

Jane addams- biography

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The argument Addams makes that " educational matters are more democratic in their political than in their social aspect" (197), I believe she is referring to the long struggle between the teachers and the Chicago School Board. The Chicago School Board was politically corrupt. Many of the teachers and custodial engineers were friends of politicians who secured their positions in exchange for certain kickbacks. The school board maintained control over the school administration for many years.

During which they restricted the types of children that were able to attend the public schools and they restricted the amount of freedom and authority the teachers were able to use in their classrooms. On several different occasions the " Dunne" members of the board attempted to lower the restriction on the teachers side but were warned-off with tales of the politicians and the difficulties previous attempts encountered. Addams' describes the situation between the superintendent and the Teachers' Federation as " an epitome of the struggle between efficiency and democracy" (171).

She clearly understood both standpoints and why they both felt compelled to make their argument, although she does mention that they both " inevitably exaggerated the difficulties of the situation" (171). As a member of the school board, Addams tried to influence the Federation to make changes that would be in the best interest of the children, but after the legal struggle and following months of constant change, many of the important measure were withdrawn.

Although she did have an opportunity to debate these measures in a democratic way, they were dismissed because of (more or less) political reasons. Jane Addams' role for education in an effort to reform the city was to take the disruptive delinquents the public schools rejected and accept them unconditionally into the settlement. Give them the opportunity to learn domestic training and trade teachings. She felt that even people of lesser means were interested in the same topics as the "well-to-do" people of society.

She also thought that if you give a child encouragement and a sense of self-worth combined with an opportunity to become something in society that they would try to become productive. Hull-House offered educational opportunities for anyone who wanted to attend with no political or economic restrictions. Hull-House also offered the opportunity for recreation, such as supervised sports matches, which hundreds of youths seemed to prefer.

Jane Addams' makes an important statement that "The educational activities of a Settlement, as well as its philanthropic, civic, and social undertakings, are but differing manifestations of the attempt to socialize democracy, as is the very existence of the Settlement itself," (206). That illustrates her idea of education, which I believe is what she wanted for the public school system, but was unable to achieve while she was a member of the board.