Historical Context and Art Programs at Hull-House

Intent

This diagram aims to show the impact of historical eras and movements on Hull-House art programs. Hull-House was closely linked to several eras and movements, such as:

- Woman's Club and Settlement Movement
- Second Industrial Revolution
- The Rise of Communist Ideologies in Europe
- Mexican Muralist Movement
- The Great Depression

Grounding Hull-House programs within a larger global context enables the audience to understand the relationship between the settlement and society, and how meaningful its programs were in their time.

How to read it

Historical Era or Movement

More information about era/ movement

xxxx

Historical event or organization

Within Hull-House

xxxx

Hull-House event or program

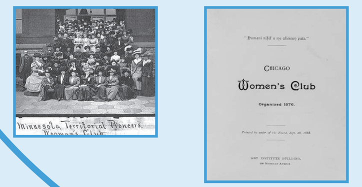
Photo or artifact

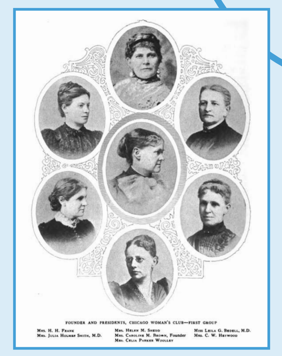
Work of art

1870 | 1880 | 1890 | 1900 | 1910 | 1920 | 1930 | 1940

1870s – 1920s
Woman's Club & Settlement Movements

These movements take root to provide access to education and social opportunities, evolving into a source of social reform and community involvement.





1876
Chicago Women's Club

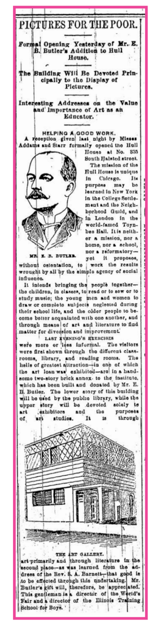
This notable club was established by women who believed it was their duty to make Chicago a safe and virtuous city as well as improve municipal conditions for women and children. Notable members included **Jane Addams** and **Julia Lathrop**.

1884
Toynbee Hall

Located in London, England, Toynbee Hall was the world's first social settlement house. **Jane Addams** and **Ellen Gates Starr** used this as the model for their own settlement house.

1880
Bohemian Art Club

One of Chicago's first art associations for women, this club provided a strong support system for serious female artists. Notable members included **Alice DeWolf Kellogg Tyler** and **Enella Benedict**. In 1888, the group's name was changed to the Palette Club.



PICTURES FOR THE POOR.

Formal Opening Yesterday of Mr. E. B. Butler's Addition to Hull House.

The Building Will Be Devoted Principally to the Display of Pictures.

Interesting Addresses on the Value and Importance of Art as an Educator.

1870s – 1920s
The Rise of Communist Ideologies in Europe

Communists believed that socialism could be achieved only through violent revolutions and totalitarian dictatorship. Communism focused on flattening capitalism's hierarchical structure to improve the overall lives of the working class proletariat instead of the bourgeoisie. The labor advocacy aspects made communist ideologies appealing and widespread beyond Russia.

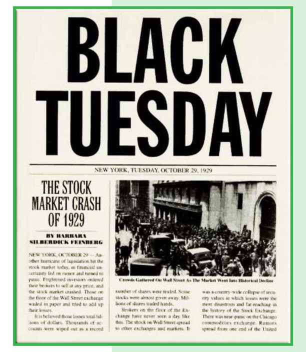
Structure of Capitalism

Bourgeoisie
The wealthy capitalist class who own the means of production and whose primary concern is the preservation of capital and their economic superiority in society.

Proletariat
The working class in a capitalist society who do not own any means of production and whose only significant value is their ability to sell their labor power for a wage.

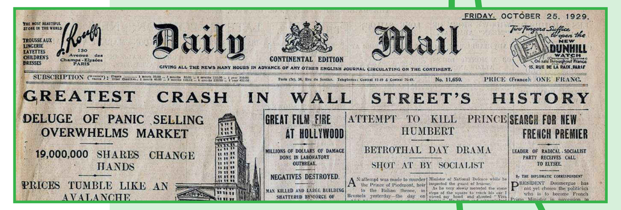
est. 1919
Communist Party USA

After splintering from the Socialist Party of America, this group was closely related to the US Labor Movement, to which **Morris Topchevsky** belonged.



1929 – 1939
The Great Depression in the United States

This begins with the Stock Market Crash of 1929, which is considered the most devastating crash in U.S. history to this day. The U.S. and rest of the world suffered devastating changes to commerce, personal incomes, and livelihoods.



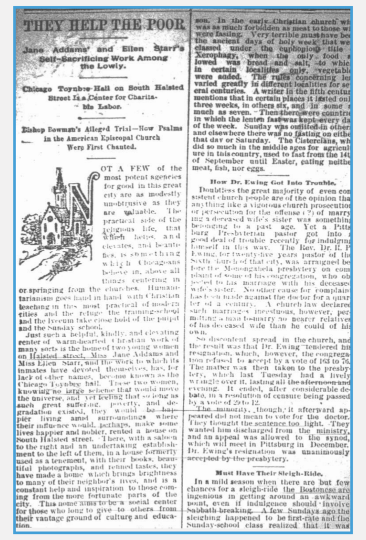
1934 – 1943
The New Deal

This series of federal programs includes public works projects, aimed at helping the country recover from the devastating economic impacts of the Depression.

Works Progressive Administration (WPA)
It was the largest and most ambitious New Deal agency that centered on public works projects.

Federal Art Project (FAP)
A WPA program that provided relief employment to artists in a wide range of media, such as mural painting, easel painting, sculpture, graphic art, posters, photography, theater scenic design, and arts and crafts. This is the first major show of government support for the visual arts in the United States.

Within Hull-House



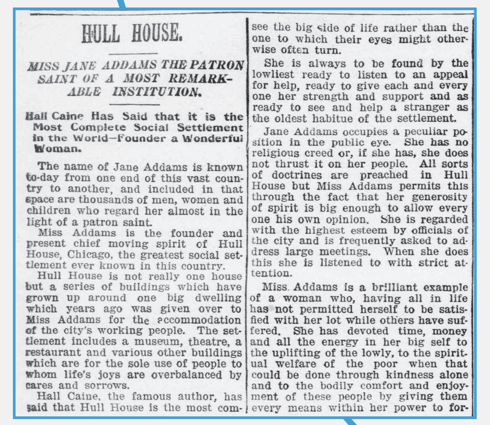
THEY HELP THE POOR.

Jane Addams' and Ellen Starr's Self-Sacrificing Work Among the Lowly.

Chicago Toynbee Hall on South Halsted Street Is a Center for Charitable Labor.

1908.

AMERICA'S FOREMOST WOMAN



HULL HOUSE.

MISS JANE ADDAMS THE PATRON SAINT OF A MOST REMARKABLE INSTITUTION.

Hall Caine Has Said that it is the Most Complete Social Settlement in the World—Founder a Wonderful Woman.

1889
HULL-HOUSE

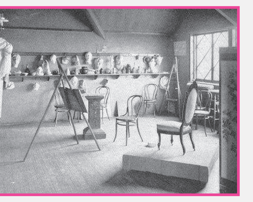
The settlement house is co-founded by **Jane Addams** and **Ellen Gates Starr** in Chicago, IL.

1891
BUTLER ART GALLERY

This gallery opens as the first new addition to the Hull-House settlement and was the first public art gallery in Chicago, IL.

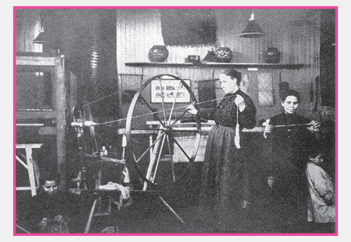
1892
HULL-HOUSE ART SCHOOL

The school is founded and directed by **Enella Benedict**. She remains the director for nearly 50 years.



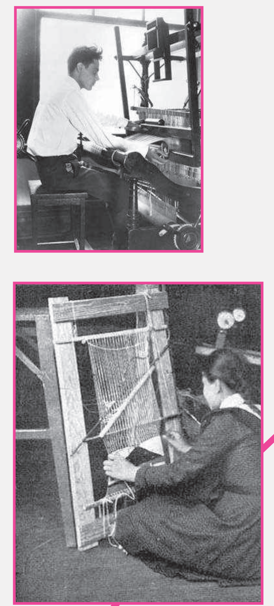
1895
CIRCULATING GALLERY

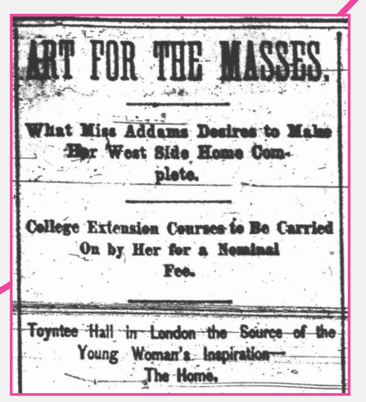
Ellen Gates Starr develops the gallery with the idea that members of the community could rent out pieces of artwork to display in their homes.



1900
HULL-HOUSE LABOR MUSEUM

This museum is established by **Jane Addams** and **Ellen Gates Starr** to showcase the craft knowledge of skilled immigrants and preserve and display a global range of pre-industrial craft traditions, such as pottery, printing, metallurgy, bookbinding, and woodworking.





ART FOR THE MASSES.

What Miss Addams Desires to Make Her West Side Home Complete.

College Extension Courses to Be Carried On by Her for a Nominal Fee.

Toynbee Hall in London the Source of the Young Woman's Inspiration—The Home.

1920s – 1940s
LABOR ADVOCACY AT HULL-HOUSE

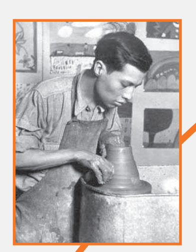
Inspired by communist ideologies about workers' rights, **Morris Topchevsky** and **Leon Garland** actively turn against art for art's sake, focusing rather on highlighting the struggles of the working class in the United States.

Streamlined Teapot
Michael Gamboney
1935

Blue Tray & Sugar
Myrtle Merritt French
1927-1937

Butterfly Vase
Camilo Fuentes
1927-1937

Floral Plate
Jesus Torres
1927-1937



1927
HULL-HOUSE KILNS

Co-founded by **Myrtle Merritt French** and **Hazel Johnson Hannell**, the Kilns offered migrants the facilities and training to create "Mexican" handicrafts and market them to the public.

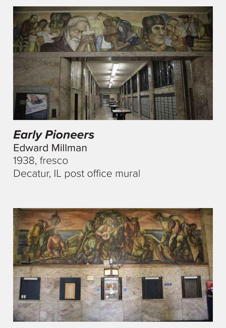
Lunch Hour
Morris Topchevsky
1935, watercolor on paper

Bargain Hunting
Morris Topchevsky
1935, Etching with aquatint

1937 – 1942
U.S. Post Office Murals

Edward Millman and **Mitchell Siporin** receive commissions from the Illinois Art Project, the Treasury Section of Painting and Sculpture, and the WPA for murals in the post offices of Moline, IL, Decatur, IL, and St. Louis, MO.

Ploughshare Manufacturing
Edward Millman
1937, egg tempera on gesso
Moline, IL post office mural



Early Pioneers
Edward Millman
1938, fresco
Decatur, IL post office mural

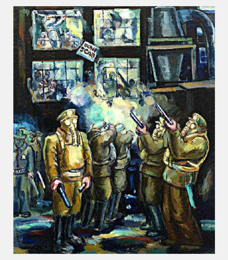
St. Louis Post Office Murals
Edward Millman and Mitchell Siporin
1942, fresco
St. Louis, MO post office mural

1935 – 1943
WPA-FAP AT HULL-HOUSE

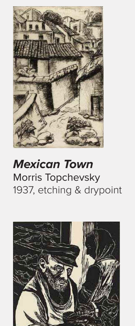
There was a high concentration of WPA-FAP artists who taught, resided at, or had some connection to Hull-House, including **Eleanor Jean Coen Kahn**, **Leon Garland**, and **Edward Millman**.

1930s – 1940s
FESTIVAL OF MEXICAN CULTURE

Each year, the Festival of Mexican Culture is held at Hull-House to celebrate Mexican traditions and exhibit Mexican arts and crafts.



Strike Breakers, Company Violence
Morris Topchevsky
1937, oil on canvas



Mexican Town
Morris Topchevsky
1937, etching & drypoint

Shoemaker
Edward Millman
1937, woodcut

To a New Life
Morris Topchevsky
1937, woodcut

Persecution
William Jacobs
1937, woodcut

1850s – 1914
Second Industrial Revolution in the United States

This period involved rapid industrial development in which "man-made" was replaced by "machine-made."

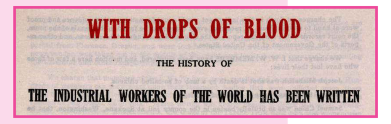
Pre-industrialization, highly skilled workers had control over their interactions with customers, and could charge for their craft. Advances in machinery took control away from individual workers and gave most of the power (and money) to companies.

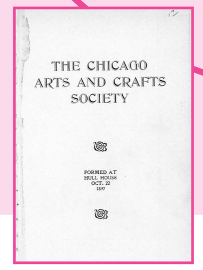
Pre-industrialization: individual customers → pay → skilled workers → sell individual goods → individual customers

Industrialization: mass consumers → pay → businesses → pay low wages → unskilled workers → make mass-produced goods using machines → businesses → sell → mass consumers

1887 – 1920s
The Arts & Crafts Movement

This movement begins in response to the influx of mass-produced goods during the Second Industrial Revolution. The movement advocated a return to the skilled craft labor that occurred before industrialization.





1897
The Chicago Arts & Crafts Society

Co-founded by **Ellen Gates Starr** and **George Mortimer Rendel Twose**.

1910 – 1920
Mexican Revolution

The failure of the 35-year long regime of Porfirio Díaz to establish presidential succession and the challenge of the outcome of the presidential election of 1910 leads to the struggle of the working class against oppression and agrarian and urban middle-class insurgence.

Travels in Mexico City

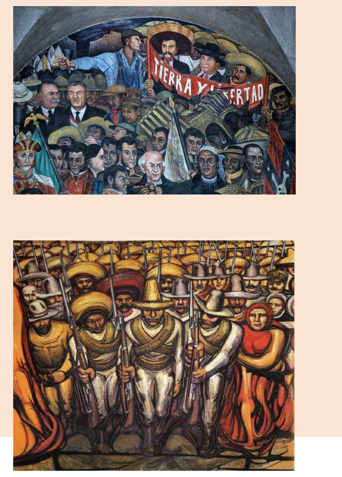
1924
Morris Topchevsky, **Jane Addams**, and **Emily Edwards** travel to Mexico City, where they are introduced to Mexican muralists Diego Rivera and José Clemente Orozco.

1934
Edward Millman travels to Mexico City to study with Mexican muralist Diego Rivera.

1941
Eleanor Jean Coen Kahn wins the James Nelson Raymond Traveling Fellowship from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, which she uses to go to Mexico City to study at the Taller Grafica Popular (People's Graphic Arts Workshop).

1920s – 1970s
Mexican Muralist Movement

This movement occurs in an effort to reunify Mexico following the Mexican Revolution through murals with social and political themes. With the revolution and the disorder that followed, artists (including Diego Rivera and José Clemente Orozco) strove to redefine what it meant to be a Mexican and who Mexico would become as a nation.



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