

# *The U.S. Sanitary Commission: Recovering Women's Leadership, Management and Compassion During the Civil War*



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# Plan for the Presentation

- Introduction - History of Women in PA
- Civil War and USSC
- Reform efforts
- Lessons Learned



1788-1920

## Men's Political Democracy

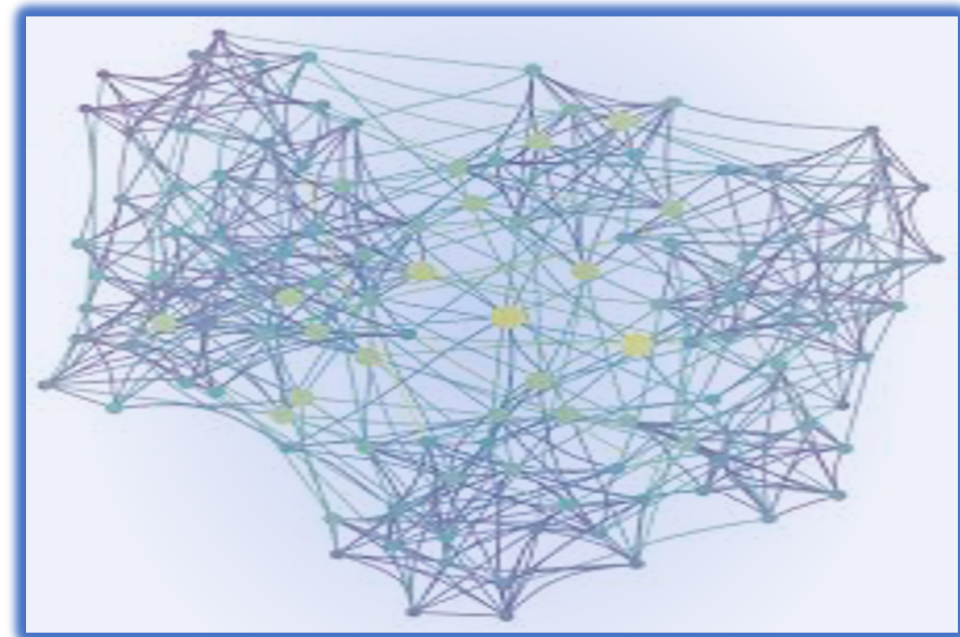
Government and Business



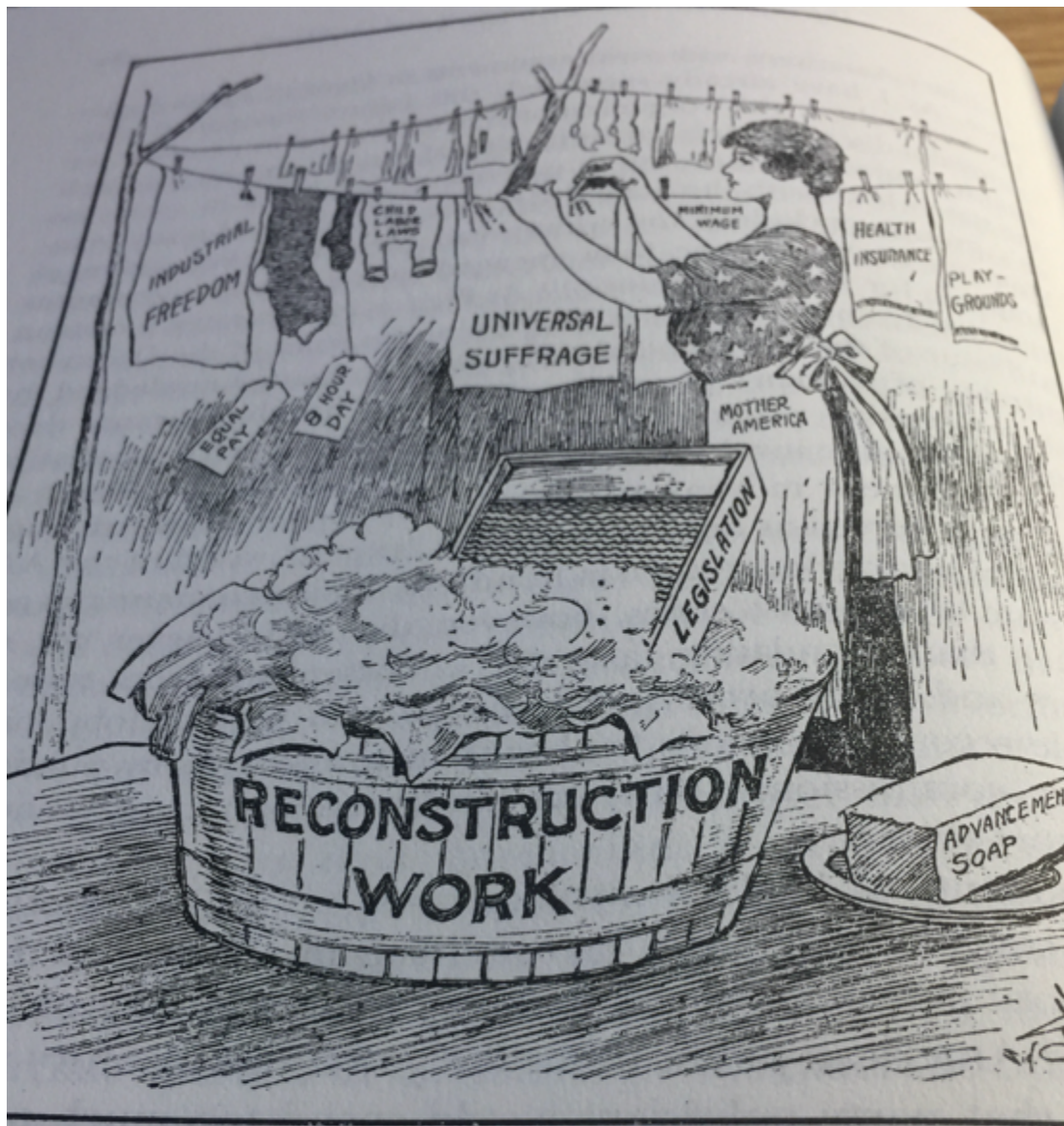
## Women's Networked Participatory Democracy

Nascent Non-profit organizations

Service related clubs  
Ladies-Aid-Societies





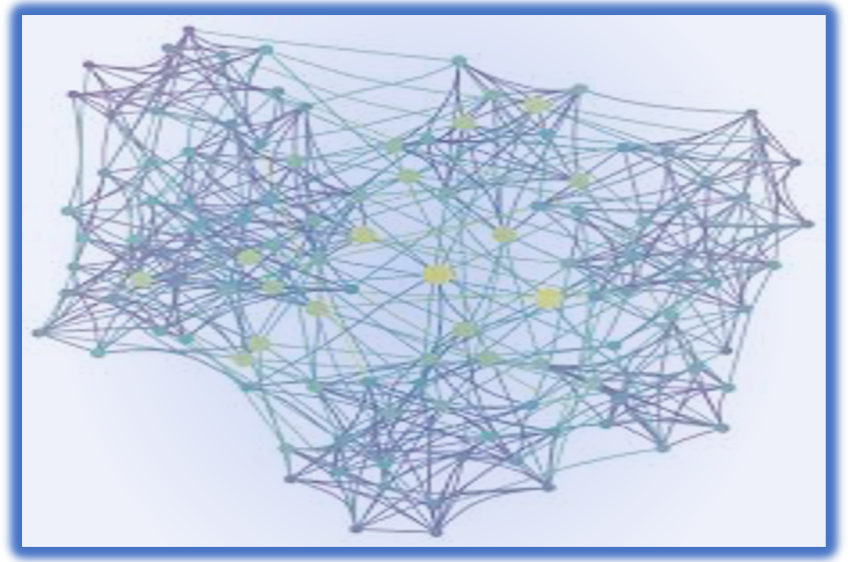


1918

Greene, in New York, (N. Y.

A WOMAN'S WORK IS NEVER DONE

Themes that propelled the women's organizations

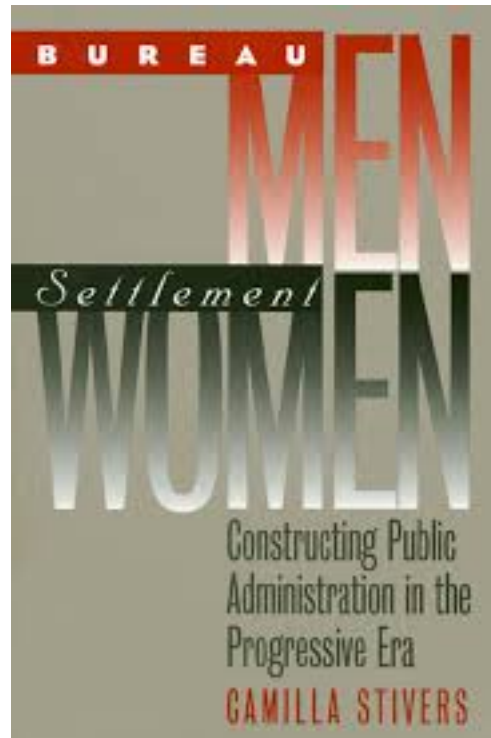




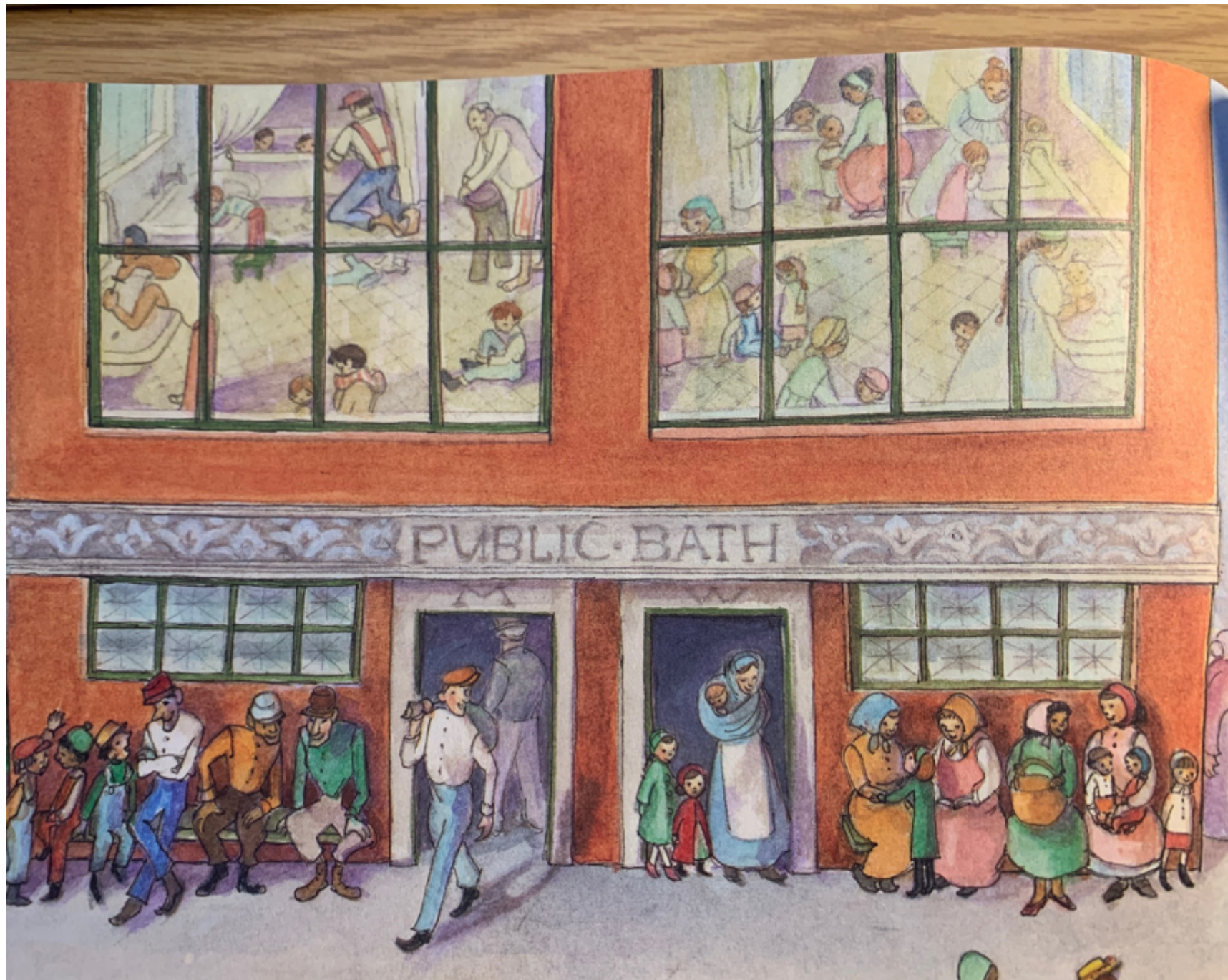
# Settlement Movement Incubator of the Alternative View of Public Administration



Jane Addams



1880s-1920s



## US Settlement Movement

- Dominated by women
- Non-profit
- Multifaceted Community Centers
- Engines of Reform

## Alternative view of PA

- Municipal Housekeeping
- Industrial Citizenship





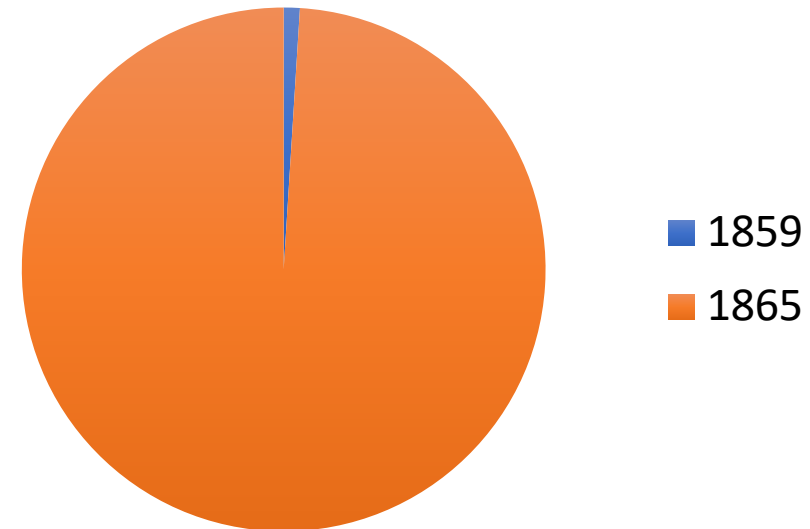
1861-1865

# Medical Crisis – Sanitation in camps/hospitals

## Supply Crisis - Chaotic Volunteer response

(hospital supplies- bedding, medicine, food, clothing.....)

1859	20,000
1865	2,000,000







# US Sanitary Commission



Nightingale  
British Sanitary  
Commission

- Non-Profit Authorized by Congress (\$25M)
- Respond to Medical/Supply Crisis
- Successful  
Lowered death by disease rate
- 1861-1866





US Sanitary  
Commission

Inspection –  
Camps/hospitals

Relief Supplies  
Nurses

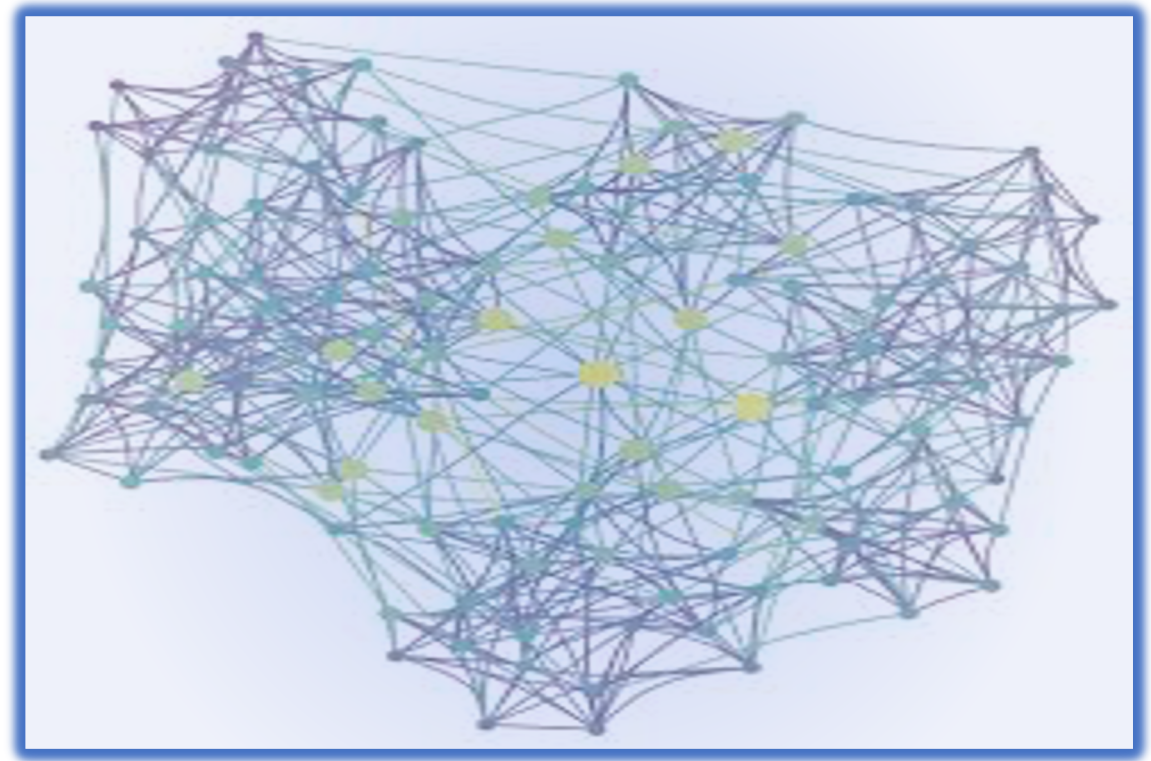
**10,000+  
Ladies Aid  
Societies**



*Chapin Hall was filled with ladies who came together to inquire how the charity of women could best serve her country in its impending peril. (Brayton and Terry, Cleveland Branch, USSC, 1869, p. 17)*

Activated the network of women's clubs

Vision was National not Local





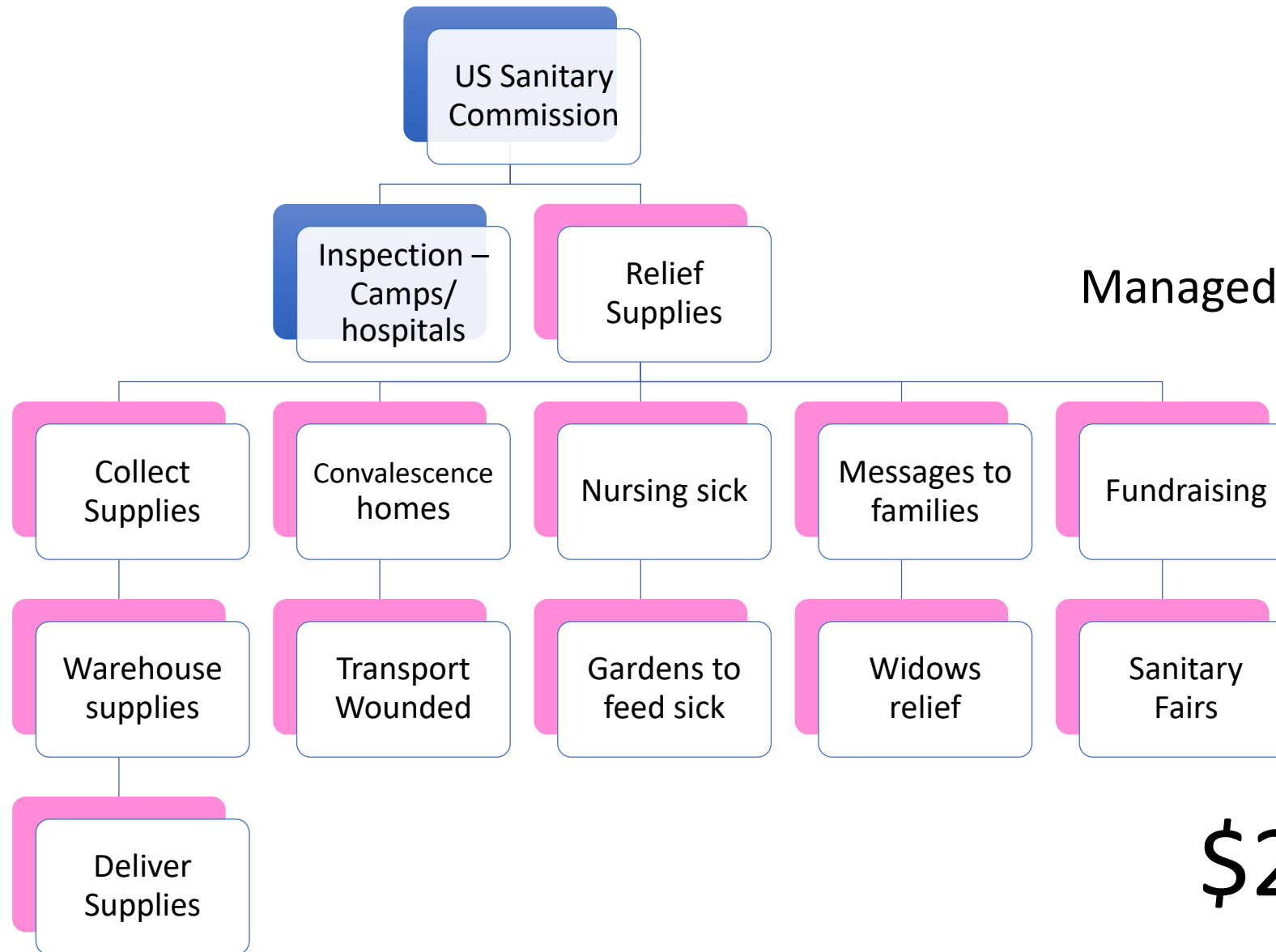
1820-1905

Abolitionist

## Manager of Northwest Branch

- Coordinated relief supply effort
- Nurse
- Fundraising
- New programs





Managed by women

Network of aid societies  
(women's clubs)

**\$25 Million**

Nurse made \$3 week (90 hour week)  
8.33 million weeks of nursing time.

# Nursing

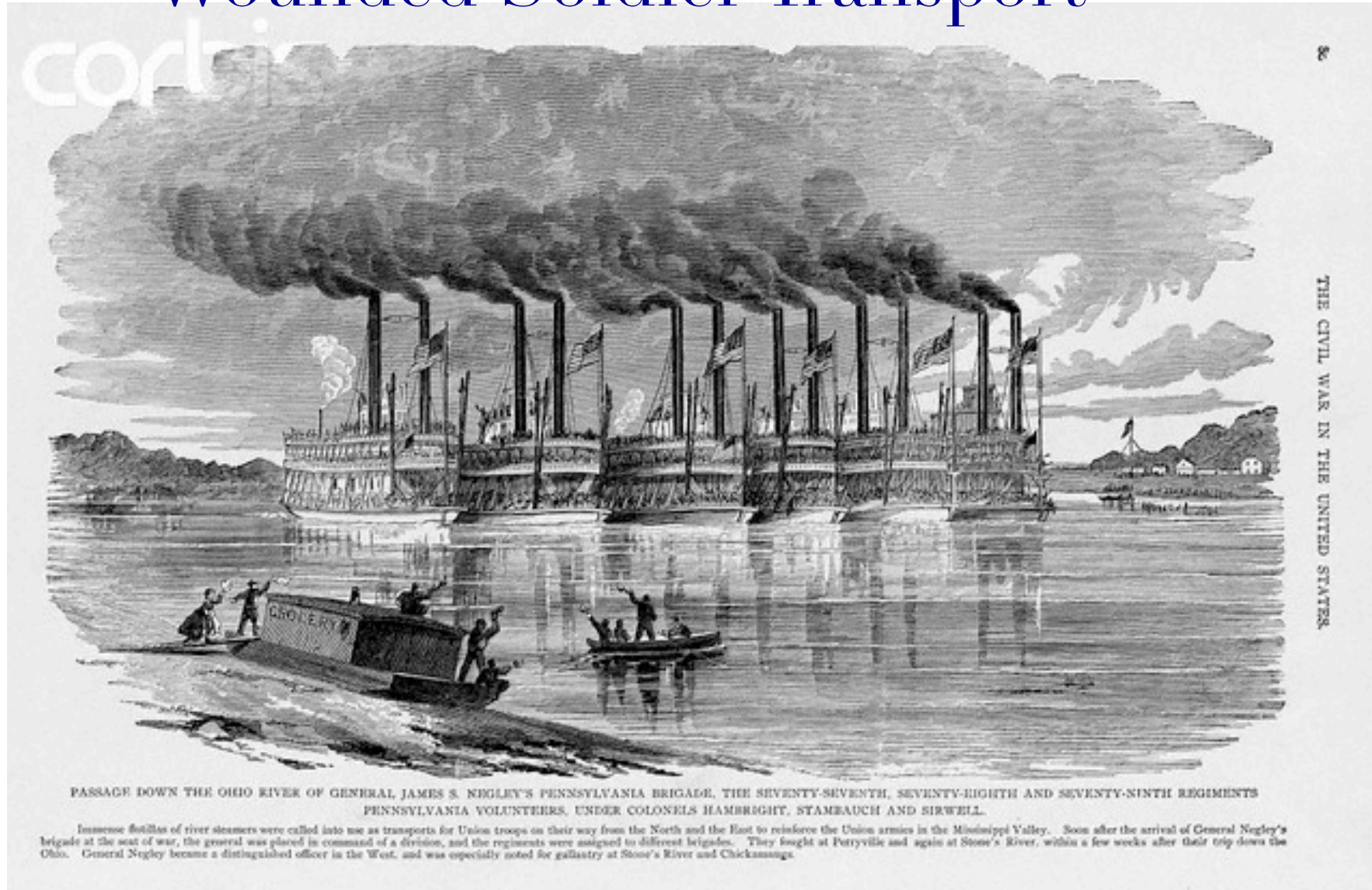
- Dorathea Dix required nurses “be over thirty years of age, plain almost to repulsion in dress, and devoid of personal attractions” (Livermore, 1887, 246).
- Mature women – **Mother role**  
use the **moral authority** of Mother to serve the Union’s Sons



Clean bedding, Clean clothes, Good food

# Supply Transport

## Wounded Soldier Transport







Chicago Hub



Fund raising – sanitary fairs



## Women's New Experiences

They learned how to cooperate intelligently with men; became an expert in conducting public business, in calling and presiding over public meetings, ..... how to keep accounts with precision and system; ... in short, they developed rapidly a remarkable aptitude for business, on which men looked and wondered. **‘Where were these superior women before the war?’** (Livermore, 1891, p. 286)



# Stimulated Reform

*I registered a vow that when the war was over, I would take up a new work – the work of making law and justice synonymous for women. I have kept my vow religiously (Livermore, 1887/1995, 347)*



# Accomplishments

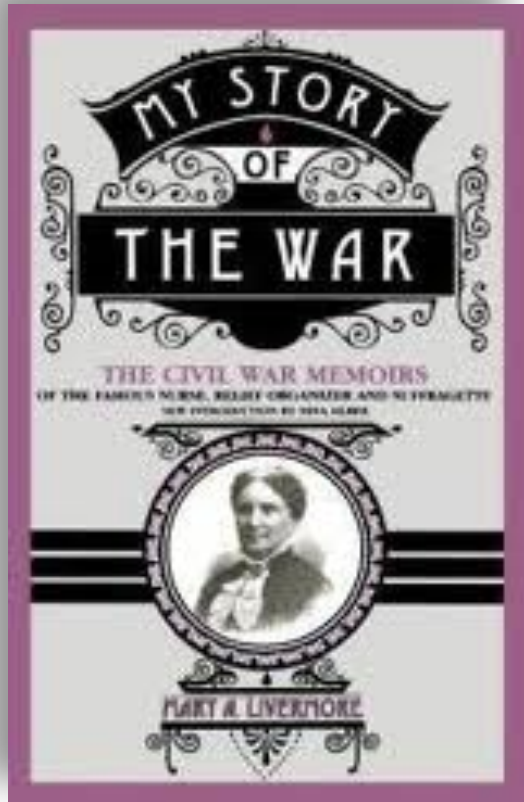
## Tangible

**Higher education for young women** – established colleges for women. Jane Addams went to a college established by Livermore.

## Intangible

- Greater acceptance of women's competency
- **Missing link** between female activism of the early 1800 and successful mass successful women's movements of late 19<sup>th</sup> & early 20<sup>th</sup> century

**EXPANDED WOMEN'S SPHERE - Open Door For Settlement women**

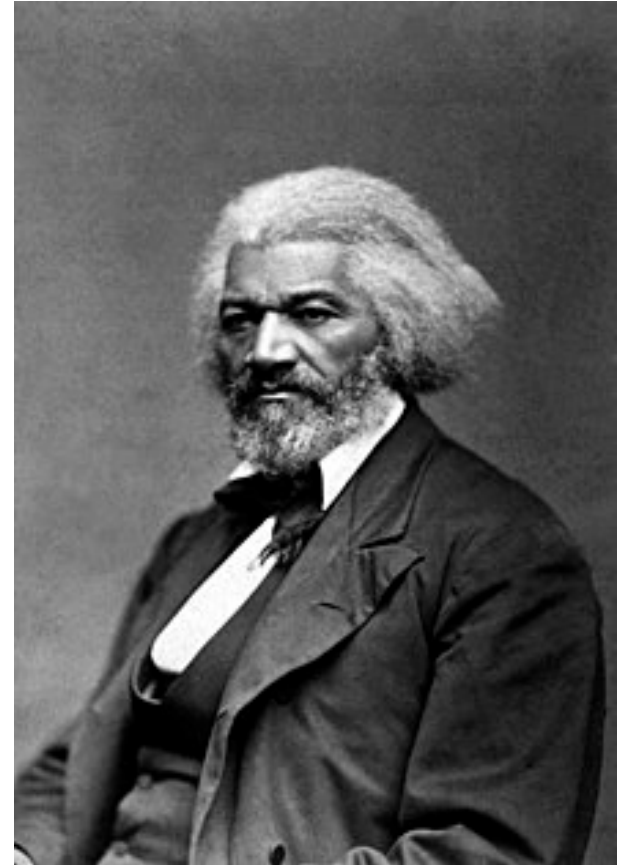


## After Civil War

- Publisher – Editor *Agitator*
- *My Story of War*
- Speaker – 20,000 miles year
- Leader Suffrage Movement  
President, American Women's Suffrage Assoc.
- Help establish **colleges** for women  
**Next Generation**
- Active early Peace movement



“The most eloquent and able speakers in Congress today do not speak with more self-possession or assurance of fitness than [Mary Livermore]”



Frederick Douglass



# Tilling the soil for Settlement Movement

Alternative Vision of PA



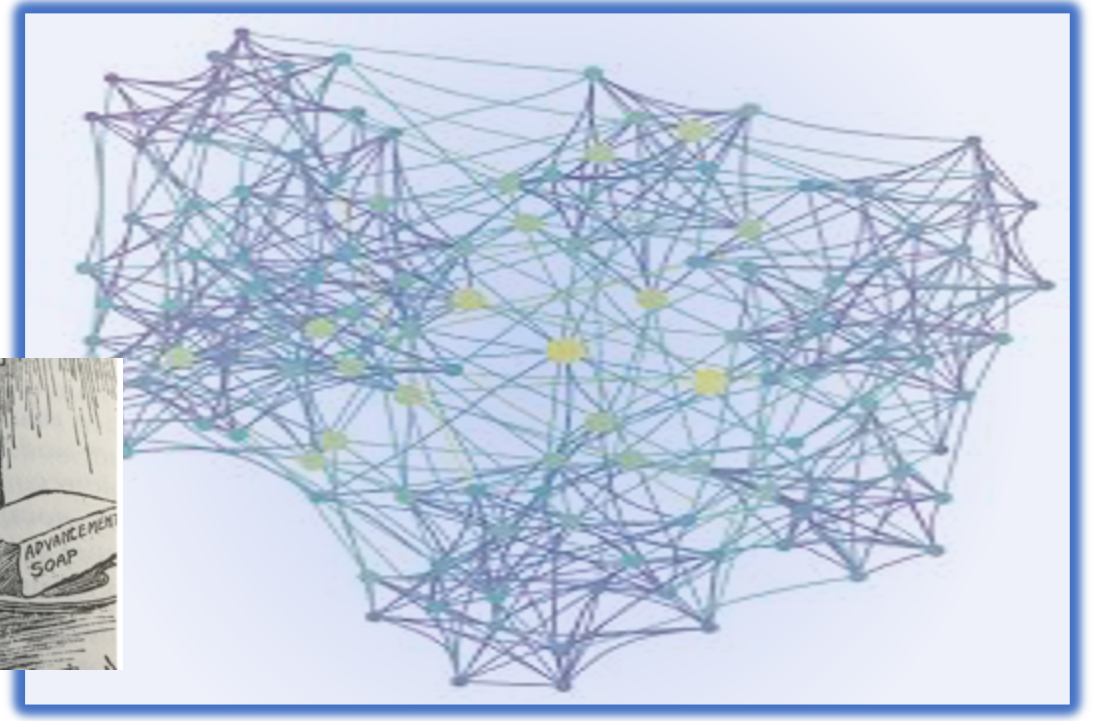
Jane Addams



John Addams

# Lessons Learned

- Need to recover the historical contributions of women in PA
- Importance of nonprofits in History of PA
- Similarities to Covid-19 (disarray, medical supply chain problems, national goals/regional response)





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