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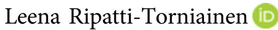
ARTICLE

Toward the Formation of *the Public* in a Marginalized Communicative Culture: Analyzing *The Long Road of Woman's Memory*


Leena Ripatti-Torniainen

Communication Sciences Unit, Faculty of Information Technology and Communication Sciences
Tampere University, Finland
Email: leena.ripatti-torniainen@tuni.fi, leena.t.ripatti@gmail.com

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Abstract

This study analyzes Jane Addams' contribution to an enduring topic: how marginalized people join *the public* from beyond political, socioeconomic, cultural, and gendered barriers. I study Addams' book, *The Long Road of Woman's Memory* (1916), which discusses the seemingly irrational devil baby case in Chicago. Using the concept of public and hidden transcripts and the method of cultural discourse analysis, I contextualize the book within the theorizing around the concept of *the public* by Addams' contemporaries, Gabriel Tarde and Robert E. Park. The analysis shows that Addams' discussion aligns with three conceptual aspects of the formation of *the public*. First, Addams describes the awakening of consciousness about a collectively relevant concern, and second, the emergence of interaction about the topic. Third, Addams constructs a conceptual distinction between two functions of memory, highlighting independent critical judgment as the divider between the two, which is the decisive factor that Park argues distinguishes *the public* from *the crowd*. Addams' writing contains an unusual perspective in that she discusses development toward the formation of something like *the public* in a marginalized communicative culture. Instead of focusing on performative and dramatic public debate, Addams addresses discreet genres of communication and illustrates their public relevance.

1. Introducing Jane Addams to the relational concept of *the public*

This study continues to clarify the significance of Jane Addams to the research of the public realm by reading Addams' book, *The Long Road of Woman's Memory* (1916b), as a contribution to theorization about how *the public* forms. Previous research shows that Addams was involved in the intellectual work of creating concepts that help to define the individual's changed relationship to public political life in modern mass society. Compared to the concepts of *the public* crafted by Walter Lippmann ([1925] 1927) and John Dewey (1927), Addams' (1902, 1907) understanding was cosmopolitan, urban, and much more sensitive to social inequalities (Ripatti-Torniainen 2022). In this study, I show that Addams in *The Long Road* again addresses a preeminent question in the theorizing of *the public*: How do marginalized people join *the public* from beyond

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political, socioeconomic, and socio-cultural barriers? Answering this question remains a methodological challenge in our time.

The Long Road is based upon a seemingly irrational incident. In the autumn of 1913, thousands of people in Chicago were convinced that a supernatural "devil baby" was sheltered in the Addams-led Hull-House. The assumed baby mobilized older immigrant women in an unforeseen manner in the city. Addams does not conceptualize the event in explicit public-related terms. To highlight the contribution of the book to the theorizing of *the public*, I situate Addams' coverage within the sociological theorizing that was ongoing in her time, which revolved around the capacity of public interaction to overcome social divisions by raising awareness and encouraging reflection upon collective concerns. Thus, public interaction could contribute to the reorganization of social relations and, eventually, to social change. This perspective is known as a relational concept of *the public* (Starr 2021), and its roots are evident in the works of Gabriel Tarde ([1901] 1969) and Robert E. Park (1904, 1972). In this study, I propose that Addams folds her voice and the voices of women from the margins into the theorizing through the conceptual discussion about memory that she develops in *The Long Road*. Distinguishing between two functions of memory, Addams recognizes characteristic value in each but considers only one capable of transforming established social ties and identities. I ask, as the research question, what Addams sees as the decisive factor behind such transformation, and I argue that, through the answer, Addams conceptualizes the formation toward something like *the public* among marginalized people, despite many barriers.

I propose that *the public*-related vantage point is a new key to a book that faced early criticism for its lack of coherence (Brigham 1917) and at first sight puzzled and slightly disappointed even the Addams scholar Seigfried (2002, x). In what follows, I first locate *The Long Road* in *the public*-related theorizing that preceded the book. I then discuss previous research on *The Long Road*, after which I introduce my research design and analysis and proceed to the results and conclusions.

2. Theorizing *the public:* Tarde and Park

Theorization around the concept of *the public* is regarded as a significant area of analysis by several disciplines, such as communication science, sociology, and political science. By Addams' era, the old philosophical assertion that the public realm carries unique value in human life (Arendt 1958; Weintraub 1997) had gained new momentum alongside the Enlightenment period's emphasis on civic life. *The public* was conceived to consist of citizens who used their reason for collective ends with awareness of their political power (Kant [1784] 1996; Laursen 1996).

A century later, massive urbanization and the development of mass communication necessitated a reconceptualization of *the public* and its interactions. Sociological work at the turn of the twentieth century was foundational in conceptualizing *the public*, both socially and communicatively, in this new setting. Gabriel Tarde ([1901] 1969) articulated a critical premise by detaching the concept of *the public* from embodied gatherings and redefining *the public* as a distinctive structure of social relations and consciousness (Starr 2021, 58). For Tarde, *the public* emerged when individuals became aware that they were facing a collective concern with unknown others and joined in interaction about the topic. Both awareness and interaction may arise in private encounters, even in solitude, as is the case when one reads a newspaper and reflects. For Tarde, the formation of *the public* often began in non-public situations (Starr 2021, 68–69).

Robert E. Park, who began working in Chicago soon after the devil baby case, had significantly developed the conceptual definition of *the public* in his doctoral dissertation, which was published in German in 1904. Building on Tarde, Park (1972) separated *the public* from *the crowd*; in line with Tarde, Park stressed that *the crowd* and *the public* are psychological rather than spatial formations. *The crowd* and *the public* exist in reciprocal public influence, and their features distinguish them from each other.

According to Park (1972, 61, 80), *the crowd* comes into being whenever a reciprocal sentiment is recognized and interpreted in unison, leading to a collective drive without criticism. Instead, *the public* develops diverging standpoints and critical discussion about the topic. Using "prudence and rational reflection" (80), *the public* develops collectively valid stances out of participants' individual standpoints and experiences (58). Whereas entering *the crowd* only requires "the ability to feel and empathize" (80), participation in *the public* presumes "the ability to think and reason with others" (80). Both *the crowd* and *the public* signaled social change for Park (78), who viewed them as "strikingly" departing from other social formations, such as political parties, social classes, and groups pursuing special purposes. *The crowd* and *the public* grow "out of and beyond" these and other groups, serving "to bring individuals out of old ties and into new ones" (78). These concepts illuminate how the weakening of established social ties and identities, and the development of new ones, reveal themselves in publicly mediated interaction (47–48, 79).

When I read *The Long Road* (1916b) alongside the work of Addams' contemporaries Tarde (1969) and Park (1972), my attention is drawn to Addams' similar creation of a conceptual distinction between two psychological, publicly relevant phenomena: two functions of memory. In the first function, reinterpretative acts of memory relieve psychological pain by construing hard experiences as bearable ones. In contrast, the second function activates reinterpretation of the hardships on a socio-political level. Addams argued that, in the latter process, memory has the capacity to contribute to social change by uniting awareness between people who have no other basis for collaboration (1916b, xiii, 53). Addams stressed that she found the latter function to be "so aggressive and withal so modern, that it was quite impossible, living as I was in a Settlement with sociological tendencies, to ignore it" (xi).

Addams' *memory* thus refers to acts of reinterpretation that may occur merely on an individual psychological level or may also include socio-political reflection. Both functions of memory resonate with theorizing related to the concept of *the public* in Addams' time. The extent to which Addams knew Tarde's and Park's work at the time of writing *The Long Road* is unknown. The English translations of Tarde (1969) and Park (1972) were only published several decades later. However, Park's arrival in the University of Chicago (Burgess and Bogue 1964, 3) coincides with Addams' (1914a, 1914b) first, short accounts of the devil baby case. The analysis of the two functions of memory, which in my reading brings Addams in dialogue with Park, is a development Addams made for *The Long Road* (1916b), after her first publications of the devil baby.

It is not the goal of this research to reveal the flows of intellectual influence. What matters within the context of this study is that Addams, in *The Long Road*, seeks answers to same questions to which major sociologists of the same era were devoting their efforts. Addams provides a contribution that has so far been missing from the scholarly history of *the public.* She relates how marginalized people can and do move toward participation in public discourse through acts of reinterpretation and socio-political reflection, regardless of their lack of franchise and despite socioeconomic

and cultural barriers. This insight is significant. According to feminist scholars (Siltanen and Stanworth 1984; Landes 1988; Fraser 1990; Ryan 1992), perspectives demonstrating public participation by subordinate groups remained largely absent from *the public*-related theoretical research throughout the twentieth century. Landes (1988, 7) even stated that "the exclusion of women from the bourgeois public was not incidental but central to its incarnation." Landes (7) argued that marginalized feminist perspectives not only have important theoretical but also historically unique vantage points on the "modern public's emergence." I argue that Addams is important because she incorporated marginalized women's voice in a conceptual discussion during a foundational era. In contrast to Tarde (1969) and Park (1972), who produced conceptual analyses on an abstract level, Addams (1916b) presented an empirical case in *The Long Road* and emphasized the methodological challenge of analysis.

Before presenting the research design through which I constructed *the public*-related contribution found in Addams' text, in the next section I provide context: previous research on *The Long Road*.

3. The intellectual and methodological contexts of *The Long Road*: previous research

Addams had a front-row seat to the spectacle around the devil baby. During a period of six weeks (Addams 1916b, x), the circulating tales of the baby attracted a "stream of visitors" (Addams 1914a; 1916b, 3) to Hull-House, which served as a social and educational center in the West Side neighborhood of Chicago. The house was a commune and home to Addams and many other female intellectuals, whose work Deegan (2013) captures under the notion of "the Hull-House School of Sociology."

The Chicagoan devil baby narratives are short. The tales report destructive domestic situations and a supernatural newborn who changes the course of events. In the two versions documented by Addams (1914a, 1914b, 1916b, 1930), the father of an unborn child commits insulting acts, either against his wife (in one version) or daughters (in another version), and suggests that the devil has more value to him than his wife or daughters. The devil indeed appears at the man's side, incarnated as his newborn son.

Devil babies are folkloristic figures. Stories of malformed but powerful infants endured well into the twentieth century, even in urbanized countries (Belanus and Langlois 2015; Renzi 2018). In 1913 Chicago, the enthusiasm for this superstitious tale fit poorly with the progressive agenda of Addams and her pragmatist peers. Renzi (2018) suggests that Addams hesitated about which stance to take and whether to address the incident publicly at all (Addams 1914a, 371). That she nevertheless addressed the issue, not only once but repeatedly (Addams 1914a, 1914b, 1916a, 1916b, 1930), and eventually developed an entire book (1916b) out of the event constitutes the motivation for my study.

At the time of the devil baby case, Addams had lived in the poor immigrant neighborhood for 25 years. Addams and her colleagues (Residents of Hull-House [1895] 2007; Deegan 2013, 253; McDonald 2013) pioneered multiple early empirical methods, including collecting "demographic information, information about nutrition, education, patterns of family life, information about working conditions, wages, and social behaviors, including domestic violence and sex slavery" (Rosiek and Pratt 2013, 583). In her first public account of the devil baby narrative, a speech at the convention of the General Federation of Women's Clubs in Chicago, Addams stressed the methodological aspect of the case. Understanding the implicit meanings of the tales, Addams explained,

required intercultural analytical skills that American society generally lacked. "We do not set up any adequate method or communication with the immigrant women….it takes a sort of technique and a training with a determination to understand them before we can uncover these reserves of moral ability and the power of life, which these women have come to embody." (1914a, 373).

Addams became particularly interested in the significance of the devil baby tales to the older women who arrived at Hull-House to see the baby and shared their life stories with her. The Hull-House neighborhood reflected the dramatic change in immigration around the turn of the twentieth century, when most immigrants were moving from pre-modern, rural areas of southern Italy, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and Russia (Knight 2005, 179, 194). The Anglo-Saxon majority saw them as "representing distinct races" and being "intellectually inferior" (Fischer 2019, 104). Immigrant residents in Addams' ward faced open discrimination in public discourse and by academics (Fischer 2019, 124–26). Addams (1916b) refers in *The Long Road* to the multiple layers of exclusion that they experienced, especially the older immigrant women. Their learned way of life, rooted in another world, clashed with the realities of an industrial metropolitan city. Addams highlights the loneliness and isolation experienced by the older women, whose younger family members often adapted more readily to their new society. As Addams analyzed the devil baby case, she discussed those whose marginalization had begun within their own families.

In her analysis, Addams utilized early versions of what are now referred to as qualitative cultural studies and media studies methods: participatory ethnography, autoethnography, and narrative and discourse analyses. Her primary resource was the legacy of American women writers, who had long used the genre of fiction to critically examine domestic issues (Pratt 2004). Fiction provided a way to write about the domestic realities behind the curtains of Victorian morality. As a participant in this tradition, Addams considered fiction a "strand of knowledge" (Rosiek and Pratt 2013, 583).

In *The Long Road,* Addams uses fiction (the devil baby tales) as the starting point from which she moves toward a revelation of and reflection upon psychological and social realities. She does this through reconstruction and analysis of women's stories and her own thoughts. Rosiek and Pratt (2013, 585–86) write that *The Long Road* is the clearest example of Addams using a narrative method to produce knowledge from personal experience—that of her informants and her own. Addams (1916b, 29) first observes that the devil baby tales represent a genre of communication that has historically been one of women's only methods of preventing domestic tragedies. She locates the devil baby tales on this continuum and interprets the Chicagoan tales as a method of "family discipline" (29), a cautionary tale that disciplines husbands and sons and warns daughters. However, Addams (1916b, 9–10, 33, 40) also observes that hundreds of older women perceived much more in the tales. They perceived their own reality in the narratives (e.g., 12, 36). The devil baby tales narrate "fundamental experiences" (22) with which these women could identify.

Fischer (2010) shows that *The Long Road* builds extensively on the then-topical theory of race memory and on European classical period literature, in particular the Greek tragedy and its famous scholar, Murray. Fischer (2010, 82–93) argues that Addams used these intellectual sources because they were well known among her educated readers and enabled her to extend the discussion to wider socio-political contexts and world politics, from domestic cruelty to the cruelty suffered by women in the ongoing World War I.

Fischer's (2010) analysis informs my study in two ways. First, her finding that Addams theoretically understood memory in her book as race memory means that Fisher views Addams' work as emphasizing collective memory. Race memory theory involves individuals subconsciously recognizing cultural archetypes (91). This would mean that Chicagoan immigrants recognized, in the devil baby tales, cultural archetypes, the interpretation of which was clear to them. Second, Fischer shows that Addams uses Greek tragedies as a medium through which she can channel communication of social realities from marginalized communities to dominant ones, and from enduring domestic issues to topical political ones. These two aspects are important premises for *the public*-related reading of *The Long Road,* but Fischer (2010) does not articulate them as *the public*-related themes.

Seigfried (2002) does not make an explicit case, either, but brings forth aspects that assist an informed reader in making connections between Addams, Tarde, and Park. First, Seigfried (2002, xxx) highlights Addams' observation that "mutual reminiscences reveal the commonality of some significant experiences among people who are otherwise so disparate." The revelation of the commonality of a significant experience is the factor that Tarde (1969, 277–78) and Park (1972, 43–50) view as the premise for the formation of *the public*. Second, Seigfried clarifies that memory, to Addams and to pragmatists, is not generally a "passive recall but a dynamic factor in making sense" of experiences (Seigfried 2002, xiv). Memory is "a new, constituting act of consciousness" (xxx) that can bridge between individual experiences and social and political processes, changing one's beliefs "radically" (xiv). Socio-political sense-making and the resulting contextualized consciousness are factors that Park (1972, 50–62), building on Tarde's (1969) idea of *the public* as consciousness, uses to distinguish *the public* from *the crowd*.

Thus, previous research on *The Long Road* suggests some leanings toward the theorizing of *the public*, but no prior research reveals the public-related pattern and contribution in the book. Next, I will introduce my own research design.

4. The research design: the public and hidden transcripts and the cultural discourse analysis

To show that Addams in *The Long Road* works with same questions as Tarde (1969) and Park (1972), I use the concept of public and hidden transcripts (Scott 1987, 1990) and the method of cultural discourse analysis (Carbaugh 2007; Carbaugh and Cerulli 2013, 2017). Based upon the currently available analytical tools, I locate my study under the poststructuralist approach of intellectual history (LaCapra 1983, 2009; Baring 2015), which activates in the analysis an "unfinalized notion of contextualization" (LaCapra 2009, 27). This means that the understanding of historical texts and contexts is considered to develop cumulatively alongside emergent researcher generations, who engage in dialogical deconstructions and reconstructions of meanings with past authors.

The concept of public and hidden transcripts (Scott 1987, 1990) connects the nineteenth-century tradition of writing about domestic realities in the disguise of fiction to twentieth and twenty-first-century political analysis. In his ground-breaking works, *Weapons of the Weak* (1987) and *Domination and the Arts of Resistance* (1990), Scott distinguishes a double structure in the communication of subordinated groups: the public transcript that is communicated openly and the hidden transcript that is communicated offstage. Scott (1987, 36; 1990, 44) observes that subordinated groups often communicate publicly in ways that cannot be used against them. More authentic experiences and opinions are revealed in hidden transcripts that can be found, for example, in privately

displayed narratives, songs, and jokes. Therefore, investigating only public utterances would be misleading. However, the analysis of hidden utterances would not be enough, either. The hidden transcript constitutes a commentary on the public transcript and "must be seen not alone but as the reaction to domination in the public transcript" (Scott 1990, 43–44). Research on public discourse thus requires analysis at both levels.

I regard the publicly circulated devil baby tales as the public transcript and the response that the tales evoked—the outpouring of personal narratives to Addams by the older women—as the hidden transcript. I use cultural discourse analysis (CuDA; Carbaugh 2007; Carbaugh and Cerulli 2013, 2017) to analyze these two levels in Addams' text. Cultural discourse analysis targets unarticulated axioms by addressing elements in communication that are "potent in meanings" (Carbaugh and Cerulli 2017, 3). The elements are identified under the discursive hubs of action, identity, relations, feelings, and dwelling. Dwelling refers both to spatial places and to the interpretation by participants of "concrete and contingent circumstances which serve as the grounds of our existence, our experiences, and lives" (Carbaugh and Cerulli 2013, 6).

The discursive hubs often provide complementary information about each other. For example, when a woman explicated her regular day to Addams (the hub of action), she implicitly communicated about herself (the hub of identity) and her relations to others (the hub of relations). Carbaugh and Cerulli (2013) call this complex "a meta-cultural commentary" that penetrates beyond "the surface of meanings" (10), addressing "the deeper significance and importance of the matters at hand" (10). In this way, CuDA resonates well with Scott's (1987, 1990) aim of revealing the hidden transcript behind the public transcript.

In the following sections, I use the concept of public and hidden transcripts and the method of cultural discourse analysis to show that Addams first weaves from the explicit content of the devil baby tales a socio-politically important message that the narratives implicitly contain. Addams then analyzes the reflection evoked by the tales and constructs a conceptual discussion that aligns with Tarde's (1969) and Park's (1972) notions of the formation of *the public*.

4.1. Cultural discourse analysis of the public transcript of the devil baby tales

Addams (1916b, 3–4) provides the following record of the Chicago devil baby tales. She relates Italian and Jewish versions of the tale, acknowledging that both were circulated with numerous variations. The Italian version, Addams writes, goes as follows:

> A pious Italian girl married to an atheist.
>
> Her husband in a rage had torn a holy picture from the bedroom wall
>
> saying that he would quite as soon have a devil in the house as such a thing,
>
> whereupon the devil incarnated himself in her coming child.
>
> As soon as the Devil Baby was born,
>
> he ran about the table shaking his finger in deep reproach at his father,
>
> who finally caught him and, in fear and trembling, brought him to Hull-House.
>
> When the residents there, in spite of the baby's shocking appearance,
>
> wishing to save his soul, took him to church for baptism,

> they found the shawl was empty
>
> and the Devil Baby, fleeing from the holy water,
>
> was running lightly over the backs of the pews. (1916b, 3–4)

The Jewish version, as given in Addams' book, is considerably shorter and narrower:

> The father of six daughters
>
> had said before the birth of the seventh child
>
> that he would rather have a devil in the family than another girl,
>
> whereupon the Devil Baby promptly appeared. (1916b, 4)

The discursive hubs of CuDA highlight the following features of the tales:

The hub of identity
The narratives introduce a pious Italian girl, an atheist husband, a father, a devil baby (indicated to be a son), daughters, the devil, and the Hull-House residents.

The hub of action
The described action consists of the tearing of a holy picture by the husband and the devil baby chasing the father, the disrespect paid to the daughters by the father, the devil's incarnation in an unborn child, that child's rebellion against his father, the Hull-House residents, and the church, and the father's search for protection. The act of getting the devil baby baptized to save his soul is attempted by the Hull-House residents, but the baptism is not completed due to the act of escape by the devil baby.

The hub of relations
The relations cover a family in which the devil is an intervening force. The only external earthly relations are to the Hull-House residents and to the religious institution of the church. Both have an intermediating role: They provide protection to the newborn and protection from the supernatural powers of the newborn.

The hub of feelings
The presented feelings are rage, deep reproach, fear, trembling, and shock.

The hub of dwelling
The only places are a bedroom, a table, Hull-House, and the church. When dwelling is understood as grounding circumstances (Carbaugh and Cerulli 2013, 6), the Italian version names piety, atheism, and marriage. Hull-House is introduced as a place to seek help and the church as a place to seek salvation for the soul.

The meta-commentary
The public transcript of the devil baby tales delivers a story about a man, his destructive domestic behavior, and the implications of his behavior on his family. The man's actions lead to "the devil" gaining influence in the family's life. The tales suggest deep tensions between family members and a lack of respect for women and girls by men. However, the public transcript also refers to acts of rebellion against authorities: the atheist husband

tears a holy picture, and the devil baby reproaches his father and escapes from the church baptism. The devil baby thus turns against his father, the church, and the Hull-House residents who have taken him for baptism. The rebellion is described in an impish manner. The tales thus attract attention to acts that challenge authority, yet the style of description of those acts deemphasize the threat of confrontation.

A glaring element of the meta-commentary is that essential parts of the story are missing. All discursive hubs lack female voice. The only references to women are that of a married girl who is expecting a child in the Italian version and the six daughters in the Jewish version. The tales do not refer to a mother, nor is the man's partner introduced as his wife. The Jewish version mentions no female partner at all. Consequently, there is no action by female members of the family. Nothing is revealed about how the mother experiences the incarnation of the devil in her unborn child or how she responds to the birth of the supernatural baby. The tales also do not mention how she survives being pious while married to an atheist, deals with being the target of her partner's aggressive behavior, and feels about expecting a child who may be rejected by his father.

The systematic silence of the female perspective in the devil baby tales suggests, first, that the tales indeed operate through the double structure of public and hidden transcripts, and second, that the hidden transcript, once revealed, will likely center on women. In *The Long Road*, Addams wrote of older women streaming to Hull-House to see the devil baby and pouring out the details of their lives to her. In addition to the hidden transcript of the devil baby tales, the gradual revelation of how Addams in her analysis begins to outline a distinction between the diverse responses to the tales is also notable; I consider this distinction relevant to the theorizing around the formation of *the public*.

4.2. Cultural discourse analysis of the hidden transcript of the devil baby tales

The hub of identity

The women speaking to Addams are mothers and grandmothers from diverse backgrounds. The uniting feature of their narratives is the imprinting of domestic tragedies upon entire lives and identities. These recounted tragedies include grave violence in the childhood home or marriage (Addams 1916b, 10, 12, 35, 44–46), the deaths of every single one of 14 children (10), and the early drifting of children into crime (36, 42). Another commonality is that the role as the guardian mother continues, regardless of children, especially sons, coming of age (51, 55). Although even aging women often continue to function as breadwinners who provide for extended families, the women's identities also consist of other layers, such as being world travelers due to immigration (41, 45) and being fluent in several languages (46).

The hub of action

Violent acts experienced by the women include a father killing a mother with a knife when the informant was 10 years old (Addams 1916b, 10), a father killing himself after trying to kill his wife and children when the informant was 12 years old (44–46), and a premature delivery by an informant due to her husband kicking her side (35). Another woman tells Addams the following:

> You might say it's a disgrace to have your son beat you up for the sake of a bit of money you've earned by scrubbing—your own man is different—but I haven't the heart to blame the boy for doing what he's seen all his life, his father forever went

> wild when the drink was in him and struck me to the very day of his death. The ugliness was born in the boy as the marks of the Devil was born in the poor child up-stairs [the assumed devil baby in the upstairs of Hull-House]. (1916b, 12)

The combination of extreme poverty and hard work defines many of the informants' acts. Low-paid work at that time included sewing clothes and scrubbing and cooking in factories and restaurants (Addams 1916b, 38, 46). Many women worked late hours, up to midnight, peeling potatoes, washing dishes, and cleaning floors. Unpaid work awaited them at home, including troublesome caregiving to disabled or severely ill family members or unemployed or alcoholic adult children. Nonetheless, the women express care and love for their children: those alive, those dead, and those who had disappeared.

The hub of relations

The women describe unalterable relations to adult family members who are unable to care for themselves. Husbands have often disappeared from the scene, and family relations have grown complex due to husbands' and sons' lovers and children born from extramarital relationships. If some children have climbed the social ladder, their mothers face the need to balance fortunate and unfortunate children's lives. Finally, the women have relationships with the surrounding society and authorities: representatives of schools, asylums, hospitals, prisons, and the army. These relations seem to position the women as objects (Addams 1916b, 10, 48). Supportive relations include workmates, neighbors, friends, and some of the children.

The hub of feelings

The women express a wide array of feelings, from excitement and curiosity about seeing the devil baby to grim sorrow and grief about hardships. Addams is stunned by the emotional serenity many visitors display as they deliver details of past and present tragedies (Addams 1916b, 24), but the women also communicate self-reproach concerning violent deaths in the family and self-sacrifice for adult children.

The hub of dwelling

Besides homes and workplaces, the women's narratives refer to urban scenes, such as saloons and red-light districts, and to sites of governmental intervention, including poorhouses, insane asylums, institutions for orphans, special classes, schools, universities, state penitentiaries, the army, and the court of domestic relations. When dwelling is understood as grounding circumstances (Carbaugh and Cerulli 2013, 6), the overarching circumstances are various brutal realities and interventions by modern society.

The meta-commentary

The women's descriptions, as documented by Addams, provide explicit commentary for the devil baby tales, resulting in the following changes in the narrative. First, the story is told with a woman's voice and from a woman's perspective. Second, the devil receives his due, which could take the form of abuse, alcoholism, crime, death, domestic violence, economic exploitation, hunger, illness, poverty, and unemployment. Third, the narrow scenes in the initial devil baby tales transform into much more sweeping depictions of modern society. Finally, instead of narrating information metaphorically and under the guise of anonymity, the older women's stories explicitly describe "monstrous social injustices" (Addams 1916b, xiii) and a "demoniac quality" of life (40),

voluminously sketched in the women's own voices. Addams hears the women speaking "with more confidence than they had ever done before" (45). This commentary, delivered to Addams and reported by her, is the hidden transcript of the devil baby tales. The Appendix collects the CuDA analyses of the public and hidden transcripts of the devil baby tales, as reported by Addams.

5. The interplay between the transcripts: women's responses to shifting forms of domination

According to Scott (1990), the hidden transcript is a reaction to domination in the public transcript. Scott (43–44) stresses that the hidden transcript "must be seen not alone" but in interplay with the public transcript. In this section, I analyze domination in the devil baby tales from Scott's perspective.

The public transcript of the devil baby tales articulates domination in terms of patriarchy, religion, and the institutions of modern society. The hidden transcript departs from the public transcript by instead describing matriarchal families. Most husbands and fathers have left the scene; breadwinning and parental judgment rest on women. The interplay between the transcripts thus not only refers to declining patriarchy but also highlights women's agency.

An even clearer pattern emerges regarding religion. Obedience to religious authorities is questioned throughout the public and hidden transcripts alike. In the public transcript, renunciation is embodied in the atheist husband who disparages his wife's faith and in the devil baby who refuses to join the church. Notably, criticism of religion is explicit in the hidden transcript as well, where it features in some of the women's own judgments. One woman describes herself to Addams as a "freethinker" (Addams 1916b, 47), and another questions the maintenance of conventional attitudes on religious grounds (62).

At the same time, both the public and the hidden transcript present religious domination as intertwined with other forms of domination. The public transcript describes Hull-House residents bringing the devil baby for baptism to save his soul. The public transcript thus constructs a link between religious authority and reformers of society—indeed, heralds of progressivism. Religious domination here operates indirectly through voluntary adherence to the sacrament of baptism. Analogously, the hidden transcript describes the indirect influence of religiously motivated sexual norms. The interplay between the public and hidden transcripts can be understood as emphasizing the persistence and socially subtle nature of religious domination in women's lives.

Institutions of modern society are presented in the public and hidden transcripts as effective but removed from ordinary people. In the public transcript, the good intentions of the Hull-House intellectuals fail due to the resistance of the devil baby, whose soul they wish to save. Introducing a gamut of authorities of modern society, the hidden transcript suggests their power: The army, court system, labor unions, schools, and prisons all reach out to families. In spite of their determination to define the direction of society, modern institutions seem to fail to win the souls of subordinates. The hidden transcript mostly refers to women's lack of enthusiasm for and passive relationships with these institutions. Following Scott (1987, 1990), the lack of enthusiasm can be interpreted as a form of taking a stand—precisely in the sense that Scott explored in his own studies. All in all, Scott's (1990) insight into the interplay between the public and the hidden transcript reveals women's active responses to shifting forms of domination by patriarchy, religion, and modern society.

6. From the devil baby tales toward an outline of a forming *public*

It is clear at this point that the devil baby tales had public value. Hundreds of women recognized the hardships addressed in the circulating tales, braved the streets, showed up at Hull-House, and used the tales to express in plain language their own subordination to men and the devils of daily survival. Scott's (1990) concept, according to which the public and the hidden transcripts complete each other as comments on domination, further clarifies that the devil baby tales not only communicated the experience of domination but also notions of agency and resistance by women. Together, the public and the hidden transcripts of the devil baby tales provide interpretations and developing judgments of social change by marginalized women.

However, Addams' (1916b) report not only reveals the public value of the narratives but also theorizes the devil baby case in ways that align with three conceptual aspects of the formation of *the public* by her contemporaries Tarde (1969) and Park (1972). First, *The Long Road* incorporates the aspect of consciousness, which, for Tarde and Park, is the point of departure for the formation of *the public*. Along with consciousness comes arousal of reciprocal feeling that enables strangers to recognize a uniting element and mutual empathy. Park (1972, 57), who in his conceptual distinction emphasizes reciprocal feelings particularly in the category of *the crowd*, argues that reciprocal feelings serve the important public function of perception-stage awareness-raising in large bodies of people, which is evident in the devil baby case. Addams (1916b, 84), referring to the public function of literature, writes that the devil baby tales redeemed "the mission of literature" by reducing the "crude pain in the isolated experience by bringing to the sufferer a realization that his is but the common lot." Addams nods here to the first function of memory, the individual psychological reinterpretation of hard experiences.

Second, *The Long Road* incorporates the aspect of silent reflection and private exchanges that, according to Tarde (1969), characteristically follows the state of becoming conscious of an issue. *The Long Road* largely describes this second aligning aspect, which Tarde sees as an essential stage toward the formation of *the public*.

However, Addams does not conclude her analysis with the remarkable event of the older women perceiving public address of their struggles and giving voice to their personal suffering in private exchanges. Addams continues to inquire about what prevents most women from moving to the socio-political level of interpretation of devastating realities, which for Addams is the area of the second function of memory. This inquiry is the third aspect that aligns *The Long Road* with contemporary theorizing around the formation of *the public*. Along with her inquiry into what prevents most women from moving to socio-political interpretations, Addams approaches the area of Park's (1972) decisive definition of *the public*. For Park, the separation between the two valuable social categories of *the crowd* and *the public* lies in *the public*'s critical search for explanations and the formation of collective will. Through critical discussion, *the public* serves as a preliminary stage for outlining new social norms to replace those that have become outdated (Park 1972, 80). Addams (1916b, xi–xiii), writing within the rhetorical frame of memory, views the socio-politically important "second function of memory" as materializing in the search for new standards to replace old traditions and conventions. Addams asks why such reinterpretation was only occasionally present in the devil baby case.

Most devil baby visitors, Addams (1916b, 99) hypothesizes, "were merely continuing the traditional struggle against brutality, indifference, and neglect that helpless old people and little children might not be trampled in the dust." For many, there seemed to be

no other exit from their devastating circumstances other than making peace in their own minds—in memory, as Addams says—which many women indeed did, thereby illuminating the individual psychological reinterpretation that makes life bearable. According to Addams, these women utilized "well-seasoned faculties in contrast to the newly developed powers" (99) demonstrated by younger emancipated women. For these older women, it was "the conditions under which the struggle is waged which have changed, rather than the nature of the contest" (99).

What Addams (1916b, 76–83, 115, 136–40) suggests here is that the decisive step lies in an awareness that the activated interpretative frameworks are social constructions that can be changed. The above CuDA analyses show that such awareness was mostly absent from the narratives the older women told Addams. The women constructed their identities mainly as mothers of multi-problem families; their actions were tied to iron-hard realities, their most defining relationships were destructive domestic relations, and their feelings primarily dealt with coping with tragedy. Thus, the women located their lives mainly within an interpretative framework that itself gave rise to many domestic problems. That interpretative framework was, according to Addams, adherence to rigid social conventions that had lost relevance in a society that had grown too complex to be comprehended by simple social norms.

To make her case, Addams (1916b, 53–64, 68–75, 115–31) provides three long monologues that build into examples of critiques of established conventions. The three narratives once again display women in the middle of tragedies and complex family relations. The first narrator (53–64) had lost her husband in a shooting in Paris "under very disgraceful circumstances" (55) that included an extramarital affair. Raising their son alone, the narrator had tried to protect him from his father's traits. Her rigid efforts had faced a devastating end, as the son, involved in a pre-marital affair himself, had committed suicide for not fulfilling his mother's standards. The mother, surviving both her husband and her son, had become the sole guardian of the dead son's assumed baby.

The second narrator (Addams 1916b, 68–75) had raised a family in a poor neighborhood with an unsupportive husband. Their son, who followed in his father's footsteps and became a circus performer, had sent his lover and unborn child to be cared for by his mother. His sisters, who had climbed the social ladder and were leading middle-class lives, considered their baby nephew a risk to their reputation. They invited the aging mother to live with them in a nice residential area but expected her first to abandon the illegitimate baby to an institute.

In a clear distinction from the previously discussed life stories in which marital and gendered conventions went unquestioned, Addams (1916b, 79) shows these narrators reflectively facing the consequences of conventional concepts condemning "fallen women" and their children. Introducing a third narrator, Addams (115–31) extends the discussion to conventions that legitimize war. The third narrator's scientist son had been required to use his expertise to advance killing during the World War I. After the son died on the front, the grieving mother denied her support for the war, and her criticism was now isolating her from patriotic family members. Addams takes the time to delicately unfold how the three narrators reflect upon their lives, consider which stance to take in the face of acute dilemmas, and gradually mature to criticize the conventions and moral codes that have previously ruled their lives and relations.

Here lies the answer to the research question. I asked what Addams (1916b) sees as the decisive factor in the transformation of established social ties and identities, which for her characterizes the second function of memory. The decisive factor Addams introduces is the stance taken on social conventions relevant to the issue at hand. The first

function of memory (the individual psychological reinterpretation) retains established social conventions. In contrast, the second function of memory (the socio-political reinterpretation) submits social conventions to critical reflection, develops independent judgments on them, and eventually detaches from conventions and norms that are deemed illegitimate.

When a grandmother approves of her grandchild born outside of wedlock (Addams 1916b, 68, 76, 78–79) and the mother of a soldier questions the justification for war (115–31), the setting of the transformation is an inward reconsideration of social conventions and social relations. Yet Addams (65) suggests that these women are on the verge of a significant shift that will reposition them both socially and politically. These "self-conscious" women are about to set aside the "iron fetters of convention" (78), and they are not alone. Their "analytical efforts are steadily supplemented by instinctive conduct on the part of many others" (65); memory begins to act "as a reproach, even as a social disturber" (53). Such a process inaugurates social change, Addams writes (xiii), but the process may be so slow that it appears to be a natural phenomenon.

7. *The Long Road*'s contribution to the theorizing of *the public*

The above sections have shown that Addams' coverage in *The Long Road* aligns with three aspects of the formation of *the public,* as conceived by Tarde (1969) and Park (1972). First, Addams describes the awakening of consciousness about a collectively relevant concern; second, the emergence of non-public conversations about that topic. At this point, the premises for the formation of *the public* do exist, according to Tarde and Park. Addams goes on and, third, constructs a conceptual distinction between the two functions of memory, highlighting independent critical judgment as the divider between the two functions. This aligns her analysis with the decisive factor that Park (1972) argues distinguishes *the public* from *the crowd.*

Although Addams does not use a public-related vocabulary, it seems as if she first investigated the premises for the formation of something like *the public* in the devil baby case before eventually analyzing why the decisive stage of such formation materialized only occasionally. In any case, Addams' coverage is well-tuned to the theorization of her day, yet distinguishable in that she presents an unusual perspective by discussing development toward transformative public interaction in a seemingly irrational devil baby case and among politically, socioeconomically, culturally, and gender-marginalized people. Instead of the performative and dramatic public debate that has been cherished in sociology, political science, and journalism from Park's days on (Starr 2021, 65), Addams addresses discreet genres of communication and shows their public relevance. In *The Long Road*, the genres are, first, folkloristic tales that, through the disguise of religious motives, address devastating realities and social change; second, heart-searching in the solitude of mind; and third, monologues to a sole listener. The lengthy monologues in *The Long Road* can be read as an effort by Addams to give public form to the inner reflection that takes place within her informants and herself.

By making their reflection visible, Addams communicates the suffering of marginalized women to educated elites and the primarily Anglo-Saxon middle class, illuminating a cultural agency that elites had ignored, which is a contribution that Seigfried (2002) and Fischer (2010) perceive in *The Long Road*. Further, Addams conceptually includes representatives of a marginalized communicative culture, whom researchers still today tend to overlook, in public interaction capable of transforming established social relations and identities.

This aspect is significant. The notion that subordinated groups, such as women without a vote and marginalized minorities, are outside public life is, according to Fraser (1990, 58–63), an ideological construction that prevents scholars from perceiving the diversity of public participation.

The reading of *The Long Road* as an outline of development toward the formation of *the public* emphasizes that our understanding of public interaction cannot be reduced to the concepts and genres suitable for dominant and privileged groups. Addams' writing highlights that people in cosmopolitan cities were and still are not going to join *the public* on the basis of similar political rights or similar communication cultures. *The Long Road* reads as a legacy of the diverse and occasionally subtle forms that interaction with a changing society and resistance to domination can take in human experience. Addams speaks to us of a critically important issue: Identifying the discreetly forming *public* may require methodological competence from the researcher and journalist alike.

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Leena Ripatti-Torniainen, PhD, is Senior Lecturer at Tampere University, Finland. Her research covers three areas: 1) theorization of the public realm, 2) inclusion and exclusion as communicative social phenomena, and 3) university education and academic leadership and development. Her previous study of Jane Addams, *The Transformative Public of Jane Addams*, was published in *Journalism* in 2022. Hypatia's readers may be interested in the study *The Human Core of the Public Realm* for which she theorized women prisoners' performed "radio" at the Majdanek concentration camp. The study, written with Grazyna Stachyra, was published in *Media, Culture and Society* in 2019.

Appendix

Table 1. The cultural discourse analyses of the public and hidden transcripts of the Chicago devil baby tales

DISCURSIVE HUB	DEVIL BABY TALES as reported by Addams (1916b, 3–4) THE PUBLIC TRANSCRIPT	OLDER WOMEN'S NARRATIVES as reported by Addams (1916b, 1–52) THE HIDDEN TRANSCRIPT
Hub of identity	**Italian version:** Pious Italian married girl with an unborn child Atheist husband and father Devil Devil baby (indicated to be male) Hull-House residents **Jewish version:** Father of six daughters and an unborn child Devil Devil baby	Mothers and grandmothers Survivors of tragedy and trauma Breadwinners, sole guardians Cosmopolitans
Hub of action	**Italian version:** Raging and tearing a holy picture Preferring a devil in the house over the holy picture Incarnating oneself into a child Being born Reproaching one's father Seeking help for/from the baby Taking the baby for baptism Escaping the sacrament of baptism **Jewish version:**	Presence of acts of domestic and other violence Acts related to extreme poverty Acts of low-paid hard work and endless home-based duties Acts of care and love

(*Continued*)

Table 1. (*Continued.*)

DISCURSIVE HUB	DEVIL BABY TALES as reported by Addams (1916b, 3–4) THE PUBLIC TRANSCRIPT	OLDER WOMEN'S NARRATIVES as reported by Addams (1916b, 1–52) THE HIDDEN TRANSCRIPT
	Preferring a devil over another daughter Appearing (the act by the devil)	
Hub of relations	**Italian version:** Pious girl—an atheist husband Devil—newborn child Father—devil baby Father—Hull-House residents Hull-House residents—devil baby Hull-House residents—church Devil baby—church **Jewish version:** Father—six daughters and unborn child Devil—unborn baby	Domestic relations Supportive social relations Destructive social relations Relations to institutional representatives of modern society
Hub of feelings	**Italian version:** Rage of husband Deep reproach of his father by devil baby Fear and trembling of father Shock of Hull-House residents **Jewish version:** Negative emotions communicated by father to daughters	Emotional serenity concerning past tragedies Excitement, curiosity Self-reproach, self-sacrifice Sorrow
Hub of dwelling	**Places, all in Italian version:** Bedroom and table at home Hull-House Church **Grounding circumstances:** Parenting Aggression and disrespect in domestic life **Additionally, in the Italian version:** Authority of and protection by church Marriage Piety and atheism Protection by Hull-House	**Places:** Domestic sites: homes and workplaces Specialized units of modern society (from care homes to prisons) Urban scenes, providing income and causing threat **Grounding circumstances:** Domestic and other violence Codes of respectability in sexual and marital conduct Extreme poverty and hard work Immigration Law Multiple problems

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