiling Children."

Personal as well as professional considerations dictated Florence Kelley's decision to go to Chicago. She wanted a divorce from her husband which was easier to obtain under Illinois law than in New York or her home state of Pennsylvania. Furthermore, she became involved in some political infighting with the New York Labor Socialist Party that resulted in her ouster from that organization. Friends apprised of her move suggested that she contact Jane Addams of Hull House to discuss their mutual interests. Kelley's expertise in social research and her deep interest in child and sweatshop labor reforms seemed to recommend her as a possible resident of the settlement house. Upon meeting, Kelley and Addams immediately started a friendship that was to last a lifetime.

The Hull House that Kelley entered in 1891 was becoming increasingly well-known, thanks to its brilliant and energetic administrator, Jane Addams. During the first two years of its existence, Hull House programs featured educational and cultural activities aimed at the neighborhood immigrant population. The purpose of these programs was to boost the process of "Americanization" and to provide alternatives in the lives of the poor. From these beginnings grew alliances with local labor interests. For example, Jane Addams heard about the activities of Mary Kenney, an organizer with the Chicago Trades and Labor Assembly, and invited her to use Hull House facilities for the social gatherings of female laborers. Out of the meetings came the organization of "Jane Clubs" which fostered close ties between working-class women and Hull House.

More important, however, was the connection that Jane Addams made between the squalor surrounding the settlement and the economic system that produced it:

> Our very first Christmas at Hull House, when we as yet knew nothing of child labor, a number of little girls refused the candy which was offered them as part of the Christmas good cheer, saying simply that they 'worked in a candy factory and could not bear the sight of it.' We discovered that for six weeks they had worked from seven in the morning until nine at nights, and they were exhausted as well as satiated. The sharp consciousness of stern economic conditions was thus

> thrust upon us in the midst of the season of good will.[12]

Besides candy factories, children and women were employed by the thousands in sweatshops operated by garment industry manufacturers. Jane Addams realized, as did many other reformers, that irreparable harm might come to American society and its foundation of stability, the family, if this exploitation continued unabated.[13] Hence a crucial turning point for Hull House came when Addams began to take an interest in changing the conditions of capitalist society.

Much later, Jane Addams would portray the settlement house as having had a vital role as "middleman" between labor, capital, and government in helping to blunt the sharp and dangerous economic distinctions that characterized late nineteenth century America: "Hence the duty of the settlement in keeping the [labor] movement from becoming in any sense a class warfare is clear."[14] In 1891, however, the future role of Hull House was still uncertain, and that is where Florence Kelley made a great contribution.

Not long after Kelley's arrival, Jane Addams wrote, she "galvanized us all into more intelligent interest in the industrial conditions all around us." Edith Abbott, another early resident, put it more bluntly when she said: "The method of social progress in which Florence Kelley believed almost devoutly was that of direct assault."[15] Despite her more radical stance, however, Kelley shared with Addams and the other residents a staunchly middle-class background.[16] The benefits of working in Hull House, such as having a respectable institutional base to rely on and a warm and supportive working climate, clearly outweighed any misgivings she might have as a socialist sympathizer. Already a trained social investigator and dedicated activist, Florence Kelley began in December 1891 the work that would lay the foundation for both her own illustrious career and for Hull House's international reputation as a center for social research.

The interest in alleviating sweatshop conditions did not begin with Hull House or with Kelley's arrival in Chicago. It had its roots in the labor unrest of the 1870s and 1880s. Chicago was the national center of agitation for the eight-hour day, agitation which led to the famous Haymarket riot of 1886. The riot directed the energies of a whole generation of reformers and labor leaders, including Henry Demarest Lloyd and Eugene Debs.

The riot also spurred the growth of new unions. In October 1888, Samuel Gompers, head of the American Federation of Labor, granted a charter to an occupationally

mixed women's union. Called the Ladies Federal Labor Union, it was organized by the female labor activists Elizabeth Morgan and Mary Kenney.[17] One of the union's main goals was to gather statistical information on women workers in order better to present their case to the public. Elizabeth Morgan recognized both the inadequacy of the union's resources to do this and the need to broaden their base of support. She decided to join forces with twenty Chicago women's clubs in 1888 to form the Illinois Woman's Alliance (IWA).

"From that point on," writes Meredith Tax, "the Ladies Federal Labor Union and the Alliance worked hand in hand, one concentrating on labor organization, the other on those community issues . . . that most affected women and children."[18] Florence Kelley was familiar with the work of the Illinois Woman's Alliance and contacted them immediately upon moving into Hull House. The members of the IWA proved to be enthusiastic and able allies with Hull House in the upcoming campaign against sweatshop labor.

Beginning in the late 1880s, the press and the public also showed a growing interest in the exploitation of women and children in the workplace. The *Chicago Times* published a series of investigative articles in the summer of 1888 called "Slave Girls of Chicago."[19] These articles created a furor in the city and contributed to the formation of the IWA. Soon publications of a less lurid nature came from the labor movement itself. Elizabeth Morgan worked closely with her husband, socialist labor leader Thomas J. Morgan, to prepare a twenty-four page pamphlet entitled "The New Slavery: Investigation into the Sweating System as applied to the Manufacture of Wearing Apparel."[20] Published under the auspices of the Chicago Trades and Labor Assembly in 1891, this pamphlet stirred sufficient excitement to arouse Congress to authorize an investigation of the nation's sweating dens in early 1892.[21]

It is clear that conditions were ripe, and perhaps had been for several years, for a concerted effort to regulate the sweatshops and improve working conditions for women and children. Lynn Gordon writes that "as early as the 1870s organized labor, business leaders and the press worried publicly about child labor but they failed to form an effective coalition."[22] It was precisely the ability of Kelley and the Hull House residents to form coalitions that made their participation in the campaign so vital a turning point in the anti-sweatshop movement.

Evidence of their ability abounded. Jane Addams had an impeccable social background as did her co-founder, Ellen Gates Starr. Together they attracted many

prominent Chicago society women to Hull House activities. They persuaded these women to join in common causes with working-class labor leaders like Mary Kenney, Alzina Stevens, and Elizabeth Morgan. Florence Kelley's close ties to labor interests further cemented the alliance of Hull House with labor. Hull House also attracted a variety of supporters among the "social gospel" ministers of the city, as well as many reform-minded academics that were in Chicago at the time. Florence Kelley herself was the daughter of the well-known Pennsylvanian Congressman William Kelley. This together with connections made through her education, travel, and political experiences gained her easy access to the highest circles of Progressive reformers. She counted among her good friends the economist Richard Ely and the famous Chicago reformer Henry Demarest Lloyd. Kelley's children stayed with the Lloyds while she settled into her Hull House routine. Lloyd, who was also a warm supporter of Jane Addams, was one of the earliest to lend his formidable support to the anti-sweatshop campaign.

Social research, however, laid the foundation for the Hull House anti-sweatshop campaign. Before any remedial legislation could be recommended, Kelley and others compiled statistical information on sweatshop abuses and made it intelligible to the public and the legislature. In January 1892, Florence Kelley met with Henry Demarest Lloyd and told him of her plans to investigate the sweating dens around Hull House. He then recommended Kelley's assistance to the U.S. Congressional Committee's "Special Investigation of the Slums of Great Cities."[23] The committee gave Kelley charge of the report to come out of Chicago.

Kelley immediately began writing down evidence of the deplorable conditions under which people worked in the tenement houses and factories near Hull House. Kelley and her assistant, Alzina Stevens, whom she had met through Mary Kenney, were especially impressed with the great number of women and children engaged in homework for the garment manufacturers, and were horrified to see that "children are found in greatest number where the conditions of labor are the most dangerous to life and health."[24]

During the investigation, two members of the U.S. Congressional Committee, Senator Hoar of Massachusetts and Senator Warner of New York, traveled around the country investigating slum conditions. Their arrival in Chicago on April 5th, wrote Kelley in a letter to Friedrich Engels, sparked a "fever heat of interest" in the movement to clean out the sweating dens.[25] This rising concern was enhanced by sweatshop tours for the committee members led by Florence Kelley and Elizabeth Morgan. In addition, their testimony before the

committee brought national press attention to Chicago's slum problems.[26] The publicity prompted the state of Illinois to set up a special committee of its own to investigate sweatshops in Chicago. Aware of her investigative work on behalf of the federal government, the members of the committee invited Florence Kelley to testify at their hearings in Springfield.

Florence Kelley was not one to let golden opportunities pass her by, and her involvement with the state's legislative committee soon provided her with a unique platform from which to lobby for the factory bill. In May of 1892 she suggested to the Illinois Bureau of Labor Statistics that they hire her as a "Special Agent" to conduct a formal investigation of sweatshops. The bureau readily accepted her offer and, along with Alzina Stevens and Elizabeth Morgan, she undertook a mammoth investigation of the sweatshops. The techniques used in gathering the information included not only shop visitation, but a house-to-house canvass of the tenements to determine whether or not sweatshop conditions prevailed. The findings of these federal and state investigations were later published in *Hull House Maps and Papers* (1895), and were considered to be "the first systematic and detailed attempt to describe the immigrant communities of an American city."[27] It was, and is, a landmark publication in the area of social research. Kelley reached the apex of her career as a social investigator for Hull House in July of 1892 when Carroll D. Wright, the Federal Commissioner of Labor, asked her to take part in a national survey of city slums.[28]

Social research, however vital, was only one part of the anti-sweatshop campaign. The most immediate and urgent task was to publish the results in the hopes of prodding the state legislators into recommending a factory inspection law. To this end, Florence Kelley worked hard throughout the spring and summer of 1892 to gain support from the leaders of the community. The clergy were among the most willing to lend their support to this cause. On May 8, 1892, Jenkin Lloyd Jones, a prominent Chicago minister announced the alliance of the clergy with the anti-sweatshop forces led by Kelley, Hull House, and the Chicago Trades Assembly. This alliance provided Kelley with an expanded forum for her speechmaking. In June she spoke to sixty-four Congregational ministers about the horrors she encountered in her investigative work.[29]

Unfortunately, not all elements of the community received the campaign as well as the clergy. In one instance, Kelley's usually persuasive arguments fell on deaf ears when she tried to convince a powerful manufacturing magnate of the benefits of remedial legislation: "I had a two hours interview with Marshall Field a week

ago. He says he cannot deprive worthy widows of the chance of working at home with their children."[30] This type of attitude on the part of manufacturers prompted Kelley to write "the manufacturers disclaim all moral responsibility to the unfortunate victims, as they disclaim all responsibility to the purchasing public for disease carried in garments made in the sweaters' victims' infectious homes."[31] By portraying the manufacturers as callous and indifferent to *both* the workers and the public, Kelley effectively combined what were to be the two major issues of the campaign, the protection of the laborers and consumers alike.

The faltering economy also provided some steam for the anti-sweatshop campaign. In the summer of 1892, Chicago began to feel disturbing signs of the devastating depression that followed a year later. The campaign for governor reflected the political repercussions of this general uneasiness. John Peter Altgeld had recently won the Democratic primary on a reform ticket. The anti-sweatshop campaigners welcomed this news since Altgeld was running on a platform of legislative and labor reform, including the abolition of the sweatshops and the eight-hour day. The fall election campaign thus quickened the pace of the anti-sweatshop drive. The reformers held an important rally at Bricklayers Hall for which Florence Kelley, Henry Demarest Lloyd, and the Reverend Jenkin Lloyd Jones were the principal speakers. All three called upon the candidates for governor to support the anti-sweatshop legislation. Resolutions were drawn up, and a committee was appointed to begin mobilizing support for a bill.

What caught the press's attention from the rally, however, was what they headlined as "Mrs. Kelley's Sensational Statement."[32] In her first important public appearance, Kelley drew upon her research experiences to give color and meaning to her speechmaking activities. She began her talk by relating what had been said to her by a chief officer of the Chicago Sanitary Department, whose office had been negligent in pursuing sweatshop violations: "We never do anything except when public opinion says we must . . . [and] public opinion is not forcing us to the inspection of these so-called 'sweating dens.'"[33] Kelley then compared Chicago's sweatshops with those she saw in New York and London and found them all equal in their "hideousness." She tied the lack of educational facilities and enforcement to the high rate of children under fourteen who were working and reiterated her belief that the public should give its utmost attention to the problem of child labor and the sweating system.

Kelley drew attention to sweatshop conditions once more at a meeting of the Secular Union.[34] The first part

of her speech detailed her visits to between six and seven hundred sweatshops and revealed the plight of the young girls between the ages of thirteen and sixteen who worked in the shops. In the second part, however, Kelley talked about the danger the sweatshops posed to the public's health. Typhoid, scarlet fever, and pneumonia were three serious diseases that were communicable through clothing. Kelley said that city policemen wore clothing made in filthy sweatshops. Only strict laws that abolished the sweating system would remedy the danger.

In November 1892 Altgeld was elected governor, and after the inauguration he appointed Florence Kelley Investigator of Child Labor for the Bureau of Labor Statistics. That same month, the general assembly of the legislature appointed a joint special committee of the Senate and House to make a comprehensive survey of the sweatshops. The committee also accepted the invitation of Florence Kelley and Mary Kenney to take them on an inspection tour of the sweatshops in February.

By this time Kelley's tours of the sweatshops had become obligatory for governmental officials or committee members interested in labor problems. The tour usually commenced at Hull House and then spread out through the slum district for one square mile around the settlement. Kelley's specially conducted excursions served two important functions: they made sure that the public officials did their homework, and they provided an occasion for publicity that was conveniently channeled into the anti-sweatshop campaign.

A report by the *Chicago Tribune* of the February 1893 tour shows how Kelley took advantage of this opportunity for publicity:

> In the rear of a fine brownstone . . . the committee found a typical "sweat shop." Amid the whir and din of a gas engine and twenty sewing machines twenty girls and four men were found at work in a room 20 x 36 feet. Several of the girls were apparently not 13 years old, but when asked their ages they replied that they were much older. . . . The sanitary arrangements were poor and the odor of the place was foul.[35]

Once in the sweatshop, the committee took testimony from employers, employees, and doctors in order to determine the health conditions. Kelley later presented to the general assembly's commission on the employment of women and children in factories a concise report based both on these tours and previous research.[36]

While the state lawmakers debated whether or not to recommend legislation, Hull House and the Chicago Trades and Labor Assembly sponsored a rally to generate publicity in favor of introducing a factory bill. Held on February 19, 1893 at the Central Music Hall, the rally included representatives from labor, clergy, reformers, academics, and women's clubs. The main speakers were Henry Demarest Lloyd, Florence Kelley, and Mary Kenney. On the stage behind the speakers a grim display of "infected" cloaks and shirts taken from various sweatshops reminded the listeners of the ever-present dangers of unregulated sweating labor.

As expected, the press directed considerable attention to the rally, which almost one thousand people attended. The next day, the *Chicago Herald* reported that:

> Hundreds of men and women of Chicago never knew until yesterday afternoon the exact meaning of the term "sweat shop." But it is certain that the large audience at Central Music Hall . . . went home with a feeling of mingled horror and shame over the fact that such things as sweaters shops existed in the world's fair city.[37]

Another newspaper account stated,

> Judges, ministers, lawyers, progressive women and laboring men gathered to hear what Miss Addams, Mrs. Florence Kelley and the speakers they might select had to say of dens where human lives and clothing are both ground out in defiance of humanity and hygiene.[38]

The crowd gave an enthusiastic hearing to the speeches and provided their endorsement to resolutions calling for the end of sweatshops on both a national and state level.

One of the major purposes of the rally was the appointment of a committee to go to Springfield to present a list of demands to the general assembly. Besides the advocation of tenement house legislation and the legal protection of women and children in the garment industry, the list included the right for all workers to receive a living wage and the general philosophical statement that society had an obligation to prevent industry from harming the public welfare. Lloyd, Kelley, Addams, and Starr headed the committee, which also included many prominent clergymen, society women, and labor leaders.[39] Jane Addams recalled insisting that "well-known Chicago women should accompany this first group of settlement folk who with trades-unionists moved upon the state capital in behalf of factory legislation."[40] The committee showed an impressive array of broad-based support for the passage of a bill.

In March 1893 the committee published its report on sweatshops and recommended a factory inspection bill.[41] Thus the final phase of the anti-sweatshop campaign could begin. The reformers still had to overcome formidable opposition. The Illinois Manufacturer's Association, which had been surprisingly quiescent, began to oppose actively the legislative committee's factory bill. Governor Altgeld warned the Chicago reformers that if they wanted the bill passed, the public and the leaders of the community would have to provide even more support.[42]

The anti-sweatshop campaigners quickly heeded Altgeld's warning. They regrouped the forces previously engaged in the campaign for the final thrust. The new organizational structure consisted of Hull House, the Illinois Woman's Alliance, and the Chicago Trades and Labor Assembly. Together they formed a powerful lobby that held public gatherings, wrote and gave speeches, and sent delegations to Springfield. Jane Addams provided some insight into those hectic months:

> Before the passage of the law could be secured, it was necessary to appeal to all elements of the community, and a little group of us addressed the open meetings of trade-unions and of benefit societies, church organizations and social clubs literally every evening for three months.[43]

One large meeting drew 2500 people to listen to Florence Kelley, Senator Hoar, Thomas and Elizabeth Morgan, and Henry Demarest Lloyd expound on the evils of the sweating system.[44]

Not only did Florence Kelley engage in speechmaking and lobbying activities, she wrote her mother that

> I have not been ill, but hardworked and distracted as never before in my life. First Mr. Carroll D. Wright's right hand man came to see why we did not get on faster, and he had scarcely left when the left hand man, so to speak, arrived and is here yet. . . .[45]

In the closing months of the campaign Florence Kelley continued to stress the twin evils of disease and exploitation. The indefatigable Kelley was at her best when addressing middle-class civic organizations such as the Channing Club or the Chicago Question Club.[46] It was on numerous occasions like these that she made her case for both the protection of women and children workers and the health of the public while she condemned the manufacturers whose human product was "an army of toiling children, undersized, rachitic, deformed, predisposed to consumption. . . ."[47] These children, Kelley warned, would become a burden on society, "lifelong victims of the

poverty of their childhood," and would inevitably harm the rest of the community. Her arguments were powerful and continued to gain acceptance with both the public and the legislators.[48]

The lobbying trips continued unabated during these spring and early summer months. A big boost came when Hull House members and Henry Demarest Lloyd persuaded Clarence Darrow, Chicago's brilliant and well-respected corporation counsel, to join them in testifying in Springfield.[49] Finally, on July 1, 1893, after a year and a half of intensive effort, the state legislature passed the State Factory Inspection Bill of 1893 and Governor Altgeld signed it into law. The vote was amazingly lopsided: 108 to 6 in the House and 40 to 0 in the Senate.

The new law provided for a state factory inspection department with an annual budget of $12,000. The head of the department was to appoint a staff of twelve whose duties would include the investigation of any health or labor violations in the sweatshops and the compilation and presentation of yearly progress reports to the legislature. Governor Altgeld first offered the post of chief factory inspector to Henry Demarest Lloyd, who rejected it and instead suggested the appointment of Florence Kelley, the most obvious candidate. Kelley accepted the position and immediately appointed Mary Kenney and Alzina Stevens to her staff. The campaign was finally over, and the more difficult and unexciting work of enforcement was about to begin.

In retrospect, the anti-sweatshop campaign of 1892-1893 encompassed the first three of the four stages generally associated with Hull House in its promotion of social legislation: investigation, publicity, legislation, and enforcement.[50] This was the first time the "process" was utilized, and its success marked the beginning of a refinement of its use which would allow a generation of Hull House reformers to record "accomplishments that had never before been achieved by any group of American women or achieved since."[51]

There was, however, an additional reason for the success of this first Hull House campaign. Meredith Tax writes that "although the Chicago labor movement had been agitating for an eight-hour day for many years . . . it had not envisioned that it was to come about through state legislation."[52] Most of labor had assumed that change would come about through strikes or even revolution. But these more "radical" tactics were eschewed by the women of Hull House, who clearly favored the English model of social legislation. They firmly believed that remedial laws could accomplish many of the goals that labor unions desired, and without the violence and class

divisions engendered by strikes.

By pursuing remedial legislation, Florence Kelley and Hull House reformers were forced to turn to different elements in the community to gain the widespread support they would need to convince the Illinois legislature of the urgency to control sweatshop labor. Thus, at every step of the campaign the reformers made divergent and sometimes conflicting appeals in the cause of coalition politics. The appeals made to middle-class groups focused primarily on the danger to public health, while the appeals to labor audiences concentrated on the inhumanity of the manufacturers.

The constant interweaving of health, labor, and general humanitarian concerns ultimately succeeded in accommodating a wide range of interests in the anti-sweatshop campaign of 1892-93. While the initial concerns and much of the groundwork for the anti-sweatshop movement came from labor unions, it was Florence Kelley and Hull House reformers who brought together the broad-based support needed to wed social welfare concerns with a nascent but growing political base.

NOTES

The author wishes to thank Professor Kathryn Kish Sklar for her guidance and criticism.

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7. Ibid., p. 34-35; quote from p. 35.
8. Sklar, "Florence Kelley: Resources and Achievements," pp. 9-10.
9. Keller, *Affairs of State*, p. 4.
10. Davis, *Spearheads for Reform*, p. 6.
11. Ibid., p. 224.
12. Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull House*, p. 148.
13. Jane Addams, *My Friend, Julia Lathrop* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1935), p. 116.

14. Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull House*, p. 202.
15. Addams, *My Friend, Julia Lathrop*, p. 116.
16. Sklar, "Florence Kelley: Resources and Achievements," pp. 10-17.
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42. Destler, *Henry Demarest Lloyd*, pp. 255-256.
43. Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull House*, p. 150.
44. Tax, *The Rising of the Women*, p. 83.
45. Florence Kelley to Caroline Kelley, May 27, 1893, Florence Kelley Papers, Hull House Archives, Chicago.
46. Unidentified clipping in Hull House Scrapbook.
47. Florence Kelley, "Wage-Earning Children," in *Hull House Maps and Papers*, p. 61.
48. Ibid.
49. Destler, *Henry Demarest Lloyd*, p. 256.
50. Sklar, "Florence Kelley: Resources and Achievements," p. 2.
51. Ginger, *Altgeld's America*, p. 133.
52. Tax, *The Rising of the Women*, p. 82. It should be noted here that Meredith Tax, contrary to the argument expressed in this paper, asserts that "while the contributions of settlement workers and reformers to the struggle for protective legislation were extremely important . . . the fact that they, rather than labor leaders, wrote books had tended to leave the impression that they were the only ones involved." p. 130.