



The ‘forgotten’ sociologist, Florence Kelley

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Abstract

Florence Kelley, whose theoretical and empirical activity played a central role in the development of social analysis, started promoting social research in the US in the early 1890s, with a critique of the capitalistic organisation of labour and the exploitation of children and women in the factories and sweatshops of Illinois. This research was also decisive in the contemporary development and use of qualitative and quantitative methods. Poverty, a central element in Kelley’s observations, was to her mind, the fruit of the total subordination to work of workers, their families and their communities. Her theoretical knowledge, based on her American studies, her pragmatism and the Hull-House women’s practice of democracy, was enriched by her history, economics and law studies in European universities and her relationship with the socialist tradition, with Marx and with Engels, whose *The Condition of the Working Class in England* she translated into English in 1887. The construction of an American sociological canon erased Kelley’s activity and that of many other women, authors of important research, excluded by a slew of anti-women behaviours and critical silences about their lack of scientificity. But *History is blotted out by a highly focused present* as Anselm Strauss is said to have stated (1993, p.256), a contradictory present in which the idea of a vocation on the part of women to transform research is becoming ever more central: *I am seeking an end to androcentrism, not to systematic inquiry* (Harding, 1986, p.10). Reflection on Florence Kelley’s personal journey re-opens debates and questions as to the reasons why in the last century, in the 1990s, there began a process of reappropriation of women’s contribution to the history of sociological thought and social research, which necessarily leads to their founding presence in training curricula and sociological tradition thus restoring contents, dignity and memory.

Keywords: *memory; history; pragmatism; poverty; mix methods.*

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1. Introduction

My the realisation that in our relationship with sociological tradition we now have a renewed and more mature level of analysis that increasingly questions the monosexual past of this approach. This reality proposes a network of elaborations and analyses that is already extending to various European countries a renewal, present in the United States for some time already, of the traditional studies that have become marginal over time, scarcely considered in terms of their scientific value and the time devoted to their study. It is a tradition within which any research into the founding role played by women in the evolution of sociology and the contemporary nature, methods, and content of developments in social analysis has long been further marginalised. The little prominence often given to this area of discussion and to the concrete studies that might result from it ends up acting as a disincentive for the entire field of study relating to the sociological tradition in general, and even more so for reflection on the presence of women in the history of sociology. The question is: who studies the history of sociological thought today?

Barbara Finlay, many years ago, also recalled that many sociologists have written on women, gender and sexuality, but these texts, quite apart from their actual content, quickly became of secondary importance, eventually losing all relevance (Finlay, 2007): these are reflections that tend to confirm Anne Oakley's claim that sociology is a profession conditioned by its origins and predominantly male-dominated (Oakley, 1982), to which two British feminist sociologists added "areas and topics of interest to women are often overlooked and even considered unimportant" (Abbott, Wallace, 1990: p.5). Thus it was that the origins of sociology in the United States feminised the topic of *social reform*, far from any scientific relevance and provocatively almost synonymous with rights and autonomy.

2. A forgotten pioneer on the brink of modernity

In the collective symbolism, the pioneer woman was Calamity Jane (Martha Jane Canary-Burke), who in the second half of the 19th century, in the imagination of many, and also in some subsequent cinematographic representations, took on male behaviour and language, becoming the prototype of a female presence that, in order to be relevant and recognised, eliminated the characteristics of her attractiveness, that is, of reaching out to others, and conformed to the male universe, thus becoming one of its protagonists. This is not the time nor the place to open up references to a series of studies that have shown the true central role of women, only apparently weak, in the daily life of that universe that was the expansion phase of the frontier in the far west (Pascocoe, 1990; Wagner, 2007), but *social pioneer* was the term used by Dorothy Blumemberg, Kelley's scholar and author of a biography of her, to indicate her avant-garde role on the cover of the text dedicated to her "Florence Kelley boldly challenged the conforming assumption, and laid bare the ugly industrial machinery that was grinding out poverty and all its attendant social ills. No cause was too unpopular if she believed in it, no situation too distasteful if she felt it could be aided by her presence. She spent her recklessly, and so she had an infinite amount to give" (Blumemberg, 1966: p.XII). Of course, Kelley was always able, like the pioneers, to move the boundary of situations 'further': 'beyond' was her rule for all action. Following on from the presentation that preceded me, which recalled the residents of Hull-House, the

Addams, and that incredible multiplier of analytical and reforming energies that, under the propulsion of Addams and Kelley were the Hull-House settlement and the women who ran it, I would like to recall, at the beginning of my presentation on Kelley, the '*forgetfulness*' of which she was the object, first of all, but not only, by Chicago sociologists. It took more than thirty years for Robert Park, at the end of the 1920s, to recognise the 1895 research and the other manifold investigative activities promoted and carried out by the Hull House, even though he reduced their great cognitive and methodological value to an all too superficial definition "were in the nature of an exploration and recognizance, laying the ground for the more systematic and detailed studies which followed" (Park, 1929: p.4).

This was an obvious show of indifference and a citation that was urgently pressing in the face of the great and continuous active work of the Hull-House and the investigations carried out by Florence Kelley, which led to the Hull-House Maps and Papers in her essay on the system of exploitation (Kelley, 1895), and in her other work of analysis of the exploitation of minors, carried out together with Alzina Stevens (Kelley, Stevens, 1895). And further dismay is due to the failure to refer to the maps contained therein, memory and present, tradition and future, drawn actually by Agnes Holbrook (Holbrook, 1895), who died prematurely at the age of 26, a year after they were written. In fact, it is as if Park had not even read that text, a prisoner of both chauvinist indifference and journalistic superficiality. And an almost similar number of years was needed for William Burgess, after his critical and chaotic assessment of urban research formulated in 1926: "the happy hunting ground" (Burgess, 1926, p.VIII), to express a very different, certainly more pondered, judgment in 1964 together with his historical student, Donald Bogue, recognising "The Department of Sociology studies were not the first field studies in Chicago. If you go back as far as 1895 in the Hull-House Papers, you will find urban studies. It should be correct to say that systematic urban studies in Chicago began with these Hull-House studies" (Burgess, Bogue, 1964: p.4).

The evaluation expressed by Ernest Burgess, however, followed in the footsteps, theoretical and spiritual, of that Chicago Department that did so much to keep female researchers, and the female spirit of research, out of its reality and out of a monosexual, *de facto* self-referential 'science'.

What is even more astonishing, however, is that it took more than a century for a male sociologist, and a British one at that, in a journal on classical sociology edited mainly by a very qualified group of American historians of sociology, to open a positive reflection on Florence Kelley's contribution to the discipline, mainly making amends for the great silence that had surrounded the figure of this researcher: "Florence Kelley is a seminal, yet largely unrecognized figure in the history of Sociology. Though her contributions to social reform have been reasonably well documented in the field of history and social work, sociology has been considerably less inclined to recognize Kelly's work as formative ... the majority of contemporary sociologists have failed to document extensively Kelley's contributions to the discipline" (Timming, 2004: pp. 289-290).

Only a few years later, in his complex history of sociology in America, did Craig Calhoun associate Jane Addams and, above all, Florence Kelley as the authors of a mapping method strategy that combined survey data with urban areas. And Calhoun pointed out that this method would *only later be* continued by the Chicago School (Calhoun, 2007: pp.10-11 and p. 11n27). The bias of this reference preserves all reservations with respect to the recognition of the role of women in the foundation and development of sociology. '*Forgetfulness*', '*forgotten*', are terms that seem to indicate

absent-mindedness, behaviour due to chance, but in fact in its Latin root the meaning has an opposite component: *de-menticare* indicates 'to remove from the mind', a conscious action that subjectively removes one or more persons, things or circumstances. It is no coincidence that forgetting is part of the psychotherapeutic action of 'reconstructing presence' and of the activity of memory seeking remembrance.

Therefore, there was and is nothing accidental in the absence of women from the history of sociology, even if it may seem incredible and if the topic, when addressed in a discussion is more often than not taken seriously, linked to a playful, almost incredulous awareness, for that absence/marginalisation of women sociologists that the history of the discipline shows in an incontrovertible way and which is paradoxically confirmed by their presence, of some, in places of leadership. Thus, for example, even in one of the most recent documented contributions on the history of sociology in the respective nations, the article completely 'forgets', the female presence and absence in this history, except for a quotation from Ann Oakely's (2020) English work, (Collyer, Manning, 2021). A definition that may explain this 'forgetfulness' is offered by Joan Landes when she recalls that women's exclusion from the emerging public discourse associated with the Enlightenment and with the rise of capitalism as a general economic form of life, was essential to men's capacity to sustain the masquerade of universality (Landes, 1998).

3. Florence Kelley's thought

Her thinking was influenced by a fruitful relationship between Marxism and pragmatism, progressively deepened by the results of her investigations.

The theoretical tools inherited from classical pragmatism offered Kelley the potential to construct solid empirical work in sociology, particularly Dewey's theory of action, which also influenced other early Hull-House residents (Jane Addams, Ellen Starr, and Julia Lathrop). Kelley's interest was thus to strengthen the empirical basis of pragmatism as an alternative, non-teleological way of understanding social action, its purposes, and its effects.

Elements of feminist pragmatism guided much of Kelley's research, teaching, and social activism, as well as her reformist mindset: for her, pragmatism was to be understood as the cognitive process in which the relationship between thought and action is to be privileged in an activity that favours a response to reality and a solution to problems, not the mere description and representation of social dynamics. The knowledge acquired as time goes by, which allows the individual a continuous relationship with their surrounding context, is socially constructed and the meaning of ideas, expressed in the actions produced, arises from the interaction present in every mental process. This scientific knowledge, by its very nature, constitutes a theoretical advancement but is also limited, destined for further modification in its inevitable social transformation. Its reflection, linked to the evolutionist principle, generates hypotheses on reality and its representations structured by the individual always on the brink of uncertainty, at least evaluating them over time, which is significantly temporary as is proper for a process in which arrival and departure, which can be considered from two different points of view, are paradoxically at the same point. The specificity and usefulness of the pragmatist method are therefore concentrated in their guidance towards real knowledge of the world supported by the experience that the subject or subjects have.

This theoretical approach formed the basis of *Some Ethical Gains Through Legislation*, 1905, in which Kelley argued that if one desired certain social benefits, one

had to perform actions that possessed the appropriate 'social morality' and consider the 'moral experiences of the many'. The result was the ethics of 'making a difference' in so far as certain actions offered help to the less privileged through reforms and legislative innovations. In other words, Kelley's social experience and analysis at Hull House must be understood as a relational process. The relational approach is more than just a focus on process, it is a commitment to making relationships the primary units of social analysis.

Remember to think about "We see the experience as an interplay of forces, as the activity of relating leading through fresh relating to a new activity" (Parker Follett, 1924: p. 81).

The influence of "socialism" we said. In reflecting on the theoretical work and the activity of Florence Kelley, a firm point of reference is the socialist tradition, matured in Europe in her relationship with Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, of whom she was a direct friend and for whom she translated into English in 1887 *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, a translation that remained unique in the United States for decades (Kish Sklar, 1995: p.100).

Kelley made constructive reference to the time she spent studying in Europe when she was introduced to the nature and the value of empirical research and fieldwork. Moreover, the volume was characterised by Kelley who immediately grasped its theoretical character and analytical value: "When the first book appeared in 1844, in Germany, in the German language, Engels was not yet twenty-four years old. Published almost half century before Charles Booth's monumental work *The Life and Labor of the People in London*, it is an amazing achievement, a museum specimen of painstaking, laborious, precise observation set forth in language so vivid that a Frenchman of high literary standing could hardly have excelled its clarity. It takes nothing from the value of his portrayal of facts as they then were, that a youth picturing in his first book conditions which he saw, that were incident to the Industrial Revolution in England and are now universally recognized as having been unbearable, ventured upon prophecies which have not been fulfilled in England" (Kelley, 1986: p.69).

To this, and to her family background of commitment to democracy and equality, was added the pragmatist lesson, in particular of Dewey and Mead of the Department of Philosophy at the University of Chicago, the experience of a relationship with other women engaged in social research as well as the reforms, other cultures, other democratic traditions, other strategies of change. Considering this element, apparent ideological homologation, one might overlook the specific role of Kelley, by no coincidence defined by Max Weber, during his stay in America, as by far the most interesting intellectual he had met. Weber learned much more about the radically negative aspects of that world from her, and Kelley prompted him to pursue reflections he had never thought of before (Weber, 1975, p. 302).

4. Poverty and exploitation in social analysis: the influence of European Socialism

Florence Kelley's place in the history of social research is also linked to the perception, at the end of the 19th century, of an overall need for knowledge, aware of the role that information and knowledge of reality could have in determining a different societal orientation and a social transformation that would reduce the dramatic conditions of subordination and exploitation present then. According to Kelley, the lesson of Engels's *The Condition of the Working Class* lay in being a text that could make up for the "lack of

a scientific literature in America " (Kelley, 1886: p.31), even though the press indicated it as "one of the most dangerous publications of recent years" (Kelley, 1887: p.34). The focus on investigation, carried out in Manchester, as well as the awareness of Charles Booth's research, were the premise for a relationship with the English tradition of perusing and analysing poverty, misery, sanitary conditions, and labour exploitation.

Hence the novelty of investigation and communication, starting with what Engels had called the 'housing question', was placed in an apparently distant context that ignored a reality of degradation and exploitation, as Jane Addams had pointed out: « There was at the time no statistical information on Chicago industrial conditions, and Mrs. Kelley, an early resident of Hull House, suggested to the Illinois State Bureau of Labor that they investigate the sweating system in Chicago with its attendant child labor » (Addams, 1910, p.150). So, in that cognitive context, Kelley represented a *de facto* link between the British and the American experience: she brought to the culture of America, to Hull-House, and to her general baggage of experience, not the background of the settlement, as Jane Addams had done, but the reality of urban contradictions and misery in development. In fact, for Kelley the 1880s period, that she considered to have begun in 1876 in Switzerland and then continued in the United States, represented a phase of elaboration and incubation, a period of ferment. Kelley relates this European event to a certain 'ferment of ideals and sorrows' also present in the United States, establishing a specific relationship between the two, with a series of American women protagonists of that ferment: for this, she refers to Addams and her reading of the Greek Testament in the Rockford seminary, to Lathrop in Vassar and the design of new ideas, but also to Carrie Chapman Catt, teacher, and activist for women's suffrage, future president from 1900 to 1904 and from 1915 to 1920 of the *National American Woman Suffrage Association*, and to Anna Howard Shaw, English immigrant, committed to the acquisition of women's suffrage, president of that NAWSA that inspired a series of conflicts for their own goals.

Those frequent ideals and sorrows mentioned by Kelley and encountered in her research, objectively refer to a very beautiful and contradictory passage by Agnes Holbrook in her presentation of the maps.

The Painful nature of minute investigation, and the personal impertinence of many of the questions asked, would be unendurable and unpardonable were it not for the conviction that the public conscience when roused must demand better surroundings for the most inert and long-suffering citizens of the Commonwealth.

, not as some might have thought because on this basis the poverty data would have been altered, but because the research would have ended up being steeped, and how could it have been otherwise, in the miseries of men and women, subtracting the reality of a part of society from ignorance and indifference, effectively rewriting daily life.

Emblematically, the chapter of her autobiography that begins with the description of her arrival at Hull-House is entitled '*I go to work*', a summary of how the two factors coincided, or at least were in remarkable harmony: "...on a snowy morning between Christmas 1891 and New Year is 1892, I arrived at hull House, Chicago, a little before breakfast time, and found their Herry Standing Bear, a Kickapoo Indian, waiting for the front the door to be opened. It was Miss Addams who opened it, holding on her left arm a singularly unattractive, fat, pudgy baby belonging to the cook, who was behindhand with breakfast. Miss Addams was a little hindered in her movements by a super-energetic kindergarten child, left by his mother while she went to a sweatshop for a bundle of cloaks to be finished» (Kelley, 1986: p.77).

Her first task was to see and grasp the living conditions and degradation in the area near Hull-House, finding three- and four-year-old children at work. This is how she recounts the beginning of that experience in a letter to Friedrich Engels: “We have a colony of efficient and intelligent women living in a workingmen’s quarter, with the house used for all sorts of purposes by about a thousand person per week [...] And the most open-minded workers seem to me to be the Russian Hebrew Immigrants. But my range of observation is limited. I am living in the colony mentioned above, conducting a bureau of women labor learning more in a week, of the actual conditions of proletarian life in America than any previous year” (Kelley, 1892a [2009]: pp.57-58).

That teaching was a cognitive experience that greatly contributed to reinforcing his choice in the direction of research into children's work (Davis, 1967, p.57): “her chief motivation in combating child labor was to defend the rights of children to leisure and education, not, as was the case with organized labor and state bureaus, to protect the jobs of adult men, she extended the definition of child labor to include workers under the age of sixteen, going beyond the usual limit of fourteen or less. Finally, since her views were anchored in children’s rights rather than the welfare of the family economy, she noted how her goals were thwarted but not fundamentally compromised by the complicity of parents who evaded the law and sent their children to work. Therefore, unlike commissioners, she did not shrink from enforcement strategies that took such complicity into account” (Kish Sklar, 1995: p. 160).

5. Reformist contribution and the use of mixed methods

One of the main points of my attention in Kelley’s Reformist Contribution about natural use of Mixed Methods (Cersosimo, 2019). When in the spring of 1892, she was appointed Special Agent for the Sweat Trade in Chicago, and in July of the same year, Carroll D. Wright, the Commissioner of Labor, named her the Special Agent to participate in research on the slums of Chicago (Wright, Hugo, & Houghton, 1894), Kelley’s activity contributed significantly to the approval of the Workshop and Factories Factory Act on July 1, 1893, which limited women’s and minors’ working hours. It also reduced inequality in wages and introduced controls on sweatshops that were central to the exploitation of labor. Photography, together with other methods as part of Kelley’s approach, remembering the photographic work of Jacob Riis (1890), documenting the reality of immigration in New York. Kelley (1895) sought to communicate the real condition of the tenements and sweatshops: “To assure the abandonment of this obsolete position, however, public opinion, including the courts, must be effectively enlightened upon every aspect of tenement-house manufacture” (p. 245). In October of 1893, Kelley wrote to Henry D. Lloyd: “We are weighing and measuring factory children at a great rate and shall publish photographs of deformed children found in the cutlery trade where every boy yet found has shown the same deformity ... I think that medical chapter of this report will start a new line of activity for medical men and factory inspectors both.” (Kelley, 1893/2009: p. 69). Her representation of children’s poverty, just quoted, and misery through images avoids pietism, as could have been the case of descriptions of poverty only through statistical data. Because images cannot be silenced in the denunciation of poverty. That information was the basis for pushing for industrial reforms and to advocate the passage of specific laws to protect children and workers. Reforms included mandatory education and adequate funds for schools, an 8-hour work day, and protection from hazardous conditions in the workplace (Goldmark, 1912; Sklar, 1995; Waugh, 1982).

Often, Kelley would risk her life, such as during a smallpox epidemic, to document the dreaded conditions within tenement houses and to prevent infected materials—such as garments—from being distributed to the public (Sklar, 1995). Together, these data provided an overall and clear picture of the relationship between exploitation conditions and daily life. Hull House Maps and Papers was the first attempt to use mixed methods to capture the social reality of urban workers in the United States. Through the interpretation of urban reality, the work left no doubt as to the legacy of Friedrich Engels's analysis of the working class in Manchester. The research data provided daily to Hull House before being sent to the inspectorate, was also the basis for maps documenting the ethnic and economic reality of the 19th district of Chicago.

Most of the social research conducted by Kelley did not rely exclusively on the collection of data of a single type or by a single method. Her mixed methodology relied on both textual and numerical data, and she was convinced that there are also many situations when images can inform those two types of data. This is either because some information about the phenomena may only be obtained through a drawing, map, or photograph or because it is good practice to complete and visually check the information obtained in textual or numerical form. This is the case—today as it was then—in terms of how research is represented, especially those aimed at social impact.

The work was multifaceted, with respect to data and knowledge. And furthermore, there was another problem, namely the representation of that data, which was aimed at a 'scientific' publication and therefore had to be easily accessible to a public whose educational background was often very poor if not totally absent, and who also wondered what the meaning and result of the questions, interviews, analyses that those people asked, was. In this sense, maps and tables were obviously simpler languages. It has been said that in the past the survey used a heterogeneity of methods, both qualitative and quantitative in what was often not a choice but an attempt to gather, in the most varied manner, all the information available while establishing a link between that activity, the social area under investigation, and the researcher or researchers engaged in the analysis. In that work there was a social appeal that constituted an unprecedented strength, entrusting the researcher with a resoluteness of the kind expressed by Kelley, in the work cited, attested by her letter to Richard T. Ely, dated November 1894. In it she protests at the delay in printing the volume she had advertised as being in circulation in September of that year, showing "The disappointment over the delay is trivial in comparison with the dismay which I felt when you suggested cutting the maps. This I positively decline to permit. The charts are mine to the extent that I have not furnished the data for them but hold the sole permission U.S. Department of Labor to publish them. I have never contemplated and do not now contemplate, any form of publication except as two linen-backed maps of charts, folding in pockets in the cover of the book, similar to Mr Booth's charters. If Crowell and Co. does not contemplate this, it will be to stop work at once, as I can consent to no use of my charts in any other form" (Kelley, 1894c: pp.77-78).

Florence Kelley's research was alone without being alone: her highly qualified individuality, occasionally aided by Alzina Stevens, a radical worker, one of her companions in Hull-House, was part of something that was not the work of a mass of people but that did benefit from the presence and supportive activity of many female researchers, a sign of a transformation of women's social presence and initiative and of the future, which for many was rooted in the unprecedented vivacity and emotional depth of the relationships they developed in college. In many cases, sisterhood was not ideology but a living practice, present even but unspoken, a community of affection, dissociation from

power, an experience of social presence. In fact, statistics on female college attendance in the turn-of-the-century years, and the existential paths following school attendance, show that a large proportion of those graduates did not go on to be wives and mothers: those women often remained unmarried, or chose other paths [some even considered 'unlawful'] for their feelings, choosing an occupation outside the home (Cross, 1962: pp.30-45). With respect to those relationships, which saw passions previously seldom declared or disclosed between women and for a long time prudently concealed by the texts that dealt with them grow to an unforeseen extent, it may be useful to recall a passage in the reflections of a late Italian philosopher: "Love does not require one to bury one's talents, to proceed to a pure exchange of equivalents ... love wishes talents to multiply, the exchange to grow upon itself, possibly generating 'wealth' and mutual advantage" (Bodei, 1991, p.40). That women expressed their autonomy not only in civil society by way of their activities, but contributed in various ways to organizational changes in the public and urban sphere (Kish Sklar, 1995, p. 205). How just I mentioned, during this time investigation and reform were increasingly inseparable. Addams, Kelley, Lathrop, Gates, Breckenridge, Stevens, MacLean, and many others, all intrigued by the settlement idea and by a democratic aim, manifested the middle-class feminine approach - a new solution to individual, social, and industrial problems - at the same time conquering the public sphere and disclosing a new womanhood. A new tradition of investigation was born within their heterogeneous activities, yet all endorsed the promotion of social research as the premise of a deep urban knowledge and public transformation. All were deeply and consistently involved in urban and state affairs previously banned for women. This horizon, this work became part of their everyday life, especially after the constitution of *College Settlement Association* in the late 1880s, whilst their connection was promoted by Vida Scudder and other women of the settlement as an association: a network whose idea was a national coalition for debating national social reforms, with a corresponding power in national politics. Mainly young, their median age was twenty-five (Davis, 1967) but they worked hard to affirm settlement and personal ideals, especially in the new century when *The College Settlement Association* "offered free room and board as well as small stipend to college graduates interested in studying the city and living in a settlement" (Cooley, 1900, pp.1-2).

Kelley argued that wealthy corporations seek work continuously all over the world in the hope of increasing their wealth. While this industrial system has produced many victims, it has also brought many immigrants out of direct poverty and into relative prosperity. Furthermore, she said we produce poverty directly.

Among the various other themes that Kelley felt the need to turn into factors of knowledge there was undoubtedly what she called, *The invasion of family life by industry* (1909) with the family structure being subverted, which challenged all possible traditions linked to the primary group and favoured an existence that disrupted all existence. By altering the times and actions of each family member, it disrupted every hypothesis of conviviality and coexistence, eventually shattering even the ancient custom of the evening at home, due to night work. The thousands of tenements in Chicago functioned day and night according to the continuous multiplicity of urban jobs, with an impetus that could afford not to be limited in any way, so it ended up with its own problem of resources and machines alone. Florence Kelley does not self-celebrate her work but in passing she points out "I have been studying messenger boys for seventeen years", this being experience derived from research that therefore built a new common sense around exploitation. This will allow her to say: "After ten years of close contact with places where young girls are

employed I am convinced that the families who sent their sons to the Cuban war took no greater risk, though we know that many (died, many were made invalids and many came home diseased and demoralized. Those who sent their young sons to that war took no graver risks of death, disease, and demoralization than families take who send their young girls into department stores, offices, and all the innumerable industries which are calling young girls, as they have never been called before in the history of the world, to work away from their own roof, away from the supervision of their mothers. It is a new process" (Kelley, 1989: p.94).

The memory of work that is being re-proposed has its own ethical wealth and intrinsic efficacy, which are 'inconsistent' with the various processes of employment. This approach is subversively emblematic because the premise of work, of every technological innovation and of the turnover of exploited and labor-worn workers is to erase all previous traces, whilst the work carried out by the researcher, in this specific case by Kelley, is exactly the opposite, to focus on the present with an unprecedented memory, subverting time seemingly destined to move forward only.

In keeping with these observations, years later, in *Modern Industry: in Relation to the Family, Health, Education, Morality* (1914) she continued her thread of uninterrupted analytical discourse by showing that the connection between degraded environments and production systems ended up reproducing situations of exploitation and poverty and that modern industry while promoting working conditions and wealth, also generated new social inequalities, new illnesses and conflicts between workers, consumers, and producers (Kelley, 1914: pp.41-43).

Kelley showed how industrial organisations, in order to maintain their status quo in terms of working hours and wages, could rely on the ambivalent relationship towards the legislative protection of women workers by men. On the one hand, men were aware that the legislative protection of women workers would also benefit them by preventing them from being replaced in their jobs by women, who would no longer constitute competition by supplying labor at lower wages. On the other hand, however, they feared that a law protecting women workers would harm them by causing them to lose their privileges due to reduced hours, adequate wages, and an increasing female presence in industry. This conflict between male and female workers, according to Kelley, contributed to increase situations of poverty and exploitation, as workers "were reduced to simple tasks within industry" (Kelley, 1914: p. 106), whereby modern industry governed only by the demands of competition also produced among its effects "a loss of moral responsibility in the relation of the owners of industry to the consuming public" (Kelley, cit.: p. 119).

All this highlighted reflection is obviously part of the thinking, the investigations, and the perspectives that denoted the work of the Consumer's League of which she was secretary in New York. The texts referred to allow us to grasp, regardless of the language used, the development of capitalism already at the end of the 19th century, quite in dissonance with the interpretations that identified its 'maturity' later in time. The commodification of childhood, was an unforgettable symbol of this, a Christian betrayal which materialised in the form of a path in which all sensitivity and compassion were subordinated to the need for mass participation, regardless of gender and age, in forms that allowed the greatest possible profit. This action disrupted individuals and families, overwhelmed feelings, and pedagogies, annulled all rights to childhood, took on the name of tenements and sweatshops, and became the target of a wider conflict that challenged certain cornerstones of 20th-century development. Capitalist development without any ideology thus showed its inhuman face, with respect to which the democratisation of

research was an unprecedented cognitive tool, and the reformist perspective made Kelley a protagonist and social pioneer. The long experience of Kelley confirmed a connection between socialism and liberalism, which, for example, found specific expression in her critique of consumer socialisation.

6. Conclusions

To conclude, I would say that Kelley's writings rightfully place her within the sociological tradition as a researcher who has made an invaluable contribution to the theory and the methods in the process of institutionalising sociology and to the presence of women in sociology. Her texts capture, with immediate sensitivity and timely critique, the aggressive and controlling implications of the capitalist organisation of labour that penetrated the lives of families and persons, conditioning and organising them, disrupting their traditions, indifferent to age, role, and power. The methodological heritage of his work, starting with the famous Maps and Papers, was a premise for the development and their reproduction in many other sociological works. The tools of social analysis in the Hull House text, including the maps that had run the risk of not being published because they were too expensive for the publisher, are now in fact part of the analytical heritage of the social sciences: they were to be used by other Hull House exponents such as Sophonisba Breckinridge (1866-1948) and Edith Abbot (1876-1957) in their work *The delinquent child at the home of 1912*, by another great black researcher, W.E.B. Du Bois (1868 - 1963), in his great survey of Philadelphia in 1899, and within the *Pittsburgh Survey* in 1907 edited by Paul Kellogg (1879- 1958). Their value was eventually recognised even by sociologists in the sociology department of the University of Chicago, as well as in the more recent uses of works that have contributed to the modernisation of the social sciences, insisting on the need to use complex computational tools in qualitative research.

Today as in the past, the use of qualitative-quantitative approaches is useful when presenting social research that can either become action research or be used to acquire knowledge of the social reality for policymakers who have to intervene to reform and improve people's living conditions in different spaces and times. Kelley left many traces of her legacy and influence not only in male and female social scientists immediately adjacent to her time. James Linn, the nephew of Jane Addams, recalls in a passage in his biography: "Florence Kelley, full of love as she was, still seems to the biographer the toughest customer in the reform riot, the finest rough and tumble fighter for the good life for others that hull house ever knew. Any weapon was a good weapon in her hand evidence, argument, irony or invective" (Linn, 1935: pp.138-9).

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