

### Use Authorization

In presenting this thesis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for an advanced degree at Idaho State University, I agree that the Library shall make it freely available for inspection. I further state that permission to download and/or print my thesis for scholarly purposes may be granted by the Dean of the Graduate School, Dean of my academic division, or by the University Librarian. It is understood that any copying or publication of this thesis for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

WAGE SLAVERY AND AMERICA'S LABOR MOVEMENT  
FROM THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION TO THE GREAT DEPRESSION

By

Seth Kirkpatrick

A thesis

submitted in partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts in Historical Resources Management in the Department of History

Idaho State University

Spring 2016

Copyright (2016) Seth Kirkpatrick

To the Graduate Faculty:

The members of the committee appointed to examine the thesis of Seth Kirkpatrick find it satisfactory and recommend that it be accepted.

---

Dr. Kevin Marsh,  
Major Advisor

---

Dr. Paul Sivitz,  
Committee Member

---

Dr. James Skidmore,  
Graduate Faculty Representative

## Table of Contents

List of Figures .....	vi
Abstract .....	vii
Introduction.....	1
Chapter I: How Capitalism Changed the Space of Work .....	15
Focal Study: The Rise of Wage Labor .....	25
Chapter II: The Origins and Development of the Wage Slave Argument .....	38
Focal Study: Conditions of Early Industrialization.....	55
Chapter III: The Workers' New Place, Identity, and Radicalism .....	70
Focal Study: Radicalism and the Industrial Workers of the World .....	88
Chapter IV: Government Intervention in Labor and Capital .....	105
Focal Study: Recessions and the Committee of Industrial Organization.....	118
Chapter V: Using GIS to Create Collaborative Social Simulations .....	125
Conclusion .....	139
Bibliography .....	161
Appendix.....	170

## **List of Figures**

Figure 1: U.S Production Index from 1790-1850 .....	37
Figure 2: U.S Production Index from 1851-1915 .....	37
Figure 3: Google N-Gram: Wage Slavery 1820-1865.....	104
Figure 4: Google N-Gram: Wage Slavery 1870-1945.....	104
Figure 5: Recessions in the U.S. 1857-1945.....	124
Figure 6: Google N-Gram: Wage Slavery 1950-2005.....	151

## **Abstract**

Industrialization changed the space of work in America during the 1800s. The wage slave argument, the belief that wage labor was completely, or in part, unfree in a capitalist society, was used extensively throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to criticize the rapidly changing industrial capitalist landscape. Examining how and why the wage slavery argument was used in America during the first Industrial Revolution up through the Great Depression shows how workers identified with work based on a conflicted view of freedom, describes the origins of America's labor movement, reveals how the argument was shared by both radical and conservative labor unions, and helps explain why the U.S. government passed Progressive legislation that protected workers' rights. The author also argues for utilizing Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to conduct "social simulations," creating a dynamic map from participant interactions wherein wage slavery can be analyzed and the argument more directly explored.

## **Introduction**

The institution of slavery conjures up images of pyramid-building Egyptian slaves, Roman servants, or North American southern plantation workers. Fewer are the images of wage-working northern Idaho miners or factory laborers. Yet, wage laborers have since the First Industrial Revolution (roughly 1760-1840), which began in the coal rich regions of Great Britain, considered themselves at one time or another a slave. This sentiment has been expressed by intellectual commentators from before the Enlightenment up to and including the present.

Traditional slavery is defined as one human being owned by another human being as property (one person has control over the choices of another person, can dictate what that person can or cannot do). Wage slavery is defined as a worker whose existence is contingent upon the wage that he or she receives, especially if that wage is insufficient to provide for basic needs. The wage slave argument is that the worker must rent himself or herself to an employer under conditions the worker has little or no say over to earn a living.

The idea of wage workers being considered slaves undermines the established belief that what distinguishes a slave from someone who is free is a paid wage set by a free labor contract with an employer who has no claim of ownership over the employee. If this definition is accepted at face value, it would be difficult to defend the argument of wage slavery. However, words do not always capture correctly the emotional expression meant to be conveyed. Slavery can be considered the condition of being the property of someone else. It can also be considered an institution propagated to establish and promote an economic way of life. Above all, slavery denotes a degree of subservience to another



human being by force or necessity. Subservience out of necessity is how wage slavery has traditionally been argued by wage workers and defended by intellectuals. This point also destroys the easy distinction of one being or not being a slave defined solely by ownership and promotes the idea that slavery is *felt*, that slavery is not a cut and dried definition but an emotional response to a social reality.

If slavery is a feeling, it can be felt, like other emotions, in degrees. Equality is a good example. It follows that the more equal one feels, the less likely one would cite feelings of being *like* a slave. Unequal representation felt by Americans was one argument for the American Revolution. American labor critics and laborers themselves often cited feelings of inequality when using the wage slave argument, if not directly referring to themselves as slaves like the Knights of Labor (KOL) and the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) did. Even the American Federation of Labor (AFL) cited capital as the oppressors and labor as the oppressed. Pragmatic Samuel Gompers, first President of the American Federation of Labor, identified the need for equality thusly: “When a man puts a pistol to my head and tells me to deliver, there is no arbitration. There can be arbitration only between equals. Let us organize: then we will stand on an equal footing with the employers.”<sup>1</sup> Gompers, who was the most conservative of labor leaders during the late-nineteenth century and early-twentieth, testified the following before a Senate committee in 1913 in opposition to the Sherman Act which held that union activity was conspiracy in restraint of trade: “What would be the condition of the working men in our country in our day by acting as individuals with as great a concentrated wealth and industry on every hand? It is horrifying even to permit the

---

<sup>1</sup> Samuel Gompers, *Rocky Mountain News*, February 10, 1888, accessed November 20, 2015, <http://www.gompers.umd.edu/quotes.htm#LABOR>.

imagination full swing to think what would be possible. Slavery! Slavery! Demoralized, degraded slavery. Nothing better.”<sup>2</sup> Gompers would also call for the “emancipation of workers” and the “abolition of the wage system.”

The Industrial Revolution, coupled with capitalism, upset traditional methods of rural and artisan work, introducing social changes such as rural migrations due to enclosure or choice and economic changes where capitalism relied exclusively on the wage system of labor. These components, in part, resulted in an argument of wage slavery felt and discussed by wage workers and social critics alike who questioned the amount of freedom American wage workers actually possessed under industrial capitalism. In addition to the use of the wage slave argument as a rhetorical tool by discontent workers, the argument captures how wage workers felt united, although reluctantly, under a condition of “wage slavery,” consolidating major union organizations which all professed to elevate the working class. The different tactics and solutions professed by each union organization often tore them apart and made them enemies rather than allies.

This paper explores how the wage slave argument was developed by social critics, common laborers, radical labor, labor leaders and even the United States government who all made use of the wage slave argument. How the wage slave argument developed within America helps explain the American labor movement because it provides unique insights into how industrial capitalism changed the space and place of wage workers up to when the United States government passed laws specifically addressing labor concerns

---

<sup>2</sup> Samuel Gompers, “Testimony,” Sixty-second Congress, Third Session, Senate Reports No. 1326 Vol. II (Washington, 1913), p. 1728, in *The Progressive Movement 1900-1915*, Richard Hofstadter (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1963), 102.

during the 1930s, how the words and arguments used by workers and social critics demonstrate how they identified with their new work spaces and social place, and how workers identify with work relates to the concepts of freedom and slavery in a post-industrial America. Indeed, wage slavery was not as radical as the term may sound, and every major union made use of or referenced the argument, as did the U.S. government to pass New Deal and Progressive legislation which ultimately guaranteed labor what they fought so hard to achieve on their own: legal formation of recognized unions, collective bargaining, the right to strike, a maximum work week and security in a turbulent economic society.

The wage slave argument, having a long, infused history with the rise and predominance of wage labor, is an overlooked core issue, largely marginalized by labor history, which ought to be further discussed in relation to the working class movement. For example, Melvyn Dubofsky, a “new labor” historian who has published several books and multiple essays on radical labor in the American West, particularly the IWW, often cites Bill Haywood, Ed Boyce and other radicalized labor leaders whose words refer to wage workers as slaves and wage labor as a form of “industrial slavery.” In his essay “The Origins of Western Working-Class Radicalism, 1890-1905,” Dubofsky chooses not to explore why radical labor leaders chose those particular words. Without exploring why those chosen words were used, he misses the opportunity to link radical labor rhetoric to earlier comparisons of U.S. wage labor and slave labor, content to conclude, in regards to Idaho, “corporations had finally succeeded in polarizing Idaho politics and society”<sup>3</sup> prompting the WFM to view trade unionism as a failure and

---

<sup>3</sup> Melvyn Dubofsky, “The Origins of Western Working-Class Radicalism, 1890-1905” in *Hard Work* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 50.

radicalism, socialism, and direct action as their most promising avenue to exercise power in their workspaces. Radicalism, though pronounced in the West because of “corporate social polarization,” cannot be divorced from wage slave rhetoric and ideology rooted in the U.S.’s eastern past. This is not to contend that radicalism in the West was *because* of wage slave rhetoric; only that, by failing to connect the *language* of radicalism, labor history fails to account for the true origins of working-class radical rhetoric.

Radicals, as Dubofsky reminds us in his essay “Not so Turbulent ‘Years’: Another Look at America in the 1930s,” were a very small percent of the labor force. The peak year for labor strikes, 1919, (in the U.S. but also across the globe), only saw “seven out of one thousand wage-earners participat[ing] in strikes” citing Isidore Lubin’s 1934 (another peak strike year, followed by 1937) report on the year’s labor unrest for President Roosevelt.<sup>4</sup> There were 1,856 strikes in 1934. Compare that to over 3,000 strikes every month from January to June in 1919. And yet, there was no working-class revolution in America like in Russia, no formation of a political labor party like in Britain and, indeed, no great labor gains without the government’s support which began with Theodore Roosevelt, expanded under Woodrow Wilson, and cemented under Franklin Roosevelt. Lubin’s report in 1934 and Dubofsky’s insightful account of the geography of the U.S. where such massive space could “dilute the impact of industrial conflict nationally,” coupled with the fact that state capitals in America (unlike the great European capitals) were not often directly impacted by labor unrest and strikes,<sup>5</sup> can perhaps account for the absence of a working class revolution in America.

---

<sup>4</sup> Melvyn Dubofsky, “Not so Turbulent ‘Years’: Another Look at America in the 1930s,” in *Hard Work* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000), 138.

<sup>5</sup> Dubofsky, “Not so Turbulent ‘Years’,” 139.

There is not abundant literature on the topic of wage slavery itself.<sup>6</sup> However, historians who wrote about wage slavery often did so from a racial point of view. For example, Lara Vapnek and Susan Levine approached the wage slave argument from a nineteenth century white women's perspective. As such, the wage slave argument was used by white women (and men) to emphasize the idea that, being white, they should not be treated like slaves, that due to their race they could, and should, demand more respect in the work place. Vapnek carries the idea that wage slavery was “white slavery” much further than Levine. Levine's focus was on making key points about women being part of labor unions (Knights of Labor, specifically) which would save them from wage slavery.<sup>7</sup>

Eric Foner in his *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party before the Civil War* argues that Republican ideology saw those who could enter and compete in the free market, those who could dictate their labor, as being essentially free. To clarify, if one chose for whom to work where doing what for how long for what wage, and those choices were not dictated by another, then one was essentially able to be a part of the free market and to be free himself by dictating his own choices. Slaves could not dictate their labor, so they could not enter the market. The Republican view of freedom was incompatible with that held by the South (slaves were necessary for progression). The difference between these views resulted in competing ideologies over labor and what it meant to be free during the antebellum period and, eventually, resulted in the U. S. Civil War. Freedom, then, economically speaking, was at the heart of the matter, at least ideology-wise. It is noted that Foner touches on wage

---

<sup>6</sup> Marcus Cunliffe's *Chattel Slavery and Wage Slavery: The Anglo-American Context, 1830-1960* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2008) is an exception. Those who have explored the argument are featured throughout this paper and are mentioned in the footnotes.

<sup>7</sup> Susan Levine, “Labor's True Woman: Domesticity and Equal Rights in the Knights of Labor,” *The Journal of American History* 70, no. 2 (September 1983): 326, accessed September 16, 2014, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1900207>.

slavery as a critique of both the Northern and Southern methods of production and the resulting impact those methods had on those who provided the labor. The U. S. Civil War is not the focus of this paper and, whatever role the wage slave argument had in the war's occurrence, will not be a primary objective. What will be of import is the rhetoric behind the wage slave argument and how the idea of free labor was critiqued by both wage workers and pro-slavery southerners.

Like Foner, Marcus Cunliffe, author of *Chattel Slavery and Wage Slavery* confines his examination of the argument to the antebellum period and also suggests how wage slavery is “white slavery.” Cunliffe explores the racial angle, but the arguments presented are indicative of labor degradation more than racial privilege and, as such, race is not the primary motivation for his exploration. He, like the author of this paper, is seeking to answer the question of why “free” laborers would compare themselves to “slaves.” On the surface, the concept that wage workers were slaves seems insulting to those who really were slaves, those who were really someone's “property.” Yet, as the conditions of wage laboring free workers degraded, the wage slave argument exposed (as both a rhetorical device and a philosophical reality) what discontent labor considered the lie inherent in the Republican and liberal definition of being “free:” dependence on an unsure wage, sacrificing labor, time, and individual control to another in order to survive, i.e. reliance on a wage for survival.

Chocking the wage slave argument up to race alone disregards the long-standing feeling of labor being treated like slaves from before the America Civil War to far after. Race alone cannot account for the comparisons of wage labor to slave labor based on industrial work environments for all races and genders, especially with the inclusion of

African American membership in unions (KOL and IWW), the concentration of capital, and the existence of monopolies after the Civil War which affected all labor regardless of race or gender. There was, without a doubt, as Vapnek, Cunliffe and other historians point out, a racial argument being made when talking about wage slavery as “white slavery.” Wage slavery, however, is not *only* “white” slavery; it is a feeling labor has in regard to its relationship with its employers under a system of wages. Likewise, the wage slave argument has been overlooked for its critique on a changing space of work and the workers' place in that space.

This paper focuses on the labor and spatial aspect of the wage slave argument more than on the racial angle, for there is discovered a better understanding of labor's concept of freedom and why it would compare itself to slaves of any color. The rhetoric and examination of wage slavery, in the end, is a critique of a system which shaped a new social reality, not of the working conditions of a race. An entry in the *Journal* of the Knights of Labor from the summer of 1883 sums this fact up nicely:

We think slavery simply consists in placing oneself in that condition where he is powerless to exact an equivalent for services rendered...The coercion of a man or holding of the labor of his hands, or the services of his faculties to the benefit of another without the freedom or power to compel an exact equivalent, is and always will be slavery, without regard to color, race, location or position. The essential fact of slavery, therefore, is that it places one man in the possession of the labor of another under conditions which are compulsory upon the latter, or leaves him no room for the exercise of that power or freedom that would permit him to demand and exact an equal return, and whatever differences may exist between this and the holding of slaves in the South is in a degree only, and not in kind, as neither the wage slave or the chattel-slave was in a position to arrange the terms of competence for labor performed.<sup>8</sup>

---

<sup>8</sup> Knights of Labor, *Journal* 4, no. 4 (August 1883): 539, accessed November 3, 2015, <http://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/000548606>.

The argument of wage slavery is one which signifies a coercion or lack of choice on the part of the individual through the transformation of work, promoting a condition which discontent labor referred to as an absence of freedom resulting in feelings of slavery. This feeling was addressed depending on how labor or a laborer identified with work. As Helga Hallgrimsdottir and Cecilia Benoit explore in their article “From Wage Slaves to Wage Workers: Cultural Opportunity Structures and the Evolution of the Wage Demands of the Knights of Labor and the American Federation of Labor 1880-1900,” how one identified with the capitalist space, how one chose to view his or her place in that space, changed one's language. If individuals identified as producers who felt exploited (and where exploitation would end only after overthrowing the wage system itself), they called themselves wage slaves. If individuals identified as consumers who felt capitalism was a system with which they could positively negotiate, they called themselves wage workers. The above quote from the Knights of Labor used the argument to promote the working class movement as evidenced by the first sentence. The Knights of Labor as a union wanted full value for their work and, as such, could use the argument only by identifying with work. Those who viewed work as the root problem would find fault with the first sentence, such as Paul Lafargue. Paul Lafargue was a French socialist and Karl Marx's brother-in-law. He wrote the following criticism of the “imposed” capitalist work ethic on the proletariat in 1883 while in a French prison:

And meanwhile the proletariat, the great class embracing all the producers of civilized nations, the class which in freeing itself will free humanity from servile toil and will make of the human animal a free being, – the proletariat, betraying its instincts, despising its historic mission, has let itself be perverted



by the dogma of work. Rude and terrible has been its punishment. All its individual and social woes are born of its passion for work.<sup>9</sup>

There are two diverging positions on work apparent in the above quotes, despite both using the themes of oppression, of freedom and of slavery inherent in wage work or, rather, work in general. The first is the bourgeoisie work ethic which states that work is both a social good and an economic good. Work enriches the country and the individual. Lafargue counters this “dogma of work” by citing work as the cause of poverty, lower wages and more exploitation due to over-work and thus, overproduction accompanied by unemployment. “Work, work, proletarians, to increase social wealth and your individual poverty; work, work, in order that becoming poorer, you may have more reason to work and become miserable. Such is the inexorable law of capitalist production.”<sup>10</sup> Lafargue is stating generally that if workers believe in a capitalist work ethic then they are creating the conditions which render them impoverished. It is important to remember that the wage slave argument is always used to criticize the world of work under capitalism, but the arguer employs the argument for one of two different ends, hoping it will lead to “freedom:” freedom to work on his or her own terms, with goals such as improving working conditions, or owning the means of production, or seeking the diminution of work.

Labor history has been developed by exploring the labor movement, the struggles of working-class individuals to organize for better working conditions. Labor history can be separated into “old” labor history, where focus was on unions, political parties, strikes, and economics, explaining labor history from a “top-down” approach (contrary to “new”

---

<sup>9</sup> Paul Lafargue, *The Right to be Lazy: And Other Studies*, trans. Charles H. Kerr (Chicago: John F. Higgins, 1883), 13, accessed October 20, 2015, <https://www.marxists.org/archive/lafargue/1883/lazy/ch01.htm>.

<sup>10</sup> Lafargue, *The Right to be Lazy*, Ch. 2.

labor historians who approached their craft from the “bottom-up”) championed by the University of Wisconsin-Madison and where “old” labor historians such as John R. Commons, author of *History of Labor in the United States (1918-1935)*, Selig Perlman and Philip Taft learned their trade. “New” labor history burgeoned in the 1960s with such historians as Melvyn Dubofsky, David Brody, David Montgomery, Eric Hobsbawm, Herbert Gutman and Eric Foner. David Brody’s essay, “Reconciling the Old Labor History and the New” helps clarify what is meant by “new” labor history as opposed to “old” labor history.

Brody concedes that old and new labor history share similar patterns when addressing strikes, unions and labor leaders, but notes the primary difference is that old labor was written from an economic perspective rather than from a *historical* perspective which focuses on the *individual* rather than the institutions that individual belonged to or operated under. E.P. Thompson’s *The Making of the English Working Class* is almost always cited as a classic of new labor history. Herbert Gutman, Brody conceives, broke away from the Wisconsin school of thought and studied worker agency, worker community and worker social ideology.<sup>11</sup> Second, labor history became “radical history” founded during the 1960s and practiced by the New Left (again, replacing Old Left historians) who challenged that “the role of historians [was] to approach the past in a detached and neutral way, that interpretation was to be judged only by how well it accounted for the facts...”<sup>12</sup> Radical history claims that objectivity in history is tenuous, even undesirable, for “value judgments” and “ideology” are more important than “historical truth,” something unachievable because “each generation could see through

---

<sup>11</sup> David Brody, “Reconciling the Old Labor History and the New,” *Pacific Historical Review* 62, no. 1 (February 1993): 8.

<sup>12</sup> Brody, “Reconciling the Old Labor History and the New,” 11.

the lens of its own age and that the real vitality of history derived from what the historian brought to and needed from the past.”<sup>13</sup> This position does not diminish the rigorous scholarship expected from historians, though it does acknowledge a subjective side to an otherwise objective discipline.

Labor history did not become an established, professional sub-discipline of history until the early 1970s. This is not surprising, given that the journal *Labor History* was not founded until 1958, and the journal *International Labor and Working Class History* was not published until 1972. Quick to rise, labor history shows signs of aging prematurely. Melvyn Dubofsky states that “Between 1977 and 1994, labor history itself seemed to pass from the prime of life to a senescence in which younger, newer, and more vigorous subfields of history overtook it.”<sup>14</sup> To stay relevant, to identify new sources, and to publish meaningful works of history, labor historians have turned to the very subfields which Dubofsky saw as more vigorous: gender, identity, and language which have “enriched labor history.” Language, as a form of expressing feelings and ideas by labor, is a core theme of this thesis.

It was the past within which radical history attempted to live, finding ways to breathe new life into the working class movement after it was “tamed” by New Deal policies and protected by collective bargaining rights. What was left for labor historians when labor struggles largely seemed to be a thing of the past? How can labor historians connect with the individuals about whom we write or, particularly important to this thesis, the voices of these individuals when there is little evidence of a united proletariat or powerful radical labor rhetoric today? In answer, this thesis attempts to find a middle

---

<sup>13</sup> Brody, “Reconciling the Old Labor History and the New, 12

<sup>14</sup> Melvyn Dubofsky, “Starting Out in the Fifties: True Confessions of a Labor Historian,” in *Hard Work* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois, 2000), 29.

ground between old and new labor history, focusing on labor unions and politics while simultaneously bringing the voices of the wage laborers, radical or not, to the surface and connecting those voices with the actions of their unions and government. This thesis also attempts what radical history has attempted before: to be socially relevant today.

The wage slave argument herein is examined from the Industrial Revolution through the Great Depression, exploring primarily America but also mentioning Britain. This thesis explores the above and following information over five chapters. A comprehensive scope is required to fully appreciate and understand how the wage slave argument informed labor struggles in America. Because of this scope, more out of necessity than design, the five chapters broadly cover how and when the wage slave argument was used. The broadness of this thesis is tempered by including focus studies which provide necessary context and by relying on the voices of individuals involved during the period this thesis covers. Through their words, the depth of the wage slave argument can be plumbed.

Chapter I provides an overview of the changing definition of freedom and the political, economic, and social ramifications thereof. It also explains that freedom was defined by those who were in the best position to benefit from such a definition. A focal study showing the rise of wage labor is also included. Chapter II explores the origin of the wage slave argument, how it was argued as a response to the liberal and Republican definitions of freedom, and presents a focal study explaining the early conditions of industrialization in both Britain and America. Chapter III discusses the appearance of national labor unions, examines how the unions utilized the wage slave argument to further the working class movement, and explains in what ways workers identified with

their new work space and how they felt about their place in that space. Chapter III features a focal study detailing the rise of the radical Industrial Workers of the World. Chapter IV examines how the American government related to work through intervention on behalf of workers and/or employers. Chapter V covers methodology and pedagogy of using GIS to create collaborative social simulations to answer abstract social questions and interpret experiences concerning difficult to “map” ideas, such as the wage slave argument. Finally, the conclusion is shared with a section featuring a focal study about individuals who argue that work itself is the enslaving element in society rather than only the wage system.

Some labor expressed the feeling of being a slave through various methods indicative of labor dissatisfaction: striking, unionizing, acts of violence, and even seeking education hoping to eliminate wage slavery. Some believed the solution to wage slavery was higher wages. Some believed the solution could only be realized in the overthrow of the wage system of capitalism itself. Others believed wage slavery could not exist in a free market economy where labor could choose for whom to work and when to leave at will, ignoring those who considered those choices to be mere illusion.

## **Chapter I: How Capitalism Changed the Space of Work**

Freedom, or liberty, was a core theme of the Enlightenment and, arguably, best compiled in the form of the “American Declaration of Independence” and the French “Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen.” Both documents proclaim the idea that humans are created equal with individual rights, such as liberty. They both contain the idea that governmental authority is derived from the people and that the government is instituted for the common welfare of its citizens. They both are backdrops for liberal revolutions which argued the right of government (divinely appointed vs governed by consent) and the role of the aristocratic privilege (land as power) and of the merchants (money as power). Establishing what it meant to be free became paramount to developing and maintaining what, in the end, amounted to an economic way of life: capitalism. To understand how the space of work shifted from mainly agricultural to industrial, it is imperative to explore the ideological root of capitalism: “freedom.”

The first section of the “Virginia Declaration of Rights” composed in 1776 begins with the idea of freedom: “That all men are by nature equally free and independent and have certain inherent rights, of which, when they enter into a state of society, they cannot, by any compact, deprive or divest their posterity; namely, the enjoyment of life and liberty, with the means of acquiring and possessing property, and pursuing and obtaining happiness and safety.”<sup>15</sup> There is an interesting inclusion in this section that is omitted in the later drafted “American Declaration of Independence,” specifically, “entering into a state of society.” The “Virginia Declaration of Rights” touches on the very popular Enlightenment idea of there being a state of nature, which will be discussed later in this

---

<sup>15</sup> George Mason, “Virginia Declaration of Rights,” 12 June 1776, accessed March 28, 2014, [http://www.gunstonhall.org/georgemason/human\\_rights/vdr\\_final.html](http://www.gunstonhall.org/georgemason/human_rights/vdr_final.html).

chapter.

The French “Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen” drafted in 1789 also begins with the idea that humans are born free and equal in rights and goes on to define liberty. Article IV defines liberty as “doing anything which does not harm others: thus, the exercise of the natural rights of each man has only those borders which assure other members of the society the enjoyment of these same rights. These borders can be determined only by the law.”<sup>16</sup> This last sentence is important, for it captures the idea of the social contract, or the idea that freedom is best secured in a civil government, in a civilization rather than in a state of nature.

Classical Liberalism produced a definition of freedom over hundreds of years from a competing idea of what it meant to be free in a state of nature as opposed to being free in a state of civilization. In what ways was freedom defined in America and how did that definition influence relations of American wage workers (and their employers)? It is difficult to understand the American Revolution or the French Revolution, let alone capital-labor relations, without understanding liberty defined by John Locke. According to John Locke, British philosopher and a founder of Classical Liberalism, one is perfectly free to “order their actions, and dispose of their possessions and persons, as they think fit, within the bounds of the law of nature, without asking leave, or depending upon the will of any other man.”<sup>17</sup> Locke argues in 1689 that the law of nature described above is human reason. By reasoning that everyone is “equal and independent, no one ought to harm another in his life, health, liberty, or possessions.” Therefore, any member in a state

---

<sup>16</sup> France, “Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen,” 26 August 1789, accessed September 11, 2014, [http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th\\_century/rightsof.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/rightsof.asp).

<sup>17</sup> John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, ed. Thomas Hollis (London: A. Millar et al., 1764), ch. 2, accessed September 12, 2014, <http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/222>.

of civilization, a member of a state, ought to at a minimum have their life, health, liberty, and possessions protected by law. How the law sided with one person over another in defense of these protections, although both were theoretically equal, created strains between employers and employees, especially as wage labor and “free labor” contracts became more common in early nineteenth century America.

The above declarations all hinge on the rule of law. Obviously these declarations benefited those who already had property. Nineteenth century critics like Paul Lafargue argued that these laws promoted a society chained to a dogma of work, where capitalists and other non-workers lived comfortably and privileged at the expense of the workers who could never make or have use of the rights bestowed by the French “Declaration of the Rights of Man.”<sup>18</sup> The right to property meant nothing to landless laborers without property. What the right to property means is that those with property are protected from others confiscating or destroying that property, i.e. capitalist means of production, the bourgeoisie, the ruling class, the merchants who replaced and became, in Lafargue’s mind, the aristocracy. This point is important to keep in mind because it helps explain how and why liberalism, wrought through revolution, ushered in a transformed world of work.

After the American Revolution and by the 1780s, what it meant to be free and democratic challenged longstanding aristocratic and gentry hierarchical understandings of society. For example, Alexander Hamilton and the Federalists were traditionalists who believed that the idea of liberty in America ought to be restrained and believed “true liberty was reason and order, not licentiousness.” Gordon S. Wood, author of *Empire of*

---

<sup>18</sup> Paul Lafargue, “The Rights of the Horse and the Rights of Man” in *The Right to be Lazy: And Other Studies*, trans. Charles H. Kerr (Chicago: John F. Higgins, 1900).



*Liberty: A History of the Early Republic, 1789-1815* wrote “In the enthusiasm of the 1770s and 1780s too many Americans, it was said, had allowed talk of freedom and equality to go to their heads; they had run wild and had violated the hierarchical order that made all civilized society possible.”<sup>19</sup> The degree to which Americans believed in freedom and equality was a concern to the aristocratic Americans who were ambivalent toward those who they considered the “middling class” of America’s future bourgeoisie, those who were too wealthy and educated to be considered part of the lower class but who worked with their hands and were busy in the pursuit of making money and, as the gentry believed, did not have the leisure of true gentlemen so were thus unfit to serve in government. Everyone is born equal, but not all are born to serve in government, or so the argument of the gentlemen went in early America.

What allowed the gentry to be “gentlemen” was their “proprietary property” such as land, which was not viewed as a commodity but as a source of independence that allowed the owner to live a life of leisure and learning which, in turn, would allow “gentlemen,” if “called,” to serve and lead in government. This proprietary property of the gentry also came with the following attitude: gentleman did not work for wages nor necessarily with their hands; they did not compete in the market and were thus “free” of the marketplace; they pursued leisure and renounced the pursuit of profit. The attitude of the gentry was at odds with the developing middle class who viewed the pursuit of profit as a means to move “forward,” to renounce leisure for hard work and sacrifice, to own property as a commodity such as land (but also currency and investments), and to compete in the marketplace. These middle class “commoners,” as the gentry referred to

---

<sup>19</sup> Gordon S. Wood, *Empire of Liberty: A History of the Early Republic, 1789-1815* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 105.

them, challenged the aristocrats by using their wealth and education to demand social equality and saw no reason not to be considered gentlemen themselves. In fact, the tide of democratic elections by this middling class was so strong that one of the main reasons a national government was proposed was to stem this tide. There was, ironically, too much democracy and “the Constitution was intended to restrain the excesses of democracy and protect minority rights from overbearing majorities in the state legislatures.”<sup>20</sup>

The middle class would win out and replace the aristocrats of America as the dominant social element because of the changing view of property, the ability to earn fortunes through the market, and the republican belief that freedom and equality allowed anyone to rise from a “lower class” to the ruling class. This middle class set the tone for republican characteristics, including the desire for no aristocracies, no privileges by government, and no appointed positions based on nepotism. Yet, at the same time, the middle class upset the established social balance and other “lower classes” used the same call for equality and freedom to have more of a say in society, and to get more from their labor. The French Revolution largely ignored the lower class demands to be elevated; likewise, the lower classes in America, the wage working commoners, would eventually agitate against the middle class and those who owned the means of production just like the middle class agitated against the gentry, especially since “All took for granted that a society could not long remain republican if a tiny minority controlled most of the wealth and the bulk of the population remained dependent servants or poor landless laborers.”<sup>21</sup>

The rise of the middle class challenged and changed the way American society viewed work and the market but overestimated the compliance of lower classes to those

---

<sup>20</sup> Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 31.

<sup>21</sup> Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 8.

“above” them because Americans “had always been a vigilant people, jealous of their liberty and...snuffing tyranny in every tainted breeze.”<sup>22</sup> The more the middle class championed hard work, the pursuit of profit, and the capital acquisition of land and production, the more the wage workers felt they were losing their independence and felt less than free when “submitting” to the will of an employer. The wage workers, who would in turn become the working class, would, from the early 1800s onward, utilize the wage slave argument by comparing their position in society to that of the chattel slave of the American South and demanding freedom, equality, and a greater say in society and the changing space of work just as the middle class demanded of the overturned gentry class.

Alex Gourevitch, an assistant professor of political science at Brown University, theorizes in his article “Wage-Slavery and Republican Liberty” that labor, specifically workingman associations, in America had since the 1820s created platforms arguing that labor was unfree if subjected to the will of another; in this case, an employer.<sup>23</sup> This view of republican liberty and the argument pointing out the lack thereof felt by wage workers would be used repeatedly by discontent labor throughout the nineteenth century and into the twentieth. In fact, the idea that one was not as free as one could or ought to be in the “land of the free” was part of the reason the wage slave argument lasted as long as it did. The promise of American freedom in a republic was continually at odds with the feelings of “slavery” felt by labor critics who argued that they were forced to work, forced to sell their labor, forced to sell themselves to someone else for wages (especially with the dual existence of chattel slavery).

---

<sup>22</sup> Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 46.

<sup>23</sup> Alex Gourevitch, “Wage-Slavery and Republican Liberty,” *Jacobin*, February 28, 2013, accessed November 12, 2016, <https://www.jacobinmag.com/2013/02/wage-slavery-and-republican-liberty/>.

Economic dependence, because property was in the hands of the few, i.e. the means of production, was what rendered labor from the outset less than free. Without property, landless labor felt beholden to those who owned both land and the means of production. Individual will was undermined by the will of another and freedom-oriented workers, in their classification of themselves as wage slaves, began the long process of abolishing the wage system in favor of an equal distribution of property and establishing cooperatives. These early ideas of wage slave rhetoric would be adopted by other labor critics and by unions, including the Knights of Labor, after the U.S. Civil War. Willful labor un-willfully gave in because their situation demanded doing so. It was this situation of feeling subordinate, of being compelled by economic need to sell themselves to another for wages, which republican minded labor attempted to challenge through the wage slave argument. After all, the wage workers were actors in the Revolutionary War and were promised the same freedom and equality against the abuses of tyranny every other American was promised.

If property is protected by law, it follows that those with property will also be protected (life, liberty and pursuit of happiness/possessions). The freedom found in a state of nature is necessarily constrained in a state of civilization. Therefore, those without property or possessions (other than their labor) are threatened by poverty and subordination. In fact, it is poverty Thomas Paine used in 1795-96 to criticize the state of civilization and to propose a way every American could benefit from their natural inheritance of land lost to them through the advent of private property.

In “Agrarian Justice,” Paine, like Locke, invoked the image of a state of nature to argue what kind of society ought to govern. For Paine, poverty did not exist in a state of

nature and is the most noticeable problem created by civilized life. Poverty is a problem because it “is always possible to go from the natural to the civilized state, but it is never possible to go from the civilized to the natural state” due to resource restrictions and rising populations. Paine, therefore, argued that civilized life ought to be preserved but demanded the condition that “every person born into the world, after a state of civilization commences, ought not to be worse than if he had been born before that period.” He makes this idealistic point because “the condition of millions, in every country in Europe, is far worse than if they had been born before civilization began” due to poverty. “The rugged face of society, checkered with the extremes of affluence and want, proves that some extraordinary violence has been committed upon it, and calls on justice for redress.” Paine believed that the earth is the “common property of the human race” and that every human would have been born to property had it not been for private property. To make civilization better would be to see “[e]very proprietor, therefore, of cultivated lands, [owe] to the community a *ground-rent* (for I know of no better term to express the idea) [sic] for the land which he holds.” From this ground-rent a national fund would be created “out of which there shall be paid to every person, when arrived at the age of twenty-one years, the sum of fifteen pounds sterling, as a compensation in part, for the loss of his or her natural inheritance, by the introduction of the system of landed property.”<sup>24</sup> Paine did not see this fund as charity but as a means to help eliminate poverty and to give back something that was taken from all. Property, to the farmer, the independent artisan, the gentry, the middle class and the commoner, signified independence. Challenging private property was to question the independence of one

---

<sup>24</sup> Thomas Paine, “Agrarian Justice” (London: T.G. Ballard, 1798), accessed September 12, 2014, <http://www.ssa.gov/history/paine4.html>.

social class often at the expense of another. The eventual demand by the working class to own the means of production and their unwavering desire to be independent is an example of why Paine's argument is relevant to industrial America, even if he was speaking more closely about feudalism.

By the end of the nineteenth century, Classical Liberalism split, creating Social Liberalism with such proponents as John Stuart Mill.<sup>25</sup> Social Liberalism questioned the connection between private property and personal liberty because of a growing view that a market based economy was not stable enough for a free society. The Progressive Era of American politics (which will be discussed in chapter IV) reflects these concerns. Where Progressive reform was motivated by the fear that the power and wealth monopolies and corporations held threatened middle class social standing and American democracy itself, individuals began to put greater trust in government and in government programs, believing that "property rights generated an unjust inequality of power that led to a less-than-equal liberty (typically, 'positive liberty') for the working class."<sup>26</sup> Freedom defined by Classical Liberalism and challenged by Social Liberalism expresses the power relation which the labor movement struggled against.

"Freedom," then, is a select freedom, developed by and benefiting those who helped shape the definition, those with the capital to compete, the merchants, bankers and future industrialists whom the American and French Revolutions largely benefited. It was Thomas Paine's poor who lost their natural inheritance of land, who were largely ignored, rejected or subdued when rising up to demand their fair share of freedom these

---

<sup>25</sup> See John Stuart Mill, *Principles of Political Economy* (New York: D Appleton and Company, 1885), accessed April 20, 2016, <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/30107/30107-pdf.pdf>.

<sup>26</sup> Gerald Gaus and Shane D. Courtland, "Liberalism," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2011), ed. Edward N. Zalta, accessed September 11, 2014, <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2011/entries/liberalism/>.

and future revolutions (revolutions of 1848) were supposed to usher in. “Freedom” for the laborer was a freedom to work for, to be or, less likely, become a capitalist. In theory, capitalism and Republican ideology would allow anyone the “freedom” to compete in the free market with the chance of greatly increasing his worth, power, and status but, in practice, capitalism was viewed as socially unbalanced, with property and wealth held by a minority at the expense of the majority. That lack of balance is precisely why there was a split of ideals ending in Social and Classical Liberalism. This lack of balance is why some of the rhetoric of discontent labor challenged the idea that they were free and insisted they were “wage slaves.” More so, the middle class republican notion of freedom excludes the possibility of being “free” from capitalism because it implies freedom *is* the practice of capitalism, denying any negative coercion of will on wage workers by employers. Those who do not identify with work or being workers view capitalism as enslaving precisely because they are “free.” It is this “freedom” that slave owners used to criticize wage work, which will be discussed in chapter II.

The definition of freedom changed over time, supplanting aristocratic and monarchical influence through the rise of the middle class, the rejection of leisure and proprietary property for pursuit of profit and property as a commodity while championing republican attitudes toward work in general. Those who benefited most from the mutable definition of freedom were the merchants and those with the capital to compete in the free market, changing the view of work in the process. What was lost and who struggled because of the changed definition of freedom is featured in the focal study below.

### **Focal Study: The Rise of Wage Labor**

In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, agricultural labor under feudalism shifted because manor lords were in need of money, and they met this need by requiring feudal dues in the form of money rather than in labor. This change allowed serfs and villeins to form a new class of free tenant farmers. This free tenant class was divided based on those who owned a small farm and those who did not. Those who did not own a farm (the cottars and poorer villeins) and only had some land (but not enough to survive on) rented out their labor to those who did own a farm “thus beginning the development of a class who lived more and more upon wages paid them for labor performed for and under the direction of others.”<sup>27</sup> The wage earning class expanded its power after the Black Death of 1346 when the plague eliminated in some areas of Europe and the Middle East one half of the population. This decimation of life caused a severe labor shortage, and those who remained could demand more money for their labor. The wage laborer's permanent place in history was not achieved until manufacturers left guild controlled towns for those without guild influence, allowing the manufacturers to hire, organize and produce as they saw fit. It is important to point out that these wage laborers largely still worked and relied on small patches of land to supplement the now higher wages they earned from others. By the sixteenth century, enclosure threatened the laborer's need for land. At the same time, wages were being regulated by local government where those who set the prices were influenced in part or by the owning class and those who were practicing enclosure.

During the British Agricultural Revolution (roughly 1650 to the late 1800s), new

---

<sup>27</sup> George Gorham Groat, *An Introduction to the Study of Organized Labor in America* (New York: Macmillan, 1916), 3.



methods of crop rotation and the planting of clover and turnips on previously fallow land increased food production substantially. These changes were accomplished by enclosure, the making of common land private. Enclosure increased agricultural productivity but, at the same time, required less labor input due to advances in farm equipment. The decrease in the need for labor caused many former land laborers to move to the cities in search of work. The surplus of labor, accompanied by the invention of factory machines powered by the abundant coal discovered in Britain, allowed the First Industrial Revolution to replace traditional methods and spaces of work, creating a new place for workers in an industrial, capitalistic world of work. Manufacturers welcomed the new, cheap labor source, but the cities the factories populated were largely unprepared to meet the workers' needs. "By the beginning of the eighteenth century the laborers' condition had become one of poverty and distress to no small degree."<sup>28</sup> Without land, wage earners could only rely on selling their labor to someone who may not pay them enough to survive comfortably. In England, the state of labor resulted in the Poor Laws which provided the poor with aid at designated homes or, much worse, entrance into a work house which would work the poor continually. This was the state of laborers when the Industrial Revolution affirmed the wage earning system of capitalism, sealing the destiny of labor.

Because machines were expensive, it took a great deal of capital to purchase them. Those having the capital bought the machines, employed workers (especially women and children) at various wages, and competed with one another. As a result, due to their new found wealth, capitalists, the middle class, were able to rise above the nobility. Those possessing this new found wealth began to dominate politics, and nations

---

<sup>28</sup> Groat, *An Introduction to the Study of Organized Labor*, 4.

sought out new markets for their factory produced goods (almost exclusively textiles in the beginning).

Wage workers worked long (10-16 hours), hard days (up to 6) in factories or mines, keeping pace with the machines that made their jobs possible. Those who did not move west during the 1850s and onward in the U.S. to take advantage of “free land” began to identify with their new space of work and with creating their new place, a class of workers which agitated for working-class rights. By 1860, sixty percent of laborers were not economically independent and relied on wages.<sup>29</sup> Both workers and business owners (Robert Owen for example) criticized the early conditions of labor that resulted in socialism's main concern: how can the social ills created by capitalism be mitigated? Socialism and communism became popular alternatives to capitalism, and all three helped shape the transformed world of work created by the Industrial Revolution and the enclosure movements.

Benjamin Franklin, in 1760, wrote that “Manufactures are founded in poverty: it is the multitude of poor without land in a country, and who must work for others at low wages or starve, that enables undertakers to carry on a manufacture...”<sup>30</sup> This was an issue with which both Thomas Jefferson and James Madison struggled because they understood the danger of a mass of workers without property who could easily be seduced by a despot and threaten republican government.<sup>31</sup> When Hamilton backed industrial corporate ventures to achieve his goal of creating a national bank and a

---

<sup>29</sup> Eric Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party Before the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970), 32. Foner refers to David Montgomery for this statistic.

<sup>30</sup> Benjamin Franklin, William Temple Franklin, *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Benjamin Franklin*, Volume IV (London: H Colburn, 1818), 53.

<sup>31</sup> Walter Licht, *Industrializing America: The Nineteenth Century* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), 15.

powerful nation, Franklin and Jefferson opposed the idea in favor of civil minded citizens making their happy livings from agricultural labor. To back industry was, in theory, to give up freeholding agriculture, threatening American ideals.

After the war of 1812, America set out to chart its own non-mercantilist path. More than factional political parties emerged from the Federalist and Anti-federalist debates. The future of America's economic system was also at stake. Would America become industrial with a strong government, like her mother country, or would she remain agricultural and give more power to the States? Either way, the laboring masses, compounded with immigrants from Europe, often found their wage work in northern cities where the influence of industrial machines was already taking root.

The Industrial Revolution also threatened to destroy age-old work traditions. The guild system, where groups of independent artisans determined how items were to be produced, the price of those items and who would make the items, dominated early American trade. Industrialization and the migration of rural workers to urban towns changed the guild tradition which dates back to medieval times. In Boston in 1790, there were approximately 1300 "master" artisans, craftsmen who were self-employed, with a ratio of eight independent master carpenters to one dependent journeyman carpenter. By 1815, journeymen, or wage-workers, were the majority.<sup>32</sup> This became the case because of rural migrations to urban spaces. These migrations resulted in for "most craft workers...lessened opportunities for mobility and growing insecurity....[where] a rapidly growing journeyman work force made up of downwardly mobile independent craftsmen and younger men whose prospects of advancement to anything beyond wage labor (or in

---

<sup>32</sup> Christopher L. Tomlins, *Law, Labor, and Ideology in the Early American Republic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 112.

some trades piecemeal subcontracting) were poor and growing poorer, all of whom were thrown into competition with each other.”<sup>33</sup>

As a result of this decline, journeymen wage workers formed labor associations, or rude unions, to better negotiate work terms with their employers. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, any groups of labor who combined to defend artisan traditions, to increase wages or to better their working conditions were seen as conspirators to upset, under British common law (which American law largely followed), the common good. The argument went as follows. Laws provide the greatest defense of liberty (a la Locke) in a society. Groups of individuals (not necessarily individuals, as “the offence is in the combination”) who attempt to regulate trade or wages to benefit themselves at the expense of the community (which was largely manufacturers) perpetrate an attack on society and law itself.<sup>34</sup> Therefore, these rude unions fell under conspiracy and were illegal. Court injunctions which supported the belief that unions, strikes or labor agitation in general were unlawful and dangerous to society would be a continual obstacle to labor for nearly all of the nineteenth century.

The formation of workers’ unions or “journeymen fraternities” dates back to before the Industrial Revolution where the “efforts to improve conditions had been attended by disturbances often of a serious nature and had been opposed by the superior influence of employers, by the power of Parliament and by the force of long years of precedent during which it had come to be held that combination to affect wages was illegal.”<sup>35</sup> Insecurity in retaining a job, in wages, and in the ability to collectively bargain to improve working conditions all play a part in the new space in which wage workers

---

<sup>33</sup> Tomlins, *Law, Labor, and Ideology in the Early American Republic*, 112-113.

<sup>34</sup> Tomlins, *Law, Labor, and Ideology in the Early American Republic*, 131.

<sup>35</sup> Groat, *An Introduction to the Study of Organized Labor in America*, 5.

found themselves laboring. This space was widening as the gap of wealth increased between the laboring poor on one side and the merchant capitalists on the other. Foster Rhea Dulles in his *Labor in America* wrote “Banking and other monopolies [in the 1820s and 30s] accentuated this cleavage, and the great majority of the country’s workers saw little improvement in the conditions under which they labored even though trade and commerce expanded and the nation as a whole grew more prosperous.”<sup>36</sup> As a result and because workers’ parties did not trust the existing political parties, believing they kept those oppressing them, the capitalist class, in control, decided to create their own political platforms calling for free education (educational improvement was also a reason for the desire for a shortened work day), no special interests, direct elections and greater equality in taxes and representation. The workers’ outspoken demands and their votes helped create a lasting desire for major political parties to attract labor’s support.<sup>37</sup>

Norman Ware’s *The Industrial Worker: 1840-1860: The Reaction of American Industrial Society to the Advance of the Industrial Revolution* is a rather negative portrayal of the degradation of the American wage laborer. Ware relies, too heavily, on journals and papers published by and for workers while ignoring or rationalizing away other viewpoints which contradict the words of the workers. To his credit, Ware prominently features the voices of common laborers in Lowell and other factory towns which does much to promote understanding of how early wage workers responded to industrialization in America while contributing two chapters to the important development of the early labor movement during the period he explores. These voices share a common ground in their fear of an industrial future where their crafts, skills and

---

<sup>36</sup> Foster Rhea Dulles, *Labor in America* (Northbrook, IL: AHM Publishing Corporation, 1966), 36.

<sup>37</sup> Dulles, *Labor in America*, 38.

importance are regularly degraded and even forgotten. Wage workers before 1840 (and, to a lesser extent, after) relied on a small farm, fish from a river and livestock such as a pig to weather depressions in their craft and inevitable unemployment. As industrialization developed and as wages grew increasingly important, the wage worker could not fall back on this second occupation. Reliance on a wage troubled workers because they were selling themselves now instead of a product, such as a pair of shoes, and, by 1844, shoemakers in Lynn, MA, outright argued they were literal slaves.<sup>38</sup> Wage laborers rationalized that a daily wage was the same as slavery and considered their employers to be anti-republican.<sup>39</sup> This identification was partly a result of “labor saving” machines which would drive down wages while, ironically, making the work day longer. The more efficient the new machines were the quicker the pace and the longer the workday expected by employers, particularly in mill towns like Lowell, MA.

Longer hours and lowered wages were the two most common reasons workers decided to strike. The general feeling of labor in early industrial America was contributed to by labors’ feeling of continual personal degradation while not sharing or enjoying the benefits and prosperity that accompanied technological advancements and the fear of becoming a permanent population of mill or factory workers. These feelings were compounded by the facts that most all strikes failed, that earlier forms of benign paternalism were increasingly being replaced by an intrusive form of management, and that threats of dismissal for not politically supporting corporations were being used. At the root of these feelings was a loss of independence and a greater degree of control by

---

<sup>38</sup> Norman Ware, *The Industrial Worker: 1840-1860: The Reaction of American Industrial Society to the Advance of the Industrial Revolution* (Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith, 1959), xiv.

<sup>39</sup> Ware, *The Industrial Worker*, 42.

employers over their employees.<sup>40</sup> These feelings help make sense of why local trades unions before the Civil War made use of the wage slave argument and how the argument directed the beginnings of America's labor movement.

Wage labor from its inception was in a struggle against those who controlled the means of production and offered wages in return for labor and time. The Industrial Revolution made this struggle a permanent theme of labor relations. Labor's rhetoric, along with that of social critics, made use of an argument wherein wage workers, though considered free, were mere slaves to capitalist masters who controlled labors' work space, time, and wages, resulting in the term "wage slave."

It is a mistake to focus exclusively on negative aspects of capitalism, even though the wage slave argument is used primarily to criticize capitalism. It is easy to allow the rhetoric and feelings of discontented laborers to place perhaps too much attention and blame on employers, without discussing the dynamics of the market by which both employee and employer were influenced daily. However, it was the employers with whom discontented employees dealt daily and with market influences second. It was employers, scabs, Pinkerton detectives, and the military which often decided the outcome of a strike. It was the employers who would not recognize or negotiate with worker unions. It was employers who cut wages and lengthened the work day.

The market indeed may have caused employer anxiety, may have been the cause for the employers to seek ways to save on costs and retain a profit by cutting wages, but discontent labor felt they had plenty of reason to blame the messenger. And yet, twenty percent of American workers in 1920 still worked the land, and forty-four percent of the

---

<sup>40</sup> Ware, *The Industrial Worker*, 108.

population in 1930 was recorded as being rural.<sup>41</sup> Because of where almost half of all Americans lived, the daily proximity to modernity was limited. Only by 1920 did more than half the work force live within cities.<sup>42</sup> Those who did not live in cities, in large part, missed out on the advantages of both plumbing and electricity, benefits often taken for granted today. As technology increased and was shared by many Americans, the *potential* of capitalism to improve life was hard to deny. Wages increased, child mortality decreased, and production was made more efficient. At the same time, the market every year seemed to be touching larger portions of the population, rural and urban.

Wages rose throughout the 1800s. An Index of Composite Wages covering 1820 to 1909 records weekly earnings from all industries. The index is revealing, particularly when compared to dates of recessions, which will be discussed in chapter IV. Weekly wages from 1820 to 1830 did not reach over 30 dollars, and it would take nearly thirty more years before weekly earnings reached 40 dollars in 1857. During this time, weekly wages did not increase more than one unit for any given year until in 1856-1857 it increased by two, from 38 to 40 dollars. There is not a significant jump in wages until 1862-1863 when the weekly rate went from 41 to 46 dollars, and then again to 52 dollars in 1864, 57 dollars in 1865, 61 dollars in 1866, and 64 dollars in 1867. That is an increase of 56 percent within a decade. Wage increases slow after 1867, following the pre-1862 pattern of not increasing more than a dollar in any given year, and even decreasing from 67 dollars in 1873 down to 60 dollars by 1879. Weekly wages would not reach over 67 dollars again until 1889, peaking at 71 dollars in 1892, but then retreating again down to 64 dollars in 1894. Weekly wages climbed from 71 dollars at the turn of

---

<sup>41</sup> David M. Kennedy, *Freedom from Fear: The American People in Depression and War 1929-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 16.

<sup>42</sup> Kennedy, *Freedom from Fear*, 16.



the century to 81dollars in 1905, and finally to 84 dollars in 1906.

Overall, weekly wages increased by 60 units or 66.67 percent in under one-hundred years during the First and Second Industrial Revolutions.<sup>43</sup> What this index does not account for is cost of living. Though real wages increased, this index needs to be compared to a cost of living index to discern how much of an increase there was in buying power. The cost of living index presented is an index of general price levels between 1860 and 1939.<sup>44</sup> The index lists monthly increases or decreases. The months have been averaged, providing a single yearly number to better compare with the weekly wage index.

Accounting for the five years during the greatest increase in wages in the nineteenth century (1862-1867) provides a better gauge for the wage/cost of living comparison. Wages during 1862-1867 increased by 56 percent, while cost of living rose by 48 percent. Most revealing is that the cost of living from 1860 to 1909 increased by 33 percent while wages increased by 120 percent (setting a trend during times of war). Wages overall increased nearly four times the cost of living in just under half a century. However, individuals cannot gauge what the future will bring, nor what wages or even what work to expect. Comparing individual years is more important than comparing the overall period because workers, like most all individuals, focus on the immediate present, not what might be. For example, the initial wage jump in 1862-63 corresponds with a cost of living increase from an index rating of 79 to 96. This is an increase of 22 percent for cost of living while wages increased by only 12 percent over the same years. The

---

<sup>43</sup> National Bureau of Economic Research, "U.S. Index of Composite Wages 1820-1909," accessed 12/13/2015, <http://www.nber.org/databases/macroeconomy/data/08/a08061a.db>.

<sup>44</sup> National Bureau of Economic Research, "Index of the General Price Level 1860-1939," accessed 12/15/2015, <http://www.nber.org/databases/macroeconomy/data/04/m04051.db>.

following year, 1864, saw the cost of living increase again by 35 percent while wages increased by only 10 percent. Cost of living first decreased in 1966 by four points (127 to 123), but this still put wages below COL 49 percent to 56 percent respectively (48.78 percent from 1862-66). It wasn't until 1867 (46 percent COL) that weekly wages won out (56 percent). As mentioned above, weekly wages stagnate after 1867 for nearly 30 years. Cost of living declined until 1898 and then climbed into the twentieth century. These numbers show that even though weekly wages rose during the nineteen-hundreds, the rise did not alleviate the worry workers may have felt yearly, if not monthly. Wages can also be compared to the enormous increase in industrial production from 1790 to 1915.

Similar to the wage index above, an index showing the increases in U.S. production allows one to view a first-hand account of the rise of production made possible by the industrial revolutions.<sup>45</sup> Figure 1 below shows the humble beginnings of U.S. production. In 1790, production was just over 4 units and would not reach over 20 units until 1826. From there, production doubled in a single decade from 20 to 40 units in 1836. Production quickly recovered from a point dip in 1837 and more than doubled from 40 to 87 units in 1847, another decade. By 1850 production was at 102 units. See Figure 1 below.

From 1851 on, production rose rapidly with dips in 1857-58, 1865, 1874-1877, 1884-85, 1893-94, 1904, 1908, and 1914. What is interesting is that with the increase in production (reaching 500 units in 1882, 1000 in 1898, and nearly 2000 in 1915) the

---

<sup>45</sup> Joseph H. Davis, "An Annual Index of U. S. Industrial Production, 1790-1915," *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 119, no. 4 (November 2004): 1177-1215, accessed November 1, 2016, <http://www.nber.org/data/industrial-production-index/>.

corresponding dips (recessions) influenced a greater loss of production. For example, from 1874 to 1877 the index reports a drop of only 16 points, but in a single year, in 1908, there was a drop of nearly 267 points. This indicates that as production increased, recessions created a greater amount of volatility in the marketplace. Also, as mentioned previously, wages increased but never kept pace with the increases in production. These two points, volatility (job security) and a massive difference between increases in production and the lag in wage increases helps explain in part why labor disputes escalated during the latter half of the nineteenth century and gave rise to the founding of several prominent unions (KOL, AFL, IWW, etc.). See Figure 2 below.

Understanding the beginnings of wage labor, where an increasingly larger number of the working population, specifically in urban areas, heavily, if not exclusively, relied on daily wages by selling their time and labor to someone willing to pay, helps explain the state of labor prior to the early formation of what will become the working class movement. At this time, it is too early to acknowledge that wage workers prior to 1830 felt a sense of class consciousness. However, discontent labor's choice of words, most prominently the idea that American wage workers were less than free and would soon compare themselves to chattel slaves arguing a loss of independence, autonomy and control while increasingly having to rely on wages paid by those who were in a position to dictate the space of work, would sow the seeds of "wage slavery" rhetoric and grow the movement of "emancipation" which serve as a prelude to and the informing of both the labor movement and national unions.

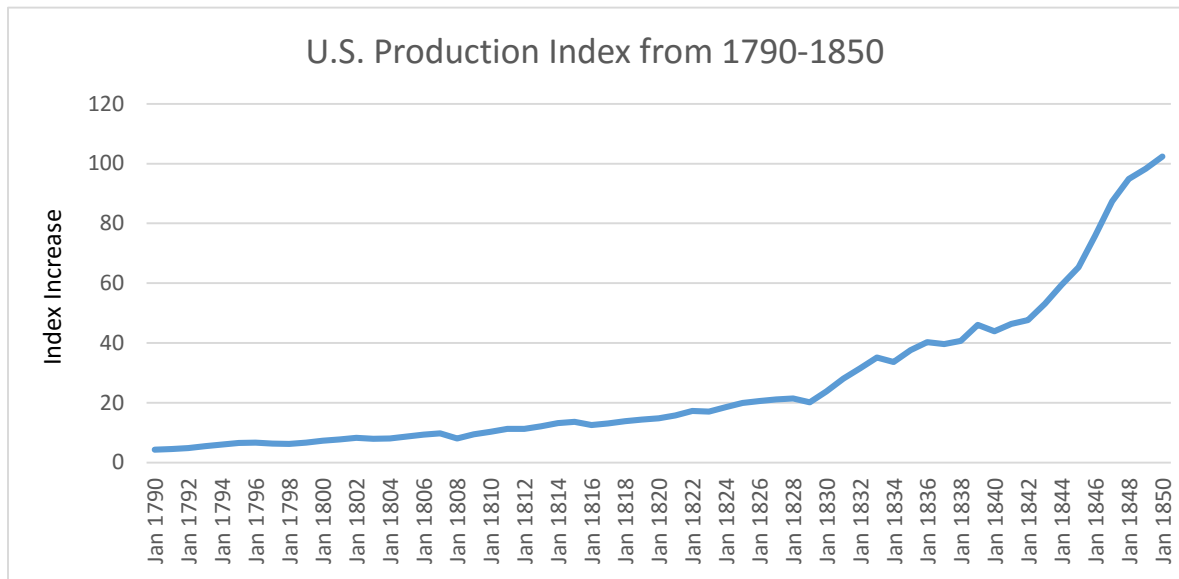


Figure 1.

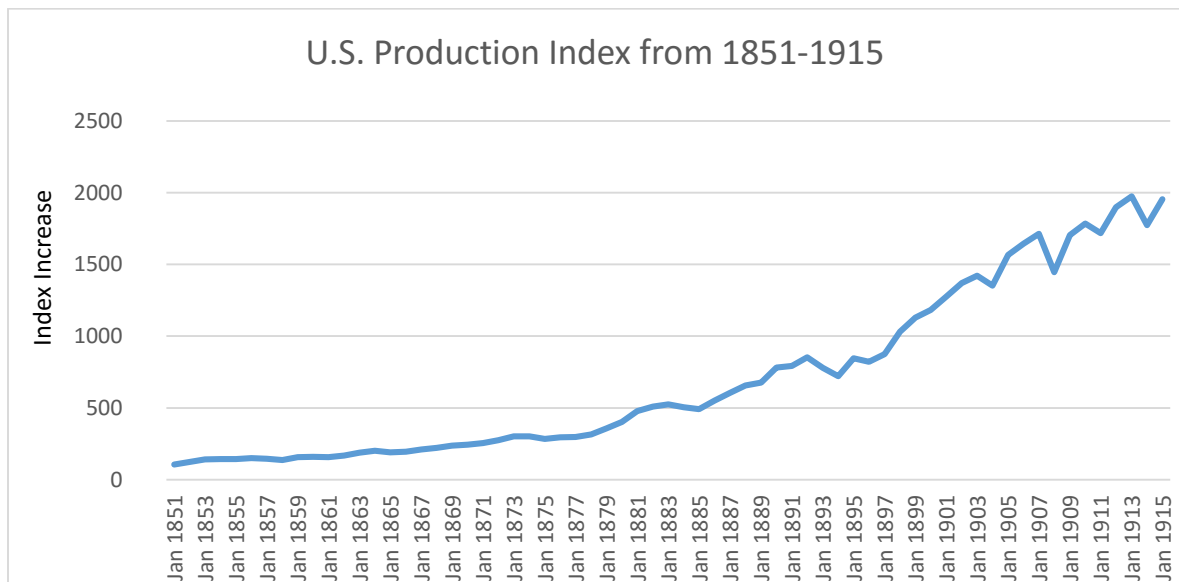


Figure 2.

## Chapter II: The Origins and Development of the Wage Slave Argument

The idea that a free laborer could consider him or herself a slave requires an examination of the origins of the wage slave argument and the conditions present in America and Britain which wage slave advocates cited as evidence for the validity of the argument. The origins of the wage slave argument necessitate consideration of two intervening events: first, the growth of industrial cities with the existence of a large population of wage workers, and second, a disputed definition of freedom resting on the acceptance of the term slavery denoting ownership, subservience and compulsory work under threatened survival. How American wage workers responded to these two intervening events helps explain how the wage slave argument informed the beginnings of the American labor movement and working class consciousness.

Eric Foner suggests in his essay “The Meaning of Freedom in the Age of Emancipation” that “as free and slave labor were joined in the material development of the New World, so the shifting definitions of freedom have frequently depended on a juxtaposition with its ideological opposite, slavery.”<sup>46</sup> By this, Foner refers to antebellum America where, because slavery was a present reality, slavery “both helped define the idea of freedom - giving it a powerful exclusionary dimension - and provided an idiom through which groups outside the boundaries of American freedom could challenge their exclusion and, in so doing, transform the meaning of freedom itself.”<sup>47</sup> It was precisely this use of the term slavery that wage slave advocates used to challenge the concept of freedom in America.

The institution of slavery ended first in Britain in 1834 and in the United States in

---

<sup>46</sup> Eric Foner, “Meaning of Freedom in the Age of Emancipation,” *Journal of American History* 81, no. 2 (September 1994): 436-7, accessed September 13, 2014, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2081167>.

<sup>47</sup> Foner, “Meaning of Freedom in the Age of Emancipation,” 438.

1865. Slavery in both countries ended after the beginning of the Industrial Revolution, readily allowing comparisons between “free” wage labor and “unfree” slave labor.

Multiple individuals will be featured throughout this chapter to help explain how the wage slave argument was used for non-union purposes before showing how it was used by unions in later years.

The origin of the wage slave argument, as well as its justification, was detailed by Simon-Nicholas Henri Linguet between 1767 and 1792, more than one-hundred years before Merriam-Webster dates the first known use. Henri Linguet was a French lawyer and journalist who antagonistically played the devil’s advocate in relation to economics and labor, to the consternation of the French crown, while simultaneously attacking anything hinting toward Enlightenment. Linguet’s criticism of the market and free labor would later be adopted by Karl Marx and other socialist intellectuals.

Linguet criticizes the notion that what separates a slave and a freeman is the freeman's ability to negotiate a free contract with an employer, thus removing any notion of ownership. The labor contract concerning wages is criticized because workers cannot withhold their labor and wait for a “free” negotiation due to a reliance on a wage to secure basic needs. Linguet writes, “it would be necessary that the workingman could remain a while without working in order to make himself needed. But he is compelled to yield because he is obliged to eat, and if it happens that he resists, his ruin—which is inevitable—increases and reinforces his dependence, precisely because the cessation of work has rendered him more needy. If he does not work today at any price, he will in two days be dead of starvation and the curtailment his surplus suffered yesterday is a reason

for reducing it tomorrow.”<sup>48</sup> If workers are not compelled by need, then they can truly negotiate a “free” labor contract. If not for having to secure a wage to secure survival, a potential employee would be in the same position as his or her employer since neither would have the fear of not meeting basic needs and, rather, both would be able to freely negotiate certain wants: money for an employee and production for an employer. The fact that wage laborers *cannot* freely negotiate because they are dependent on a wage for survival makes workers, in Linguet's opinion, comparable to slaves.

Karl Marx would later reiterate Linguet's words and thoughts in his *Theories of Surplus Value*, written in 1861-1863. In chapter seven, Marx records several quotes which help illuminate to what kind of wage labor “slavery” Linguet believed the landless masses belonged. “What is this apparent liberty which you have bestowed on them reduced to for them? They live only by hiring out their arms. They must therefore find someone to hire them, or die of hunger. Is that to be free?” “Their chains are made of the same material and only differently coloured. Here they are black, and seem heavy: there they look less gloomy and seem hollower: but weigh them impartially and you will find no difference between them; both are equally forged by necessity. They have precisely the same weight, or rather, if they are a few grains more in one case, it is in the one whose external appearance proclaims that it is lighter.”<sup>49</sup> Linguet here is comparing chattel slavery with wage labor. He believes the former is somehow more honorable than the latter because “Men's blood had some price in the days of slavery....and a [wage laborer] can be had for nothing.” A summary of Linguet's ideas reveals that he believes that the wage laborer is worse off than a traditional slave, ironically, because the wage

---

<sup>48</sup> Henri Linguet, *Annales Politiques, Civiles, et Littéraires du Dix-Huitième Siècle Volume VII* (London, 1779), 216-217.

<sup>49</sup> Karl Marx, “Linguet,” in *Theories of Surplus Value* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1968).

laborer is “free.” It is exactly this “freedom” which reduces the wage-laborer to the same “weight” of a traditional slave while being defended by none, since their worth is not as great as the cost of a traditional slave. The paradox already mentioned is that freedom somehow enslaved the wage laborer. This is consistent with the idea that freedom was a “freedom” for the bourgeoisie and not necessarily for the wage working proletariat.

Frederick Engels wrote in 1845 that “the worker is, in law and in fact, the slave of the property-holding class, so effectually a slave that he is sold like a piece of goods [which] rises and falls in value like a commodity.” Engels goes on to compare the position of the wage worker with that of slavery stating, “The only difference as compared with the old, outspoken slavery is this, that the worker of today seems to be free because he is not sold once for all...but he is forced to sell himself...being the slave of no particular person, but of the whole property-holding class.” Lastly, Engels provides a reason for why “free” labor is beneficial to the ruling class. Engels contends that “The bourgeoisie, on the other hand, is far better off under the present arrangement than under the old slave system; it can dismiss its employees at discretion without sacrificing invested capital, and gets its work done much more cheaply than is possible with slave labour.”<sup>50</sup> This same argument was first used by Southern slaveholders in the 1840s and 1850s.

Eighty years after Linguet, Engels had come to a similar conclusion. The wage-laborer is made more defenseless than a traditional slave by being considered free. This passage, along with those mentioned by Linguet, highlights a number of ideas. First, that wage labor has been compared to traditional chattel slavery, with the former being

---

<sup>50</sup> Friedrich Engels, *The Conditions of the Working-Class in England* (Moscow: Institute of Marxism-Leninism, 1969), accessed March 19, 2014.  
<http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/condition-working-class/index.htm>.



considered more insidious than the latter. Second, that another word other than slavery could not, at least by Engels and Linguet, be found to better describe the landless wage laborer. Third, that the word slave is in itself an insufficient description of the wage laborer because he is neither a slave to be sold nor free from a master for whom he must work to survive. Engels informs us that, “The proletarian is helpless; left to himself, he cannot live a single day.” This is because “the bourgeoisie has gained a monopoly of all means of existence in the broadest sense of the word.” What this means is that whatever the laborer needs “he can obtain only from this bourgeoisie, which is protected in its monopoly by the power of the state. The proletarian is, therefore, in law and in fact, the slave of the bourgeoisie, which can decree his life or death.” Fourth, that wage laborers are dependent upon bourgeoisie wages because they are without common land to cultivate or utilize for their needs. They *must* work for, or attempt to become, the bourgeoisie (ruling class) or face starvation. Fifth, that the insidious nature of what may be referred to as wage slavery is in the illusion to which the laborer holds, believing he has a free choice in establishing a free contract. To Engels, that choice is non-existent because of the monopoly the bourgeoisie has on the means of production. The choice the employee does have is which employer he or she will work for, what he or she will stand to do, but always under a system of wages that the worker feels favors and benefits the employer. These five points all hinge on the conditions of a proletariat who, echoing Paine, without enough land upon which to survive, are thus dependent on the bourgeoisie.

Jean Jacques Rousseau, in his *Discourse Upon the Origin and Foundation of the Inequality among Mankind* written in 1754, claimed that “from the moment one man began to stand in need of another's assistance; from the moment it appeared an advantage

for one man to possess the quantity of provisions requisite for two, all equality vanished; property started up; labour became necessary; and boundless forests became smiling fields, which it was found necessary to water with human sweat, and in which slavery and misery were soon seen to sprout out and grow with the fruits of the earth.” This status was contrary to equality in a state of nature because, as Rousseau was continually keen, like Paine, to point out, “the fruits of the earth belong equally to us all, and the earth itself to nobody!” The idea that the wealthy became wealthier by the labor of those who were without means or a right to property was backward to Rousseau (as it was also for Paine). He writes at the end of his *Discourse* that “it is evidently against the law of nature that infancy should command old age, folly conduct wisdom, and a handful of men should be ready to choke with superfluities, while the famished multitude want the commonest necessities of life.”<sup>51</sup> He saw a murky solution to this inequality through application of government intervention via a wealth cap which would make the accumulation of wealth impossible and, in theory, leave more wealth for the poor.<sup>52</sup>

It is interesting that John Locke, Thomas Paine and Jean Jacques Rousseau all encouraged the state or the government to intervene or exercise authority to protect freedom and reduce poverty while regulating the bourgeoisie. This advice would largely be ignored until the Progressive Era of American politics, which will be discussed in chapter IV. Freedom for the proletariat based on compulsory work was criticized by intellectuals. Proletariat freedom was also criticized by slave owners who feared a threat by the growing number of cities and free labor in the North to their own labor source and

---

<sup>51</sup> Jean Jacques Rousseau, *A Discourse Upon The Origin and The Foundation of The Inequality among Mankind* (London: R and J Dodsley, 1761), Internet Modern History Sourcebook, last modified August, 1998, accessed March 16, 2014, <http://www.fordham.edu/Halsall/mod/1782rousseau-inequal.asp>.

<sup>52</sup> Jean Jacques Rousseau, *A Discourse on Political Economy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), last modified November 4, 2013, accessed March 6, 2014, <http://www.constitution.org/jjr/polecon.htm>.

the culture it represented.

Southern understanding of freedom and liberty from the close of the Revolutionary War was at odds with Northern understanding of freedom and work (not to mention the Declaration). The South believed in the necessity of a slave class to provide leisure and promote aristocratic living. With the North increasingly idealizing free labor, championing work and condemning slavery, “the South began to see itself as a beleaguered minority in the bustling nation.”<sup>53</sup> The South defended its beliefs by challenging the so called “free” labor apparently found in the North. Thomas Jefferson believed in 1814 that Southern slaves did not live in fear of destitution as did the wage-workers of England.<sup>54</sup> In fact, during Virginia’s emancipation debates of 1832, prompted by Nat Turner’s slave revolt in 1831, there was a mutual sentiment that “the average Southern slave was, in material comfort, at least on a par with the average European worker.”<sup>55</sup> The 1830's saw Richard Oastler, a member of Parliament and an abolitionist, begin publishing his “Yorkshire Slavery” articles, pointing out how critics of slavery overlooked the fact that “thousands of our fellow-creatures...are this very moment...in a state of slavery, more horrid than are the victims of that hellish system 'colonial slavery'.”<sup>56</sup> Oastler's contention was that even though the abolition of slavery was considered an important issue throughout the British Empire, also needing to be addressed were the conditions of labor right there in England.

The comparisons drawn between chattel slavery and wage slavery were welcomed

---

<sup>53</sup> Wood, *Empire of Liberty*, 3.

<sup>54</sup> Marcus Cunliffe, *Chattel Slavery and Wage Slavery: The Anglo-American Context, 1830-1860* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2008), 6.

<sup>55</sup> Cunliffe, *Chattel Slavery and Wage Slavery*, 5.

<sup>56</sup> Richard Oastler, Letter to the *Leeds Mercury*, 1830, accessed on November 05, 2015, [http://www.makingthemodernworld.org.uk/learning\\_modules/history/01.TU.01/?style=expander\\_popup&filename=expandables/01.EX.18.xml](http://www.makingthemodernworld.org.uk/learning_modules/history/01.TU.01/?style=expander_popup&filename=expandables/01.EX.18.xml).

by discontent laborers, social critics, and reformers. The use and expansion of such language only became more common from the 1830s on.<sup>57</sup> Marcus Cunliffe, a British scholar and author of *Chattel Slavery and Wage Slavery: The Anglo-American Context, 1830-1860* describes how this expansion of language intensified, citing Lamennais, Giuseppe Mazzini, and Bronterre O'Brien as early commentators on labor conditions. Cunliffe summarized Lamennais's 1839 argument with "the modern proletarian was fundamentally as much in bondage as the ancient slaver or medieval serf." Giuseppe Mazzini said, "The workman has no freedom of contract: he is a slave: he has no alternative but hunger or pay...that his employer offers him."<sup>58</sup> and, in 1849, James Bronterre O'Brien, a journalist and reformer of Irish descent, "stressed the parallel between the old structure of chattel slavery and the newer wage slavery equivalent."<sup>59</sup> O'Brien believed that wage-labor was the new slave population for "civilized countries."

When slavery was abolished in Britain in 1833, the American South became the premier arena from where wage slave rhetoric and comparison was argued. This arena was well informed about labor conditions in Britain, about how abolitionists and slave owners had argued, about how the comparison between wage-labor and slavery had developed and was nourished by both sides concerning the institution of slavery. Despite the rhetorical attacks and the finger pointing, a well-constructed argument and comparison was developed in the early eighteen-hundreds in Britain relative to a slavery of wages. This argument was not purely rhetorical and developed along the side of abolitionist desires to see slavery outlawed. Charles Edwards Lester, a New York abolitionist, said he "would sooner subject his child to Southern slavery than have him to

---

<sup>57</sup> Cunliffe, *Chattel Slavery and Wage Slavery*, 11.

<sup>58</sup> Bolton King, *The Life of Mazzini*, (New York: E.P Dutton, 1911), 284.

<sup>59</sup> Cunliffe, *Chattel Slavery and Wage Slavery*, 12.

be a free laborer of England.”<sup>60</sup> Lester saw both chattel slavery and wage slavery as wrong but feared wage slavery more. To understand why Lester felt this way, a look at the United States is in order to see how the, now on the defense, slave-owners made use of the wage slave argument.

By the time the U.S. Civil War occurred, Republicans viewed the “free labor” of the North as incompatible with the “slave labor” of the South. Eric Foner, in his book *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men*, captures the attitudes of Republican leaders in what amounted to the glory and progress of America herself. Free labor, Republicans contended, was responsible for the rapidly advancing technological, economically independent, socially mobile northern towns which considered labor, unlike the South, respectable and honorable. Free labor ideology, Foner outlines, evolved from the Protestant work ethic<sup>61</sup> and founded the religious and social values on which capitalism thrives: honesty, frugality, diligence, punctuality, sobriety and condemning idleness, excessive leisure, excessive expenditures, and excessive enjoyment.<sup>62</sup> These values were seen as both religious duty and socially elevating, where adhering to these values meant that anyone, and indeed everyone, was expected to become economically independent and part of the middle class. Those who failed at becoming middle class supposedly did not live according to these values and deserved, according to some critics, to perish.<sup>63</sup> The rise to middle class was supposed to follow this cyclic system: A worker would work for wages until he had enough capital to purchase a farm or a business, then work for himself there until he had enough capital to hire others to work for him, thus completing

---

<sup>60</sup> Cunliffe, *Chattel Slavery and Wage Slavery*, 69.

<sup>61</sup> See Max Weber, *The Protestant Work Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (New York: Scribner, 1958).

<sup>62</sup> Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men*, 13.

<sup>63</sup> Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men*, 25.

the cycle.

Because of the promise that a laborer today is a capitalist tomorrow, Republican ideology did not perceive conflict between labor and capital; indeed, they were one and the same, wherein class meant less than hard work and enterprise. Therefore, if anyone did not make it to the middle class, the failure was believed to be the fault of the individual, not of society. If there was no work to be found, laborers were encouraged to head west. The west was the safety valve the Republican party championed with Lincoln's 1862 Homestead Act and used to guarantee upward mobility to those who worked hard, simultaneously keeping cities from being overcrowded with unemployed workers. Concerning worker strikes, Republicans in the 1850s defended the right of workers to unite and strike to gain higher wages, but they adamantly condemned *preventing* work and the use of machines as conspiracy to undermine society,<sup>64</sup> much in line with earlier American views on unions.

Challenges to the optimistic Republican outlook on free labor would occur with the rise of corporations and large scale farming after the Civil War which, even in 1853, were seen as threats to individually owned businesses and artisan labor that would culminate in a loss of individual power. Corporations would place both power and wealth in the hands of a few, undermining the foundation of free labor ideology where farmers, mechanics and merchants owned and worked their own businesses.<sup>65</sup> Industrialization after the Civil War also threatened free labor ideology as industrialization brought higher standards of living at the cost of self-employment.<sup>66</sup>

Perils of these kinds would have to wait to be dealt with because a greater

---

<sup>64</sup> Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men*, 27.

<sup>65</sup> Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men*, 22.

<sup>66</sup> Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men*, 33.

menace, southern slavery, was then more politically rewarding and pressing. The north, defending free labor as the primary cause of its success economically, socially and politically, found the south lacking on all counts. The south was largely aristocratically oriented, where labor was viewed distasteful and those who labored as degraded. The work ethic valued so highly in the north was missing in the south, which called into question the honor of labor.

The honor of labor was the primary ideological difference in view between the north and south. The more states that allowed slavery, the greater the threat to both the western safety valve and, in turn, the cities, as more workers returning to the east would cause increased unemployment and lowered wages. As such, chattel slavery became a national issue; chattel slavery was seen to be hamstringing America, keeping her from becoming as great as she ought to be and, at the same time, threatening free labor ideology. As Foner sums up, “The Republicans saw their anti-slavery program as one part of a world-wide movement from absolutism to democracy, aristocracy to equality, backwardness to modernity...”<sup>67</sup> This was the mind set of those who politically opposed slavery and why they believed even civil war was necessary, if not desirable, to ensure free labor and the economic and social benefits accompanying free labor ideology.

Eric Foner’s focus on Republican ideology and interaction with slavery, native born Americans, and race does not leave much room for an examination of how the south made use of and helped develop the wage slave argument that would be used by discontent workers from before the Civil War to far after. In fact, Foner does not meaningfully return to his comment about how industrialization meant higher standards of living at the cost of self-employment, which is a key theme of wage slavery wherein

---

<sup>67</sup> Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men*, 72.

the loss of individual power necessitated a reliance on wages (and indeed destroyed the republican expectation where free labor “meant labor with economic choices, with the opportunity to quit the wage-earning class”<sup>68</sup>) and rendered one less than “free.” Foner also too quickly dismisses the language used by southern critics of northern free labor, mostly ignoring them all by stating that the north easily defended against the south’s rhetorical attacks.<sup>69</sup> This is a missed opportunity, because the language the south uses to characterize the supposed “unfree” labor of the north ties in with Foner’s earlier comment on a loss of individual power due to the rise of corporations and the resulting social polarization after the Civil War. Foner also fails to link southern exploration of wage slavery to the language of discontent or radical workers themselves, particularly when free labor ideology began to be questioned after the Civil War. Let us not forget that free labor ideology was already preemptively questioned in the 1820s by labor associations arguing they were compelled to sell themselves as wage slaves absent republican liberty as previously mentioned.

Slave owners defended the institution of slavery by arguing that wage labor was crueler, less humane and, at least, as unfree as chattel slavery. Quoting northern newspapers, reformers, and workers themselves, slave owners insisted that job security was harder to attain, especially with the rise of mechanization. Slave owners argued that wage workers were completely dependent on the employer for their survival and could be left jobless or their wages cut to the point of starvation at a whim. In 1837, Chancellor William Harper argued that “slave labor can never be so cheap as what is called free labor” for competition and the lowering of wages “falls principally on the laborers” in the

---

<sup>68</sup> Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men*, 16, 17.

<sup>69</sup> Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men*, 67.



North and not on the employers. Slave owners, however, when faced with a poor economy cannot cut wages and cannot let go their help, “therefore [the slave owner] pays higher wages, and cuts off the principal source of misery.”<sup>70</sup> In effect, Harper suggests that the slave owner has more responsibility and cares more for his slave than an employer does his employee.

Defenders of slavery argued that the wage worker's freedom and equality were only words with no substance; all worked to make the employer wealthier at the expense of their own lives. The wage-worker supposedly lived in the most degrading and deplorable of conditions at both work and home, and the future of wage laborers in general was, when compared with Britain, only to get worse. These social ills were not, according to southern travelers, present in the South. Senator James Henry Hammond, standing before the U.S. Senate in 1858, said “Why, you meet more beggars in one day, in any single street of the city of New York, than you would meet in a lifetime in the whole South.”<sup>71</sup> Hammond was a plantation owner and held the common view of the time that black slaves were inferior and that by enslaving them owners were also elevating them “from the condition in which God first created them.” This “elevation” was not found in the North. On the contrary, Hammond contends that “the man who lives by daily labor, and scarcely lives at that, and who has to put out his labor in the market, and take the best he can get for it; in short, your whole hireling class of manual laborers and 'operatives,' as you call them, are essentially slaves.” Hammond continues by comparing free labor with slave labor. He writes, “The difference between us is, that our

---

<sup>70</sup> William Harper, *Memoir on Slavery*, (Charleston: J.S. Burges, 1837), Archive.org, accessed September 12, 2014, <https://archive.org/details/memoirofslaveryr02harp>.

<sup>71</sup> James Henry Hammond, “The 'Mudsill' Theory,” reprinted in *Africans in America*, PBS Online, accessed September 12, 2014, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part4/4h3439t.html>.

slaves are hired for life and well compensated; there is no starvation, no begging, no want of employment among our people, and not too much employment either.” Hammond then points his wagging finger at the North stating, “Yours are hired by the day, not cared for, and scantily compensated, which may be proved in the most painful manner, at any hour in any street in any of your large towns.”<sup>72</sup> Where slaves are cared for, free labor is uncared for. Where there is stability and freedom from want in the South, there is unemployment and starvation in the North. For Hammond, “free” labor meant “essentially” the same thing as chattel slavery, only worse.

William Harper's definition of slavery as stated in his 1838 “Memoir on slavery” states, “I should say that where a man is compelled to labor at the will of another, and to give him much the greater portion of the product of his labor, there Slavery exists; and it is immaterial by what sort of compulsion the will of the laborer is subdued.”<sup>73</sup> If one is compelled, such as for a wage to secure one's survival, that individual must rely upon and be dictated to by the wage provider, ensuring the owner surplus labor in the form of profits, and this, according to Harper, constitutes slavery. These commentaries have attempted to label wage labor as nothing more than slavery. Now would be a good time to take a look at some definitions of slavery from slave owners and see if they ever considered a world without slavery.

Senator Hammond used what is called the “mudsill theory” to define slavery. His argument is that civilization and progress are only achieved when built upon the labor of a class who will “do the menial duties, to perform the drudgery of life.” Slaves from Africa, in Hammond’s view, fulfilled this role. He also called slavery “the highest proof

---

<sup>72</sup> Hammond, “The 'Mudsill' Theory.”

<sup>73</sup> Harper, *Memoir on Slavery*.

[of] Nature's law,” arguing that slavery always had and always would exist in one form or another.<sup>74</sup> Northern wage labor was, in Hammond's opinion (and O'Brien's), simply the new form of slavery.

The origins and permanence of slavery are defined and defended by George Fitzhugh in his *Cannibals all! Or, Slaves without Masters*. Fitzhugh's views, although strained in his defense of slavery, were not limited only to himself. He was a man who kept up with British and American news, and his opinions were shared by both his contemporaries and his predecessors.<sup>75</sup> He starts by arguing that there “is no such thing as natural human liberty, because it is unnatural for man to live alone and without the pale and government of society,” refuting Locke's assumptions about a state of nature. Fitzhugh believed that animals that are independent by nature are naturally free because they do not rely on society. “Bees and herds” on the other hand “are naturally subjects or slaves of society” as theorized, Fitzhugh claims, by Aristotle. Humans, being gregarious, are then, according to Fitzhugh, slaves to society. Because humans are slaves to society, any claim of there being a “free” society is a fallacy. “What is falsely called Free Society, is a very recent invention. It proposes to make the weak, ignorant and poor, free, by turning them loose in a world owned exclusively by the few...” This sentiment is repeated later by Paul Lefargue, criticizing in 1900 the Rights of Man. Fitzhugh then argues that serfs, upon their emancipation, “lost something in liberty, and everything in rights—for emancipation liberated or released the masters from all their burdens, cares and liabilities, whilst it increased both the labors and the cares of the liberated serf.” Therefore, “In England, the masses have neither liberty nor protection. They are slaves without

---

<sup>74</sup> Hammond, “The 'Mudsill' Theory.”

<sup>75</sup> Marcus Cunliffe, *Chattel Slavery and Wage Slavery*, 7.

masters.”<sup>76</sup>

Fitzhugh's argument can be summed up in two parts. First, that slavery will always exist in one form or another. Free society filled with free wage workers is just another form of slavery. Second, that chattel slavery is a better form of slavery than wage slavery because, though slaves do not have “liberty”, they are better cared for, have a secure life, and can still have possessions. Slaves are better off than liberated serfs forced now to find “masters” for whom to work, which is a far more convenient situation for the “master” because he only has a monetary or contractual agreement with the laborer, not a moral or paternal one. The wage worker is “set free” only to find the world controlled by “the few,” as Fitzhugh described it. This idea of the many laboring for the controlling few in a false “free” society is important to remember, as workers had to find their place in this new capitalistic space. How the laborer carved out his or her place as a class would soon trump the arguments swinging back and forth between the north and the south in the U.S.

Wilfred Carsel's article titled “Slaveholders' Indictment of Northern Wage Slavery,” hits on something very interesting when he brings up the pro-slavery argument that wage slaves were slaves as a class rather than as individuals in a master-slave capacity. Quoting Hammond, Carsel wrote that “the modern *artificial money power system*, in which man...are all subjected to the dominion of *capital*” are slaves to an inhuman monster which with “increased profits to the capitalist came...greater misery to

---

<sup>76</sup> George Fitzhugh, *Cannibals All! Or, Slaves Without Masters* (Richmond: A Morris, 1857), accessed January 8, 2016, [http://www.gutenberg.org/files/35481/35481-h/35481-h.htm#CHAPTER\\_XII](http://www.gutenberg.org/files/35481/35481-h/35481-h.htm#CHAPTER_XII).

his workers.”<sup>77</sup> Identifying wage workers as a class is an important development, for Linguet, Engels, and those who believed in the class struggle between workers and owners all held that it was this class as a *whole* that was enslaved to a system run by a “few.”

The first steps toward class identification from the 1840s to the 1860s took place during the abolition movement when both the North and South were most defensive over their particular form of labor organization and when dissent on either side went unheard. Since both wage slavery and chattel slavery are forms of slavery, having “liberty” or freedom meant little. Slave owners argued that their form of slavery was more humane, being paternal rather than mechanical and cold. Workers in the north worked harder, longer, and without the promise of security. For Hammond, wage slavery and chattel slavery were the respective “mudsills” of the North and the South, and both exploited their respective labor forces. Because of the exploitation of labor, both North and South shared a common threat: the inevitable uniting of labor. How labor united will be discussed in the next chapter.

For slave owners, slavery was natural, as old as the Bible, and supported by the great philosopher Aristotle. Slave owners provided a voice against what the North referred to as “free labor,” in defense of their attacked institution of chattel slavery. It is of benefit to now hear from the wage workers themselves to see if their reported labor conditions truly fit the abysmal picture painted by slave owners and abolitionists alike. Glimpsed is the worker faced with the rapidly changing industrial space of work, a space that had been criticized for the effects it had on wage labor, a space which would grow as

---

<sup>77</sup> Wilfred Carsel, “Slaveholders' Indictment of Northern Wage Slavery,” *Journal of Southern History* 6, no. 4 (November 1940): 513, 515, accessed September 14, 2014, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2192167>.

the nation grew and influence an increasingly greater number of workers.

### **Focal Study: Conditions of Early Industrialization**

Since the wage slave argument began in England, it is only fitting that British wage labor in British factories be addressed before attending to the voices of workers in America's northern states. Their words help make sense of how free labor would consider themselves wage slaves. In 1832, Michael Sadler, a former linen importer, was granted permission to form and head a parliamentary committee to inquire into the conditions of labor in British factories. Sadler and his allies, some of whom were respected factory owners, hoped this newly formed committee could sway Parliament to pass the Ten-Hours Bill, limiting the work day for women and children.

Motivated by factory reform sentiment, Michael Sadler began interviewing factory workers and doctors, questioning the conditions within the mills and factories. In 1833, the year Michael Sadler lost his seat in the general election and the year slavery was abolished in Britain, Sadler published the testimony of eighty-nine individuals in what became known as the Sadler Report. The report focused particularly on women and children and recorded the abuse of laborers, workdays of up to sixteen hours, low pay, and dangerous, fast-paced work resulting in physical ailments, deformities, and deaths. Believing the report to contain numerous errors and falsities, the factory owners demanded a second committee and a second report. The second report has prompted criticism by some historians on the acceptance of Sadler's Report as a true representation of factory life in the eighteen-thirties. One such critic is William H. Hutt.

William Hutt, an economist writing in 1925, criticized Sadler's Report for being too partisan and Sadler for neglecting to have those who testified take an oath to tell the

truth. Sadler and his committee had a reason to make the conditions of factory labor sound worse than they may have been. Sympathy for the workers aided in the passing of the Ten-Hours Bill and, as it turned out even after the second report was published, was the main reason for the presentation of the Factory Act of 1833 which prohibited children under nine years of age from being employed except in silk mills and limited the number of work hours allowed for children between nine and thirteen years to under forty-eight hours per week and those between thirteen and eighteen years to sixty-nine hours a week.<sup>78</sup> Hutt's concern over the interviewees not being under oath, however, provides an interesting opportunity to compare the language of the workers with the intellectual commentaries about wage-laborers prior to and after 1832.

Having explored the origins of the wage slave argument and discussed the impact of property and the accumulation of wealth on wage laborers as presented by those who were not themselves wage laborers, it is now to the words and thoughts of those who really were working in the factory system of Britain to which this paper turns. It is in Sadler's parliamentary commissioned investigation that the voices of the wage-laboring "slaves," if they did in fact consider themselves as such, can be heard.

Twenty-two year old Matthew Crabtree was a blanket manufacturer who worked fourteen hours a day. Matthew commented on the condition of children in the factory, who "toward the close of the day, when they come to be more fatigued, they cannot keep up with [the work] very well, and the consequence is that they are beaten to spur them on." Sadler asks if Mr. Crabtree himself was beaten as a child under those circumstances, for which he replied, "Yes. Very frequently." Later, the Committee asked Matthew if he thought that "if the over-looker were naturally a humane person it would be still found

---

<sup>78</sup> Engels, *Conditions of the Working-Class in England*, 86.

necessary for him to beat the children, in order to keep up their attention and vigilance at the termination of those extraordinary days of labour?" Matthew replies, "Yes, the machine turns off a regular quantity of cardings, and of course they must keep as regularly to their work the whole of the day; they must keep with the machine, and therefore however humane the slubber may be, as he must keep up with the machine or be found fault with, he spurs the children to keep up also by various means but that which he commonly resorts to is to strap them when they become drowsy." Matthew attests to the machine's position in the factory as superior to that of the laborer and which the laborer must diligently and continually accommodate. The worker is dictated to not only by necessity but by the machine which, through its operation, secures his needs via a wage. Wages, as David Ricardo points out in 1817, operate much like a piston machine. He writes in *The Iron Law of Wages*, "As population increases, these necessities will be constantly rising in price, because more labour will be necessary to produce them. If, then, the money wages of labour should fall, whilst every commodity on which the wages of labour were expended rose, the labourer would be doubly affected, and would be soon totally deprived of subsistence."<sup>79</sup> The wage-laborer's wellbeing rests not only with an owner but also with the market in which the owner competes.

Thomas Bennett, a forty-eight-year-old father of eight, began working in Mr. Halliley's blanket mill at the age of six. He claimed to have worked up to sixteen hours a day. Later, Mr. Bennett worked for a Mr. Wood with whom he argued a number of times about the conditions in his mill. Thomas was particularly concerned about the working children. He wrote, "I have seen at that mill, and I have experienced and mentioned it

---

<sup>79</sup> David Ricardo, "The Iron Law of Wages," Internet Modern History Sourcebook, last modified August, 1997, accessed March 8, 2014, <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/ricardo-wages.asp>.



with grief, that the English children were enslaved worse than the Africans. Once when Mr. Wood was saying to the carrier who brought his work in and out, 'How long has that horse of mine been at work?' and the carrier told him the time, and he said 'Loose him directly, he has been in too long,' I made this reply to him, 'You have more mercy and pity for your horse than you have for your men'.<sup>80</sup> Here, Thomas Bennett describes the argument Engels would later employ and upon which Linguet had already commented, that the wage-laborer was worse off than a traditional slave because he was not worth as much to the owner as a single horse. The owner's concern extended to his property and, because his laborers were not property, they were worth less than his horse.

Yet, the wage-laborer, like the horse, relied on the owner for his survival.

Elizabeth Bentley, twenty-three at the time of her testimony, worked in a Flax mill owned by Mr. Busk. The committee asked her if the girls who were strapped had marks left upon their skin. Elizabeth replied, "Yes, they had black marks many times, and their parents dare not come to him about it, they were afraid of losing their work." Sadler then asked "If the parents were to complain of this excessive ill-usage, the probable consequence would be the loss of the situation of the child?" The reply was yes.<sup>81</sup> It is surprising that the committee did not inquire further into what would happen if the child was to lose his or her "situation." These laborers were so reliant not only on their wages but the wages of their children that they feared confronting Mr. Busk. To further compare the traditional slave to the wage slave, evidence of slaves slowing down in their work, sabotaging their work, etcetera, as leverage against their owners has repeatedly been cited. If the wage

---

<sup>80</sup> Charles Wing, *Evils of the Factory System, Demonstrated by Parliamentary Evidence* (New York: A.M. Kelley, 1967), 8-9.

<sup>81</sup> "Parliamentary Testimony: Evidence Given Before the Sadler Committee," *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, accessed March 8, 2014, [http://www.wwnorton.com/college/english/nael/victorian/topic\\_1/parl.htm](http://www.wwnorton.com/college/english/nael/victorian/topic_1/parl.htm).

laborers were to employ those same tactics and it was discovered, they would be let go.

As transcribed from a final testimony, Peter Smart became an overseer at Mr. Webster's mill at seventeen. Before this, he had been "bound" to an owner for six years by his mother in exchange for fifteen shillings. Peter continually referred to the mill owners as masters. As overseer, Peter was tasked with strapping the tiring workers, much as Matthew Crabtree had been beaten. Asked by the committee if he had inflicted on others what he had had inflicted upon him, Peter replied, "I went as an overseer; not as a slave, but as a slave-driver."<sup>82</sup> Peter uses the word slave to describe his fellow workers. Although he may not have considered himself a slave at the time because he was an overseer, his comment must still include himself because Peter was once the same as the workers he was then strapping. Master, overseer, slave. His language would seem more fitting to a plantation in America than to a mill in Britain. Still, these are the words Peter Smart used to describe the conditions in Mr. Webster's factory.

What is most interesting is that Sadler's Report has in it testimony from wage laborers which directly and indirectly gives the wage slave argument credence. Instead of concluding that Sadler's Report is not to be trusted, the report can be used not to describe the conditions inside British factories in the early eighteen-hundreds, not to understand how the Factory Act of 1833 was passed, not to understand the partisan nature of parliamentary members, but to understand how the worker's viewed themselves and, indirectly, supported the wage slave argument.

Words of discontent factory workers help express how some labor felt toward industrial work, but a discussion on the worker's place within a largely capital

---

<sup>82</sup> "Evidence Given Before the Sadler Committee," The Victorian Web, last modified July 22, 2002, accessed March 8, 2014, <http://www.victorianweb.org/history/workers1.html>.

constructed space built to take advantage of cheap labor sources, like in Lowell, Massachusetts, helps clarify why the wage slave argument was used.

In America, Lowell, Massachusetts, provided women with work at mills where commentary about the conditions of linen factories in early eighteen-hundreds America can be heard. The Lowell Mills provide a great opportunity for drawing a comparison between American and British factory conditions, while keeping in mind Sadler's concern for women and child laborers.

Lowell, Massachusetts, was named after Francis Cabot Lowell who went to Britain and saw first-hand the mechanized power looms which characterized the Industrial Revolution. Lowell kept the designs of the looms in his mind, as any physical drawings or notes were forbidden to leave Britain, because machine secrets were closely guarded in the interest of both individual manufacturers and the nation. With mental notes and drawings retained, Lowell returned to the United States, founded a corporation with the help of wealthy Bostonian Nathan Appleton, raised funds to construct his first mill and, with the help of the mechanic Paul Moody, built his first power loom. For labor, Lowell and Appleton sought out young, unmarried women. Lowell's combination of corporate financing, mechanized textile production, and a cheap source of labor was a winning one. Starting in the 1820s and continuing to the 1850s, the industrial city that bore the late Francis Cabot Lowell's name was constructed. The city employed 8,800 women and half that number of men with an output of 2,250,000 yards of cloth each week.<sup>83</sup> The women who worked in the Lowell textile mills lived in company-owned boardinghouses (which were originally subsidized by the corporation). There, they discussed their role as workers, as women, and as organizers for early American trade

---

<sup>83</sup> Licht, *Industrializing America*, 26-28.

unionism.

Three key events increased the occurrence of strikes at Lowell and other factories and industries in the early days of American industrialization. The first, explained by Norman Ware in *The Industrial Worker*, is the increasing conflict with and the intrusive behavior of management at Lowell. In the early days of Lowell, management organized their workers' lives according to a benign form of paternalism, where rules about attending Church were instituted for the benefit of the girls. By 1850 and into 1860, the early form of paternalism morphed hideously into a domination the actions and thoughts (including how an operative ought to vote) of the Lowell workers.<sup>84</sup> This departure from a caring form of management to one based on control and the view that workers were no more than mere machines, added to the wage slave rhetoric where the worker "felt that they were losing something of their dignity and independence...The worker objected to his cage, whether it was gilded as in [the early days at] Lowell, or rusty and unkempt [elsewhere]."<sup>85</sup>

By the mid-1840s, workers came to believe that the interests of employers and those of their employees were antagonistic, before even realizing that as workers they were beginning to form a class. The "radicalism" of the early labor movement was like a newborn baby, kicking and screaming, not knowing who she was but only that she felt something wasn't quite right with the promise of a free life. The *Voice of Industry* on July 17, 1845, asked wage workers to recognize that the "compensation for labor is steadily sinking, until thousands are now reduced to the starvation point." "Labor and laborer—it is useless to deny it—are in this Republican country even, subject to a subtle, indirect

---

<sup>84</sup> Ware, *The Industrial Worker*, 105.

<sup>85</sup> Ware, *The Industrial Worker*, 78.

slavery, rarely acknowledged but everywhere felt. And in this respect the white laborer of the north is in a worse state than the slave of the south, for while the condition of the slave remains pretty much the same from year to year, that of the supposed free man is growing constantly worse....Who dares to doubt it?"<sup>86</sup> In the same year, the most active labor organizing year before the Civil War, the Industrial Congress (IC) was created by a combination of Land Reformers, social critics, intellectuals, and laborers who formed the IC to illicit ideas as to how to improve the labor system and, by more radical voices, to "free industry as the Continental Congress [had] freed the colonies."<sup>87</sup>

The early working class movement had radical embers burning just below the surface, but without a concrete sense of self or worker solidarity, the working class movement would be defensive in nature, arguing for a quickly vanishing past where artisans, masters and apprentices dominated trade and craft labor, where land seemed more available, independence more secure and reliance on a wage not exclusive. By 1860, Ware argues the labor movement became aggressive and formed according to the laborer's particular trade, beginning inner-conflicts among workers themselves and their fledgling trade unions where the "I" became more important than the "we." What did not change was the workers' belief that they were less than free and a "daily wage" rendered them slaves. For example, Ware, late in his book, quotes that the shoemakers in Lynn "proposed to form a cooperative society 'to emancipate themselves from the system of wage slavery and become their own masters'."<sup>88</sup> Language such as this was repeated throughout New England and factory towns such as Lowell.

---

<sup>86</sup> Quoted in Ware, *The Industrial Worker*, 214. The entry can also be found here: <https://www.marxists.org/history/usa/pubs/voice-of-industry/1845/v1n08-w008-jul-17-1845-voi.pdf>.

<sup>87</sup> Ware, *The Industrial Worker*, 223.

<sup>88</sup> Ware, *The Industrial Worker*, 236.

Between the years from 1835 to 1848 and from the time she was 10 years old, Harriet Robinson worked at the Lowell Mills. Robinson, or Hanson before she was married in 1848, described her time, and the time of the other women, there as pleasant. She writes “Except in rare instances, the rights of the early mill-girls were secure. They were subject to no extortion...Though the hours of labor were long, they were not overworked...and they had plenty of time to sit and rest. They were not driven, and their work-a-day life was made easy. They were treated with consideration by their employers, and there was a feeling of respectful equality between them.” Robinson reasoned that good help was in too short a supply and that the mill owners could not afford to treat them poorly. She added that these “women were all self-made in the truest sense.”<sup>89</sup>

In October 1836, wages were reduced by fifteen percent, and the corporations required the girls to pay their own board, toward which the mill's previously contributed twenty-five cents. This action prompted, according to Harriet, “One of the first strikes of cotton-factory operatives that ever took place in this country,” and Harriet, at age 11, led a “long line that followed me, [and] I was more proud than I have ever been since...and more proud than I shall ever be again...”. This is an interesting memory for a number of reasons. First, that even though conditions at the mills were, for Harriet, pleasant, she still took pride in “turning out” over the lowering of wages. Second, that the lowering of wages was worth striking against. Third, and most importantly, that Harriet remembers how the girls sang a parody of the song “I Won't be a Nun” by replacing the word nunnery with factory and the word nun with slave:

“Oh! isn't it a pity, such a pretty girl as I--

---

<sup>89</sup> Harriet Robinson, *Loom and Spindle; or, Life among the Early Mill Girls*, (Boston: TY Cromwell & Company, 1898), accessed September 11, 2014, <http://courses.wcupa.edu/johnson/robinson.html>. Also available at <https://archive.org/details/loomspindleorlif00robi>.

Should be sent to the factory to pine away and die?  
Oh! I cannot be a slave,  
I will not be a slave,  
For I'm so fond of liberty  
That I cannot be a slave.”

Harriet's reasons for striking were her opposition to what other girls called “oppression on the part of the corporation” and her alignment with being “so fond of liberty” as was sung while “turning out.” In this testimony, a decrease in wages was seen as oppressive, especially when considering now having to pay for their own board, which Harriet estimated took one dollar out of the two earned each week.

What is important about Harriet Robinson and the Lowell Girls is their linking of slavery with a wage that directly impacted their liberty or freedom. The wage decrease, despite feeling well treated as did the workers in the Mills, was an external force which they felt was a constraint, oppressive, and rendered them a “slave.” Orestes Brownson reinforced the notion that slaves were better off than “free labor” when commenting about the conditions of the “Lowell Girls.” He writes about the girls specifically: “The average life--working life, we mean--of the girls that come to Lowell, for instance, from Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont, we have been assured, is only about three years. What becomes of them then? ‘She has worked in a factory’ is almost enough to damn to infamy the most worthy and virtuous girl.”<sup>90</sup> Brownson’s concern for the workers is exaggerated because Harriet Robinson is one of the girls who did marry. His main concern, like many reformers or socialist thinkers, is with the wage system in general.

In regard to labor, two systems obtain: one that of slave labor, the other that of free labor. Of the two, the first is, in our judgment, except so far as the feelings are concerned, decidedly the least oppressive. If the slave has never been a free man, we think, as a general rule, his sufferings are less

---

<sup>90</sup>Orestes Augustus Brownson, *The Laboring Classes: An Article from the Boston Quarterly Review* (Boston: B.H. Greene, 1840), 11.

than those of the free laborer at wages. As to actual freedom, one has just about as much as the other. The laborer at wages has all the disadvantages of freedom and none of its blessings, while the slave, if denied the blessings, is freed from the disadvantages.<sup>91</sup>

Brownson concludes, “Wages is a cunning device of the devil, for the benefit of tender consciences who would retain all the advantages of the slave system without the expense, trouble, and odium of being slaveholders,”<sup>92</sup> and his solution is to see that laborers can earn enough through laboring for another to become independent producers. Obviously, at least for Harriet Robinson, the conditions in the mills were less important (potentially, because she considered them good) than the wage earned. This fact is made even more surprising when Robinson tells us that most of the wages earned by the girls were given to a male member of their respective families so that the male member could be educated and gain a profession. Funneling money into the household was a common practice before 1840, as women were looked down upon if they spent money (placing them outside their sphere).

Harriet's feelings of oppression did not stem only from a decrease in wages. According to Robinson, the owners “took some small revenges on the supposed ringleaders” of the strike. Robinson's mother was turned away from her boarding house as a result of her daughter's actions because, with Harriet being only eleven, her mother should have had more control over her.<sup>93</sup> In the end, the strike availed nothing positive. The mills remained closed until the girls gave in and went back to work at the lowered wage.

Discontent labor in the U.S. made use of the wage slave argument because they

---

<sup>91</sup> Brownson, *The Laboring Classes*, 10.

<sup>92</sup> Brownson, *The Laboring Classes*, 12.

<sup>93</sup> Harriet Robinson, *Loom and Spindle*.



“believed the material conditions of autonomy were slipping from their grasp.” Eric Foner suggested that wage slave rhetoric “took on a special power in the United States” because “slavery was an immediate reality, not a distant symbol, and the small producer still a powerful element in the social order, the idea that the wage earner, because of economic dependence, was less than fully free retained considerable power as a criticism of the emerging order.”<sup>94</sup> Labor's reliance on a wage called into question the correctness of the definition of freedom as being free from “power or control of another.”<sup>95</sup> However, northern abolitionists were not fond of the wage slave argument for obvious reasons. The argument undermined their own way of life, their own understanding of freedom, and pitted them against their labor force. Foner pointed out that the North used the contract argument as defense against the comparison between wage work and slavery.<sup>96</sup> The contract argument stated that the laborer could choose his employer, meet at a reasonable wage, and quit if he found something better. Slaves apparently could not, though there is some evidence that they negotiated contracts.<sup>97</sup> The contract argument, however, does not account for the dependence on a wage for survival that a wage worker demonstratively felt existed, as heard from both intellectuals like Lingeut and workers themselves. This is another reason the wage slave argument persisted long after the U. S. Civil War.

The comparison between slavery and wage labor viewed against a backdrop of liberalism and republican ideology focuses the formation of the developing character of labor and its interaction with employers. The idea of freedom as promised in the Nation's Declaration or “free labor” ideology and as espoused by Republicans in the 1850s and

---

<sup>94</sup> Eric Foner, “Meaning of Freedom in the Age of Emancipation,” 446.

<sup>95</sup> Merriam-Webster definition of Freedom, <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/freedom>.

<sup>96</sup> Eric Foner, “Meaning of Freedom in the Age of Emancipation,” 449.

<sup>97</sup> See Mary Turner, *From Chattel Slaves to Wage Slaves: The Dynamics of Labour Bargaining in the Americas* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995) for a study on how slaves negotiated for informal contracts and cash rewards through negotiations or sabotage.

60s was very different when experienced in the context of the factory floor where industrial routines and heavy machinery dominated flesh and blood or in the post-Civil War South where “freedom” meant “half-free,” as former slave Frederick Douglass put it.

Douglass called for an honest day’s pay for an honest day’s work as remedy for wage slavery. This seemingly simple proposal would be echoed by labor unions, like the American Federation of Labor, that believed in trade unionism (unionization by one’s trade only as opposed to industrial unionism which unionized all regardless of trade) and felt that working within the space capitalism created was better than fighting against the system. Douglass also promoted the idea of the self-made man; through hard work, one of the lowliest of origins could rise to the height of society, echoing republican ideology. Free at last, Douglass reveled in the opportunity to earn wages which, to him, signified realized freedom. Work, for Douglass, was the defining feature of self-made men, as described in his 1872 speech. He said, “My theory of self-made men is, then, simply this: that they are men of work.”<sup>98</sup> Discontent labor (and social liberals in America and Europe) had by this time already recognized that the possibility of obtaining capital, regardless of how hard one worked, was slim. By 1883, Douglass agreed and was of the opinion that “there may be a slavery of wages only a little less galling and crushing in its effects than chattel slavery, and that this slavery of wages must go down with the other.”<sup>99</sup> Douglass saw labor unions as a way to combat this “slavery of wages” with an optimistic eye toward attaining “an honest day’s pay for an honest day’s work.”

The workers’ *space* in industrial America was one largely constructed for them as

---

<sup>98</sup> Frederick Douglass, “Self-made Men,” accessed September 15, 2014, <http://www.monadnock.net/douglass/self-made-men.html>.

<sup>99</sup> Frederick Douglass, *Frederick Douglass: Selected Speeches and Writings*, ed. Philip Sheldon Foner and Yuval Taylor (Chicago: Lawrence Hill, 1999), 676.

evidenced by Lowell, Massachusetts. Lowell, like many other company towns to come into existence in the nineteenth century, was built to be a factory town housing numerous mills and over ten thousand employees. Because industrial work spaces were built to take advantage of cheap labor sources, what the employees felt freedom meant, what their relation was to work, to wages, and to their space of work all challenged that constructed space where, as free individuals, they began to organize collectively and demonstrate their demands. By organizing and demonstrating, the workers were challenging those constructed spaces, indeed, capitalist space in general and, by doing so, began to define a place within capital space; not only a place to call home, but an identity unique to the growth of wage labor and based on the promise of freedom, a quest for equality and, eventually, securing the rights of all workers. Clarification of what it meant to be “free” labor rested on how workers came to identify with work, what they saw as threatening to that identity, and their sometimes radical reactions to those threats.

By the beginning of the American Civil War, labor had forged a sense of identity which aided the initial evolution of the working class movement in the United States, accompanied by an understanding of the worker’s new place because of industrialization. Labor by 1860 understood that a return to an earlier day, an earlier method of organizing labor, the agrarian dream of Thomas Jefferson’s simple and civic living was forced to give way to technological innovations, heavy machinery, mass production, the growth of corporations and the appearance of monopolies, all helping cement wage labor’s new place in America. It was again the wage slave argument which, like the North Star, remained a constant thread of thought, of hope, that eventual emancipation or strength through union would render the working masses free. Both the abolition movement and

Republican ideology of “free labor” overshadowed the cries for freedom from American workers who, by comparing themselves to chattel slaves, hoped to gain recognition of their own supposed subordinate and will-less position in industrial capitalism. Discontent labor argued that they were wage slaves, and even Frederick Douglass, who lived as both a slave and a free man, argued that there was a slavery of wages akin to chattel slavery. The lament of the discontent would not be fully heard until after the Civil War when labor conflict and wage slave rhetoric soared and became increasingly violent. Undeniably, it was the wage slave argument which informed and built an ideological platform for major national unions in post antebellum America.

### Chapter III: The Workers' New Place, Identity, and Radicalism

The space of the worker was the factory, the mill, the slaughter house, the rail yard, atop mountains, under the surface of the earth and on the water. This space in which labor worked, maneuvered and survived was rapidly changing in the second half of the nineteenth century. As railroads spatially and economically connected the nation, new unions including the Knights of Labor (KOL), the American Federation of Labor (AFL), and the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) attempted to nationally organize America's labor force. Each built a platform informed by wage slavery rhetoric and promised to emancipate or elevate the worker to his or her rightful social place. The wage slave argument also helps explain union relations as well as union radicalism. It may be true that those who used the wage slave argument were a minority, but it is also true that this minority largely formed the attitudes and demands of the working class in America.

Industrial jobs involving iron and steel, oil, packinghouses and textile factories relied on mass production and the use of cheap, immigrant labor. Indeed, according to Bertrand Russell in his book *Proposed Roads to Freedom*, the use of immigrant labor helped define labor relations in the United States.<sup>100</sup> This argument is justified for two reasons: first is the existence of the American Emigrant Company, which in 1864 secured a Congressional labor law that allowed for the recruitment of immigrants by advancing them their passage fees to be taken out of their future wages (very similar to the process of bringing over indentured servants in the seventeenth century). The immigrants were often very poor and relied exclusively on a wage that made it possible for businesses to

---

<sup>100</sup> Bertrand Russell, *Proposed Roads to Freedom* (New York: Henry Holdt and Company, 1919), 79.

pay them “starvation prices.”<sup>101</sup> America has always been a nation of immigrants, but the economic conditions after the Civil War coupled with the high rate of immigration enabled businesses to pay lower wages, especially to immigrants who often found work in industrial, mass production jobs like packinghouses, further polarizing the distinction between skilled and unskilled labor.

The second reason why Russell’s argument is justified is because the Republican “free labor” ideology was being undermined by the close of the frontier (removing the labor safety valve which protected cities from a permanent wage earning class and high unemployment). Foster Rhea Dulles, author of *Labor in America* wrote, “However indirect the effect of the western movement may actually have been in relieving the pressure in earlier years, the closing of the frontier meant that an entirely new epoch had begun in American history. There was still opportunity but it was to be far more limited than in the expansive days of western settlement.”<sup>102</sup>

Immigration, which held down wages, undermined union efforts to promote a united front and demand higher wages. Skilled labor historically could not easily be replaced by cheap labor. Their skill often was their greatest strength and enabled them to demand better working conditions from their employers prior to the Civil War. Because of their irreplaceability, skilled labor enjoyed success in their local Trades Unions (that first made a strong appearance in 1834 in Philadelphia), demonstrated a belief in American Republicanism and promoted workingmen pride, strength, and social utility through such events as the Tammany Hall Parade.<sup>103</sup> Before the Civil War, identifying

---

<sup>101</sup> Foster Rhea Dulles, *Labor in America: A History*, Third ed. (Northbrook, IL: AHM Publishing Corporation, 1966), 97.

<sup>102</sup> Dulles, *Labor in America*, 98.

<sup>103</sup> Dulles, *Labor in America*, 58.

with work was to identify oneself as a freeman. Even though an example of Republican ideology stated that “man shall be judged by his actions and not by his professions”<sup>104</sup> as a critique against aristocratic leanings, artisan or mechanically skilled laborers enjoyed and demanded a better social position because of their professions.

The close of the frontier and the increasing need by business to find sources of cheap labor to stay competitive threatened the position of skilled laborers. At the same time, industrial jobs were becoming more common, creating a permanent wage-earning class and the social problems accompanied by unemployment which was “far more serious than it had been in the less complex agrarian society of the first half of the nineteenth century.”<sup>105</sup> Republican ideology’s promise that industrious working men could eventually leave their position of wage-earner to become a business owner was now harder to keep. A permanent wage-earning class was here to stay.

According to Harold Faulkner, author of *The Economic History of the United States: The Decline of Laissez Faire, 1897-1917*, the end of the U. S. Civil War saw a “rapid economic expansion achieved at a sacrifice of other aspects of American civilization” through “rampant individualism and chaotic laissez faire,”<sup>106</sup> both praised ideals of liberalism. Called the Second Industrial Revolution (roughly 1860 to 1920), this time was characterized by the building of railroads, an increase in machine use, and the advent of mass production. These changes and innovations compounded “the gross inequality of wealth, wide existence of poverty, racial inequality, the domination by big business of politics, religion, education, and the courts, the selfish and stupid waste of

---

<sup>104</sup> Dulles, *Labor in America*, 57.

<sup>105</sup> Dulles, *Labor in America*, 115.

<sup>106</sup> Harold Underwood Faulkner, *The Economic History of the United States Vol 7: The Decline of Laissez Faire, 1897-1917* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1951), 369.

natural resources, carelessness of human life,” and the “exploitation of women and children.”<sup>107</sup> The worst criticisms against early industrial labor life in Britain continued firmly in tact here in America after the Civil War. In 1888, former President Rutherford B. Hayes summed up the results of the Second Industrial Revolution relative to the concentration of wealth. He wrote:

The real difficulty is with the vast wealth and power in the hands of the few and the unscrupulous who represent or control capital. Hundreds of laws of Congress and the state legislatures are in the interest of these men and against the interests of the workingmen. These need to be exposed and repealed. All laws on corporations, on taxation, on trusts, wills, descent, and the like, need examination and extensive change. This is a government of the people, by the people, and for the people no longer. It is a government of corporations, by corporations, and for corporations. -- How is this?<sup>108</sup>

Because of the rapid changes after the Civil War, this time period was also the most active time for large union memberships and the creation (and/or destruction) of many prominent unions such as the Knights of Labor, the American Federation of Labor, and the Industrial Workers of the World. With the labor contract defended by capitalists in question and the social place of workers tenuous, labor formed national (as opposed to only local) worker unions in response to feelings best described by the wage slave argument: loss of autonomy, oppression, dictation, and “slavery.” This chapter explores how each of these three national unions made use of the wage slave argument and demonstrates that the argument was not a radical idea but, instead, one shared in common. The wage slave argument united these unions, but how they attempted to overcome the argument drove them apart.

The Knights of Labor explicitly referred to employees as slaves and employers as

---

<sup>107</sup> Faulkner, *The Economic History of the United States*, 369.

<sup>108</sup> Rutherford B. Hayes, *The Diary and Letters of Rutherford B. Hayes, Nineteenth President of the United States*, edited by Charles Richard Williams (Columbus: Ohio State Archeological and Historical Society, 1922), 374.



slave masters. The KOL did not believe in the effectiveness of strikes, citing the many failed strikes in American history, and believed that workers ought to be educated to know their historic position in society and to form producer cooperatives as a strategy to retain both their independence and identity as producers. The KOL accepted all nationalities, races and women regardless of one's craft or occupation, making it an industrial union. What made the KOL "radical" was its belief in positively replacing the wage system with the aforementioned cooperatives.

The American Federation of Labor rose in part as a response to the KOL's stance on industrial unionism, the KOL's mission to abolish the wage system and the influx of immigrant workers. The AFL was the most conservative of the three national unions this chapter explores, making it a point to work within the bounds of capitalism rather than attempting to overthrow it; however, that did not mean the AFL was any less militant or zealous in protecting and promoting the rights of *skilled* workers. Samuel Gompers, long-time president of the AFL, often used language which mirrored other more radical unions' use of the term wage slavery. The AFL was nearly exclusively a trade union that believed working with capitalism was in the best interest of the working population. To be sure, the AFL's cautionary outlook on any form of radicalism and even political issues often infuriated other unions such as the IWW. The AFL's slow and steady character would eventually win the ear of President Wilson during World War I, starting a positive trend of government working with labor.

The IWW, the union featured in this chapter's focal study, was formed in 1905 and was the most radical of the three unions, operating mostly in the West (Pacific Northwest and California). The IWW's historic mission was to overthrow capitalism and

replace it with either socialism or communism. Like the KOL, the IWW was an industrial union and believed that only through “One Big Union” could labor in America abolish the wage system. The IWW believed strongly in Marx’s class conflict theory and used direct action and an abundance of wage slavery rhetoric to justify its actions. The existence of the IWW and the near constant use of the wage slave argument in its publications and leaders’ words helps illuminate Western conflict in America where the frontier ended and Eastern business interests were just beginning.

Feelings of animosity between employee and employer prompted the U.S. Senate in 1882 to form a Committee of the Senate to address relations between labor and capital. The purpose of the Committee was to hear testimony and possible solutions relative to labor wages, hours, working conditions, strikes, and the promotion of the interests of both labor and capitalists. Robert D. Layton, Grand Secretary of the Knights of Labor, was sworn in and examined on February 6, 1883. Having established that Layton understood labor concerns across America, James Z. George of Mississippi asked, “What is the general feeling of the laborers of the country, the wage laborers, toward their employers? What is the relation between laborers and their employers generally?” Layton answered, “Generally that between slaves and their masters.” The general feeling of labor, according to the Grand Secretary of the Knights of Labor (which in 1886 boasted of nearly eight-hundred thousand members), was that they were slaves to capitalist masters. Layton believed that the use of machines concentrated capital and degraded labor, which resulted in Layton stating that he believes the laborer ought to get more than he does from the present arrangement. He said, “We find in many of those large institutions that the men are looked upon as nothing more than parts of the machinery that they work. They

are labeled and tagged, as the parts of a machine would be, and are only taken into account as a part of the machinery used for the profit of the manufacturer or employer.” Pressed by Mr. George on whether there is “confidence, harmony, and good will existing between the employers and the employed in this country,” Layton answered, “The working people feel that they are under a system of forced slavery.” “[E]nslaved by capital?” George asked. “Yes sir; and that there is danger of still further enslavement.”<sup>109</sup> The wage slave argument had reached the United States Senate.

The Knights of Labor had its beginning in Philadelphia in 1869. Founded as a secret society, the KOL addressed the troubling social reality of the 1880s in its public preamble of 1886.<sup>110</sup>

The alarming development and aggressiveness of great capitalists and corporations, unless checked, will inevitably lead to the pauperization and hopeless degradation of the toiling masses. It is imperative, if we desire to enjoy the full blessings of life, that a check be placed upon unjust accumulation, and the power for evil of aggregated wealth. This much-desired object can be accomplished only by the united efforts of those who obey the divine injunction, “In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread.”<sup>111</sup>

The above last sentence relates to how Knights of Labor leadership and members identified with work. As workers who produced physical goods, they were the true wealth producers, and those who simply accumulated and aggregated wealth without producing, without sweat on their face from hard work, ought to be excluded from production, or at least from the title of producer.

According to Helga Hallgrimdsottir and Cecilia Benoit, producerist labor

---

<sup>109</sup> United States Senate, *Report of the Committee of the Senate Upon the Relations Between Labor and Capital, And Testimony Taken by the Committee*, Volume I-Testimony (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1885), 218-219,

<https://archive.org/stream/reportcommittee00capigooq#page/n5/mode/2up>.

<sup>110</sup> Similar language and goals were published as early as 1883 which is included in the aforementioned Senate Report Committee on Education and Labor, page 2.

<sup>111</sup> Knights of Labor, “Preamble and Declaration of Principles of the Knights of Labor of America,” accessed March 5, 2016. <http://www.chicagohistory.org/hadc/visuals/V0010.htm>

ideology was the primary mode of interpreting labor's relation with their employers during a time when wages were decreasing and production was becoming more and more concentrated. Producerist theory proclaimed “that all true economic wealth derived solely from human labor and was reason alone for the moral and political recognition of all those who labored...for a living.”<sup>112</sup> When production was centralized in the hands of capitalists instead of those of artisans and self-employed workers, more labor had to find employment within factories, which resulted in feelings of lost autonomy. These feelings surfaced because workers no longer controlled how their labor would be used. Hallgrimsdottir and Benoit wrote, “The loss of competence and independence experienced by skilled labor lent a particular salience to the ameliorative vision of producerism in which a return to a semi-mythical producer republic was to be achieved.” When one lost the opportunity to labor for himself and now had to labor for a wage from another, according to KOL rhetoric, one became a slave. This fact was more difficult to escape when the manufacturing sector grew by over 266 percent between 1850 and 1900 in the United States.<sup>113</sup>

It is also interesting to note that Rousseau’s warning about concentrated wealth and the need for a “wealth cap” is hinted toward also by the KOL preamble. What the KOL wanted was equality in work and pay, an eight-hour work day, and to institute co-operatives. The goals of equal pay for equal work, an eight-hour work day, and more say or control in one's workplace was shared by all major unions during the late 1800s and early 1900s. Uriah Stephens (Stevens), the founder of the Knights of Labor, called for the

---

<sup>112</sup> Helga Hallgrimsdottir and Cecilia Benoit, “From Wage Slaves to Wage Workers: Cultural Opportunity Structures and the Evolution of the Wage Demands of the Knights of Labor and the American Federation of Labor, 1880-1900” *Social Forces* 85, no. 3 (March 2007): 1397.

<sup>113</sup> Hallgrimsdottir and Benoit, “From Wage Slaves to Wage Workers, 1401.

“complete emancipation of wealth producers from the thralldom and loss of wage slavery.”<sup>114</sup> Cooperatives would instead replace the wage system: The KOL planned “to establish co-operative institutions, such as will tend to supercede the wage system, by introduction of a co-operative industrial system.”<sup>115</sup> What also makes the Knights of Labor unique is their negative stance on strikes. Instead, the KOL opted to “persuade employer[s] to agree to arbitrate all differences which may arise between them and their employees...that strikes may be rendered unnecessary.”<sup>116</sup> The Knights of Labor, however, attracted most of its membership from successful strikes held during the 1880s.

A flood of new members joined in 1885 after the KOL successfully demonstrated victory over the prosperous railroad speculator Jay Gould who attempted to impose a ten percent reduction in wages. Joseph G. Rayback in his *History of American Labor* wrote, “All the bitterness and resentment which had accumulated among workingmen during two years of depression, all the frustration produced by wage cuts, all the fury created by employer use of Pinkertons, black lists, and yellow-dog contracts suddenly burst forth to create a wild rush to join the ranks of the Knights of Labor.”<sup>117</sup> These new members were mostly unskilled, and “their rush to join the Knights was essentially a reaction against long oppression and degradation.”<sup>118</sup> Oppression and degradation was, to the classical liberal, akin to slavery. The wage slave argument persisted after the Civil War because of such feelings. When the KOL failed to win their next railroad strike against Jay Gould the following year in 1886, coupled with the Haymarket riot during the same year which convinced the public that unions were a radical threat, membership and the union sharply

---

<sup>114</sup> Melvyn Dubofsky, *Labor in America: A History*, 116.

<sup>115</sup> Knights of Labor, “Preamble and Declaration of Principles of the Knights of Labor of America,” accessed March 5, 2016. <http://www.chicagohistory.org/hadc/visuals/V0010.htm>

<sup>116</sup> Knights of Labor, “Preamble and Declaration of Principles.”

<sup>117</sup> Joseph G. Rayback, *A History of American Labor* (New York: Macmillan, 1959), 162.

<sup>118</sup> Rayback, *A History of American Labor*, 165.

declined due to the failed strike and organizational issues.

The KOL's positive stance on women's right to vote, the right to equal pay, and the acceptance of both skilled and unskilled labor provided a popular impetus for women to join the union when they were permitted in 1881. By 1887, Leonora Barry, who urged wage workers to join unions such as the KOL as a way to escape wage slavery, estimated that women made up about ten percent of the KOL membership, "just under the percentage of women in the work force generally."<sup>119</sup> In the KOL, members such as Leonora Barry and Leonora O'Reilly used the wage slave argument in a two-fold attack against the historic lack of women's rights and good work conditions in their new-found place as wage workers.

Women sought employment, defended their right to employment outside the home, and "affirmed their place in a broad-based labor reform movement that included men and women organized into trade and labor unions, eight hour day leagues, and consumers' cooperatives."<sup>120</sup> Members of the short-lived Working Women's League used the wage slave argument after the Civil War to describe working conditions in Boston.<sup>121</sup> Lara Vapnek writes, "The metaphor of wage slavery suggested that [victory in the Civil War] had been hollow. As one woman with a hand 'cramped with twenty-five years' sewing' wrote, 'We are indeed slaves, worse slaves than those my brother died to free'."<sup>122</sup> Another sewer, Mary McGary from Chicago, referred to herself as a slave and mentioned

---

<sup>119</sup> Susan Levine, "Labor's True Woman: Domesticity and Equal Rights in the Knights of Labor," *The Journal of American History* 70, no. 2 (September 1983): 325, accessed September 16, 2014, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1900207>.

<sup>120</sup> Lara Vapnek, *Breadwinners: Working Women and Economic Independence, 1865-1920* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009), 7.

<sup>121</sup> Vapnek, *Breadwinners*, 23.

<sup>122</sup> Vapnek, *Breadwinners*, 57.

that not all liked being referred to as “factory slaves but that's just what we are.”<sup>123</sup>

Leonora Barry was forced to find employment after her husband of ten years died along with her only daughter. She found work at a local mill in Amsterdam, New York. Feeling the meager pay was exploitative, she joined the Knights of Labor. She rose quickly through the ranks, becoming in 1886 the “general investigator for women’s work.”<sup>124</sup> In her reports, she did not shy away from using the wage slave argument. Lara Vapnek writes, “Leonora Barry cast working women's low wages...as part of a larger system of wage slavery...”<sup>125</sup> Barry herself argued that wage-working women, “white slaves,” as she referred to herself and other women, ought to have at least as much respect in the KOL as male members.<sup>126</sup>

Also important to Barry was educating women on the role of unions and women's role in the broader labor movement. Susan Levine writes, “By taking seriously the Knights' goal of cooperation, women hoped not only to avoid the exploitation of 'wage slavery' but also to alleviate the terrible conditions under which so many worked.”<sup>127</sup> The desire for women to be educated on labor issues was fundamental to the KOL movement. A fellow sister was of the mind that education was preparation for the eventual emancipation of the workers from the thralldom of wage slavery, echoing the KOL preamble.<sup>128</sup> The goal of educating workers on labor issues in general was also shared by Frederick Douglass. Douglass wrote, “As the laborer becomes more intelligent he will develop what capital he already possesses—that is the power to organize and combine for

---

<sup>123</sup> Vapnek, *Breadwinners*, 57.

<sup>124</sup> Vapnek, *Breadwinners*, 333.

<sup>125</sup> Vapnek, *Breadwinners*, 64.

<sup>126</sup> Quoted in Susan Levine, “Labor's True Woman,” 334.

<sup>127</sup> Levine, “Labor's True Woman,” 326.

<sup>128</sup> Levine, “Labor's True Woman,” 327.

its own protection.”<sup>129</sup> Union-encouraged education as described in the above quotes was paramount in the minds of later social liberals who believed that obtaining education was one of the most important ways to achieve individual freedom.

Leonora O'Reilly (not to be confused with Leonora Barry mentioned above) began work in a New York collar factory at the age of eleven and joined the KOL in 1886 at age sixteen. The Knights of Labor was one of the many groups she joined, and she became one of the founding members of the 1886 Working Women's Society, marking her beginning as a labor activist. In 1903, she was once again a founding member, this time of the New York chapter of the Women's Trade Union League which “represented the causes that were most important [to her]: working conditions for women, unionism, and industrial education.”<sup>130</sup> By 1911, O'Reilly was fighting for an eight-hour work day. That same year, the Triangle fire engulfed a shirtwaist factory in Manhattan leaving 123 young women dead. Sparked to anger, O'Reilly “described those who worked in 'firetrap factories' as being in a state 'no better than slavery.' The metaphor of wage slavery mocked the idea of 'free choice' for women who had to remain in jobs they knew were dangerous in order to put food on the table.”<sup>131</sup> The Triangle factory fire is a reminder of what Faulkner commented on during the Progressive Era and termed the carelessness of human life and the exploitation of women.

The labor union, radical or not, became home to discontent labor and, through the urging of workers like Barry and O'Reilly, offered hope for the escape from wage slavery (and for a fulfilling of independence for women). The KOL's popularity and success

---

<sup>129</sup> Frederick Douglass, *Frederick Douglass: Selected Speeches and Writings*, ed. Philip Sheldon Foner and Yuval Taylor (Chicago: Lawrence Hill, 1999), 676.

<sup>130</sup> Jane Bernard-Powers, “O'Reilly, Leonora,” American National Biography Online, April 2014, <http://www.anb.org/articles/15/15-00842.html> accessed September 17, 2014.

<sup>131</sup> Vapnek, *Breadwinners*, 140.



declined in 1886 after a strike failure mentioned above and the Haymarket Square Riot, which resulted in labor unions being represented as dangerous and radical after a bomb killed multiple police officers and four civilians.<sup>132</sup>

The enormous growth of the KOL, accompanied with its goal of replacing the wage system with producer cooperatives, helps explain two important events. First, the conditions after the Civil War prompted enough discontent among a minority of workers (~700,000) to join a union which wanted to replace the wage system and emancipate labor. Second, that the rapid decline of the KOL helps explain the difficulty unions had to remain united against the strategies of employers to retain control of industry and the work space (using cheap labor, using the courts to file injunctions against strikers, using labor spies and the open shop). In the face of a much more unified business front, The Knights of Labor's longstanding rival, the American Federation of Labor, took the lead as *the* national federated union quick to adopt a conservative program of working with capitalism internally and not fighting it externally.<sup>133</sup>

The American Federation of Labor had its origins in the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions of the United States and Canada (FOTLU) which became active in 1881. The FOTLU preamble recognizes labor's plight stating:

A struggle is going on in the nations of the civilized world between the oppressors and the oppressed of all countries; a struggle between capital and labor, which must grow in intensity from year to year and work disastrous results to the toiling millions of all nations if not combined for mutual protection and benefit. The history of the wage workers of all countries is the history of constant struggle and misery engendered by

---

<sup>132</sup> Foster Rhea Dulles, *Labor in America: A History*, Third ed. (Northbrook, Illinois: AHM Publishing Corporation, 1966), 146-148.

<sup>133</sup> "Knights of Labor," reprinted in The Samuel Gompers Papers, accessed November 20, 2015, <http://www.gompers.umd.edu/KOL.htm>.

ignorance and disunion.<sup>134</sup>

Again, labor unions repeatedly made use of labor's subservient position<sup>135</sup> in the changed space of work but provided hope for the worker's place in this new industrial capitalistic space through education and solidarity. In 1886, the FOTLU changed its name to the American Federation of Labor under president Samuel Gompers (who became president of the FOTLU in 1883).

In 1887, Gompers stated, "I believe with the most advanced thinkers as to ultimate ends, including the abolition of the wage system. But I hold it as a self-evident proposition that no successful attempt can be made to reach those ends without first improving present conditions."<sup>136</sup> Here pragmatic, conservative Samuel Gompers's words show he shared the sentiment of abolishing a system which the wage slave argument defined as the primary enslaving element. This is important because it shows that even conservative unions who made it a goal to work with capitalism believed that wage slavery was not just a slogan. How the AFL chose to challenge that condition was to attempt to improve the immediate conditions of the workers rather than to attempt to establish a new economic or social system.

This shift from abolishing the wage system toward focusing on improving workers' conditions presently explains one aspect of how AFL leaders and members identified

---

<sup>134</sup> Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions of the United States and Canada, "Preamble," 1881, <https://archive.org/stream/ReportOfTheAnnualSessionsOfTheFederationOfOrganizedTradesAndLabor/FOTLU#page/n4/mode/1up>, accessed 12/19/2015.

<sup>135</sup> The AFL's minutes for their convention in 1886 resolves "That we condemn the armed organization known as Pinkerton's Preventive Patrol and the Coal and Iron Police, or any armed body of men formed to act as spies and thugs for corporate monopolies, with the extraordinary privilege of moving about from one state to another, plying their nefarious trade of overawing peaceful laborers into submission to the degrading condition of servitude." In *Report of the Annual Sessions of the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions of the United States and Canada* (Bloomington, IL: Pantagraph Printing and Stationary Company, 1906), 19.

<sup>136</sup> Samuel Gompers, *Leader*, July 25, 1887, reprinted in The Samuel Gompers Papers, accessed November 20, 2015, <http://www.gompers.umd.edu/quotes.htm>.

with work. A crucial second quote from Gompers helps clarify how the AFL identified with work.

[I]f you wish to improve the condition of the people, you must improve their habits and customs. The reduction of the hours of labor reaches the very root of society. It gives the workingman better conditions and better opportunities and makes of him what has been too long neglected -- a consumer instead of a mere producer....A man who goes to his work before the dawn of day requires no clean shirt to go to work in, but is content to go in any old overall...but a man who goes to work at 8 o'clock in the morning wants a clean shirt; he is afraid his friends will see him, so he does not want to be dirty. He also requires a newspaper; while a man who goes to work early in the morning and stays late at night does not need a newspaper, for he has no time to read it, requiring all the time he has to recuperate his strength sufficiently to get ready for his next day's work.<sup>137</sup>

From this point of view, as workers, they were not only producers but also *consumers* of the wealth they helped create. This realization is important for two reasons. First, it shows that the AFL was able to identify workers as both producers and consumers who, as consumers, accept rather than reject capitalism, allowing an internal battle for workers' rights rather than an external one. Second, the AFL was informed by the wage slave argument and believed overcoming the condition of wage slavery through an unshaken belief in trade unionism and the worker's right to bargain collectively to improve their conditions was precisely what the labor movement allowed. As Gompers said in 1890, "I believe that the trade unions will bring about both the improvement of conditions and the ultimate emancipation of workers....I think that the emancipation of the working classes has to be achieved by the workers themselves. Trade unions are the pure, unadulterated organizations of the working classes."<sup>138</sup>

---

<sup>137</sup> Samuel Gompers, "Testimony, U.S. Cong., Senate Comm. on Education and Labor," Aug. 16, 1883, accessed November 20, 2015, reprinted in The Samuel Gompers Papers, <http://www.gompers.umd.edu/quotes.htm#SHORTER>.

<sup>138</sup> Samuel Gompers, *New Yorker Volkszeitung*, Dec. 21, 1890, reprinted in The Samuel Gompers Papers, accessed November 20, 2015, <http://www.gompers.umd.edu/quotes.htm>.

Gompers evokes with his choice of words freedom of the workers from the conditions of economic slavery, yet Helga Hallgrimsdottir and Cecilia Benoit explain that while the KOL was more concerned with Producerist theories of labor and highlighting control over one's labor, the AFL believed in a more Consumerist theory revolving around one's wage. The AFL wholeheartedly agreed with Frederick Douglass's stance on a fair day's wage for a fair day's work. The AFL “accepted the system of wage work as morally neutral and historically and politically inevitable” rather than replaceable.<sup>139</sup> Hallgrimsdottir and Benoit argue that wage slave rhetoric decreased (as did the focus on Producerist ideology) with the introduction of the AFL-backed idea that low wages were akin to slavery and that the remedy was to fight for a higher wage rather than for an overthrow of a wage-based system in favor of cooperatives. The two authors claim that “A critique that referred to all work as slavery and avoided demands for wage concessions in favor of supporting the creation of the producerist republic (by diverting strike funds towards funding KOL co-operatives, for example) was far less compelling than one that identified the specific conditions of slavery as low wages and posited a plausible and empirically commensurate road to freedom (and manhood): high wages.”<sup>140</sup> The authors conclude that the AFL was successful in replacing “wage slavery” with the more conservative phrase “wage work.”

Even though the AFL professed to work within the bounds of capitalism, its mission to improve working conditions was repeatedly stifled. Gompers wrote, “To-day more than ever the capitalist class, or the worst elements in that class, stand as a constant opposition to anything we may demand, and also as a constant force to try and invade the

---

<sup>139</sup> Helga Hallgrimsdottir and Cecilia Benoit, “From Wage Slaves to Wage Workers,” 1398.

<sup>140</sup> Helga Hallgrimsdottir and Cecilia Benoit, “From Wage Slaves to Wage Workers,” 1402.

rights we have already secured, and to take away from us the advantages we have achieved.”<sup>141</sup> The AFL had no less a difficult time as the KOL in trying to bargain with employers for the benefit of, arguably, all society.

Perhaps most importantly, the AFL in general and Gompers in particular attempted to elevate the worker to the same level as the employer. Recognizing that capital holds the majority of power in capitalism and recognizing that capitalists can use their position of privilege “for the sole purpose of holding the discontented in subservient bondage to iniquitous conditions,”<sup>142</sup> Gompers defiantly and crucially declared, “You are our employers not our masters. Under the system of government we have in the United States, we are your equals, and we contribute as much, if not more, to the success of industry than do the employers.”<sup>143</sup> These quotes from the President of the American Federation of Labor shows that the AFL, like other more radical national unions, made use of the wage slave argument either directly or indirectly (abolish, emancipate, equals, masters), establishing that the wage slave argument was shared widely across labor conditions (the AFL represented skilled workers who were historically better off than unskilled workers).

KOL Producerist ideals of “self-ownership” and “control over conditions and relations of production” as the “only guarantor of individual autonomy, personal freedom and liberty in society”<sup>144</sup> hearkens back to Classical Liberalism with its belief in private property (including self-ownership) and autonomous, self-directed choices, free from

---

<sup>141</sup> Samuel Gompers, “SG to AFL Convention,” Nov. 1904, reprinted in The Samuel Gompers Papers, accessed November 20, 2015, <http://www.gompers.umd.edu/quotes.htm#LABOR>.

<sup>142</sup> Samuel Gompers, “Address,” Sept. 2, 1891, reprinted in The Samuel Gompers Papers, accessed November 20, 2015, <http://www.gompers.umd.edu/quotes.htm#LABOR>.

<sup>143</sup> Samuel Gompers, “Testimony, U.S. Congress, House Committee on Labor,” Apr. 29, 1911, reprinted in The Samuel Gompers Papers, accessed November 20, 2015, <http://www.gompers.umd.edu/quotes.htm>.

<sup>144</sup> Helga Hallgrimsdottir and Cecilia Benoit, “From Wage Slaves to Wage Workers,” 1401.

coercion or control by others. Ironically, or as a result of promises of freedom, labor fought for the same ideals that their employers defended, a wage contract. These Producerist and Classical Liberalism ideals did not go away with the KOL; they also were not supplanted by AFL consumerist ideology. Instead, out of the various union and labor views arose the concept that defining what it meant to be free or to be a slave depended on how one relates to or identifies with work. The KOL identified as producers who organized against capital by replacing the wage system with a system of co-ops. The AFL identified as both producers and consumers who preferred to organize against capital by cooperating with the wage system. With the western frontier engaged in extractive industries financed by a flow of capital from the East, labor unrest (with continued use of wage slave rhetoric) burgeoned during the 1890s. This time, the disputes between worker and employer led to the formation of the Western Federation of Miners, arguably the origin of the Industrial Workers of the World, which would make the destruction of capitalism a union goal.

Discontented workers, seeking to find an agreeable *place* and feeling that they were not as free as they ought to be in the land of the free, led the way to the radicalization of both worker and union. This “place” was forged by demanding workers’ rights, equality, and “emancipation.” It was a place built on identity but also in response to the continually growing capitalist space which touched more and more lives for better or worse. The space workers were continually confronted with seemed to make the possibility of establishing an agreeable place for the working class elusive at best. Capitalists largely owned the means of production. Capitalists largely influenced local and national politics. Capitalists were, as a class, also much better unified than workers.

Confronted with these facts, some workers and labor leaders began to feel that violence and the class struggle prophesized by Karl Marx would be necessary. Robert D. Layton, grand secretary of the KOL, in his testimony before the Senate in 1882 (previously mentioned above) stated, “Those laborers, the miners, are the most enslaved of all.”<sup>145</sup> No more than ten years would pass before miners in the Coeur d'Alenes of northern Idaho would bomb and destroy an ore processing plant, lending more urgency to Layton's testimony.

Labor conflict in the west, particularly in the mining areas of Idaho and Colorado, the lumber areas in the Pacific Northwest, and agricultural fields of California in the early twentieth century had its beginnings in the late nineteenth century, as did the origins of the Industrial Workers of the World. All the bitterness felt by labor for almost one hundred years (with labor referring to themselves as slaves in the early nineteenth century) culminated in the formation of an industrial union bent on the destruction of capitalism.

The rise and fall of the IWW is a perfect focal study, demonstrating how far the wage slave argument had been taken while providing more evidence for how definition of the terms freedom and slavery in a capitalist economy rely on how labor relates to or identifies with work.

### **Focal Study: Radicalism and the Industrial Workers of the World**

During the 1880s, local unions were established in the Coeur d'Alenes region which horizontally spans Idaho's panhandle in the north and is home to the richest silver producing region in the world. These local unions joined together to form the Coeur

---

<sup>145</sup> United States, *Report of the Committee of the Senate Upon the Relations Between Labor and Capital, And Testimony Taken by the Committee*, Volume I-Testimony (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1885), 222, <https://archive.org/stream/reportcommittee00capigoog#page/n5/mode/2up>.

d'Alene Executive Miners' Union in 1882. The Executive Miners' Union's primary goal was to aid the workers, which was evidenced by the construction of a union hospital in Wardner, a mining town in the Coeur d'Alenes. However, fearful of the growing power via consolidation of the miners, the mine owners in 1891 formed the Mine Owners' Protective Association (MOA).

On January 1, 1892, the MOA stopped all work throughout the district. When they reopened the mines on April 1, the miners were welcomed back with a wage reduction. When the miners protested, the owners started to bring strikebreakers and scabs (workers who worked during a strike) into Coeur d'Alene by railroad. These nonunion men were protected by armed guards. On July 11, 1892, the guards, who were barricaded outside the Frisco mine's ore-processing mill in Gem, shot toward and were shot at by the angry miners. Dynamite was placed at the mill by the miners. When the dynamite went off, the Frisco mill was demolished. The explosion caused both the guards and the scabs to surrender.<sup>146</sup> Miners promptly took the guards' weapons and marched them and the nonunion workers back onto the trains and sent them packing.

Fearing defeat, the Mine Owners Association persuaded the governor of Idaho, Norman Willey, to declare martial law. Willey did so. Led by General William P. Carlin, "Union miners and sympathizers were arrested and kept in stockade enclosures called bull pens at Wardner and Wallace...Martial law continued until November."<sup>147</sup>

While the mining districts in Coeur d'Alene were under martial law, the union leaders who were arrested were sent to Boise for trial. During their stay in Boise, they made plans to create a stronger, more comprehensive union. This new union was the

---

<sup>146</sup> Carlos Schwantes, *In Mountain Shadows* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1991), 155.

<sup>147</sup> Stewart H. Holbrook, *The Rocky Mountain Revolution* (New York: Holt, 1956), 41



Western Federation of Miners, officially organized in May of 1893. Carlos Schwantes in his history of Idaho *In Mountain Shadows* wrote, “Fifteen unions from Montana, Idaho, Colorado, Utah, and South Dakota met in Butte to discuss combining into a federation similar to the Coeur d’Alene Executive Miners’ Union, which had shown a notable united front in the recent troubles of 1892.”<sup>148</sup> This new union, or federation, was led by Ed Boyce, who was elected union president in 1896.

Boyce preached two demands: high wages and a closed shop. A closed shop is an agreement between the owner and the union to only hire union men, no scabs. Boyce leaned more toward socialism and industrial unionism, unionism that would accept all forms of labor regardless of trade. If the AFL organized against capital, they did so in a tug-of-war fashion, each side giving a little ground here and there. Though both the WFM and AFL believed in militant unionism, they differed over trade and industrial organization and over the idea of socialism. In June 1902, as Boyce officially retired from the WFM, he said, “There are only two classes of people in the world: One is composed of the men and women who produce all; the other is composed of men and women who produce nothing, but live in luxury upon the wealth produced by others.”<sup>149</sup> He then went on to advise those present not to align with any current political party but to invite all to find a way “to abolish the wage system, which is more destructive of human rights and liberty than any other slave system devised.”<sup>150</sup> Ed Boyce’s language brings up two critical ideas which help explain how the wage slave argument intensified in the case of the WFM and later the IWW and differed from both the KOL and the AFL. First is the

---

<sup>148</sup> Holbrook, *The Rocky Mountain Revolution*, 42.

<sup>149</sup> Western Federation of Miners, “Official Proceedings of the Tenth Annual Convention of the Western Federation of Miners of America” (Denver CO, Colorado Chronicle, 1902), 13.

<sup>150</sup> Western Federation of Miners, “Official Proceedings,” 8.

IWW's belief in the class conflict which, according to Karl Marx, would end only after capitalism was supplanted by the workers with communism, theoretically ending any class differentiation.

This outlook differs starkly from that of the AFL which had no intention of attempting to end capitalism and sought to compromise with capitalism. For labor leaders like Boyce, there was to be no compromise with capitalism. Second, the wage slave argument in the West intensified in both scope and frankness. Boyce's second quote directly links the wage system to the most "destructive...slave system devised" and promotes violent direct action to remove capitalism in America. Ed Boyce favored militancy because he believed workers were the majority and had the power to replace "the present system of legalized robbery" with one that "will give equal rights to all, and insure the producer the same protection as the capitalist..."<sup>151</sup> Boyce's language is another reminder that the wage slave argument characterizes labor-capital relations and how workers identify with work, in this case, as producers.

After 1899, Edward Boyce appointed a miner and WFM board member by the name of William Dudley Haywood, or Big Bill as he came to be known, to be secretary. Haywood was to be Boyce's second in command and the secretary treasurer of the WFM. Boyce also moved the headquarters of the WFM from Butte to Denver. In Colorado, Haywood was met by Governor Peabody who had been elected by the mine owners and other capitalists to stem the rise of socialism and unionism in his State. A new state-wide organization of capitalists was created under the title of the Citizens' Alliance of Colorado. The Alliance was thirty thousand strong and headed by James C. Craig who unconditionally supported Peabody. To show reciprocity for Craig's support, Governor

---

<sup>151</sup> Western Federation of Miners, "Official Proceedings," 10.

Peabody helped establish his own Citizens' Alliance branch in Canon City, Colorado.<sup>152</sup>

The WFM members were as integrated into the Cripple Creek district as the employers. The WFM had members who were aldermen, town marshals, police magistrates, police and jailers. "So firmly entrenched was the union in these towns that juries couldn't be found that would convict a union man of any serious offense."<sup>153</sup>

Despite the integration of the WFM, the Citizens' Alliance proved to be a formidable opponent when, in August 1903, Bill Haywood made plans to call a strike to support the smelter workers of Colorado City. In response, 3500 miners joined Haywood's strike.

As scabs from Minnesota and Missouri were being shipped to Cripple Creek, union men met their arrival with violence. The mine owners exaggerated this violence, hoping to persuade Governor Peabody to send in the National Guard. Peabody needed no persuading. On September 3, the mine owners told Peabody that if he would supply the troops they would fund their occupation. Imagine a thousand National Guard units setting up camp in Cripple Creek. All the mines would be stationed by armed guards while the highways would be patrolled by the same. Communications would be sent via Western Union telegraph lines between Denver and the camps.<sup>154</sup> The mine owners, backed by armed guards, were ready for a confrontation. Haywood and the WFM resolved to see the strike through.

The events of the night of June 6, 1904, became the catalyst for the impending confrontation. Sixteen strikebreakers were blown up when two hundred pounds of dynamite exploded beneath the Independence train depot. The Mine Owners Association

---

<sup>152</sup> Anthony J. Lukas, *Big Trouble: A Murder in a Small Western Town Sets off a Struggle for the Soul of America* (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1997), 218.

<sup>153</sup> Lukas, *Big Trouble*, 223.

<sup>154</sup> Stewart H. Holbrook, *The Rocky Mountain Revolution* (New York: Holt, 1956), 91.

proclaimed the WFM to be murderers and called for their immediate removal from Cripple Creek.<sup>155</sup> The following week saw the forced removal of the integrated officials who were sympathetic to the WFM. Men who sided with the Mine Owners Association and the Citizens' Alliance replaced them. Similar to the events after the explosion in the Coeur d'Alene's, the WFM, without formally calling off the strike, had lost almost all support, as had the strike.<sup>156</sup>

With the WFM in shambles, Haywood looked to other unions to bolster the WFM's strength. What Haywood encountered instead was an invitation to a meeting to discuss the creation of one big union dedicated to industrial unionism. Because the WFM was the most prominent delegation to this new convention that convened in Chicago on January 2, 1905, Bill Haywood became the meeting's chairman. By June, another meeting took place where Haywood had the following to say:

This is the Continental Congress of the working class. We're here to confederate the workers of this country into a working class movement that shall have for its purpose the emancipation of the working class from the slave bondage of capitalism...to put the working class in possession of the economic power, the means of life, in control of the machinery of production and distribution, without regard to capitalist masters.<sup>157</sup>

Haywood's speech characterizes the newly created Industrial Workers of the World. Under its banner, all types of labor, skilled and unskilled, men and women, native and immigrant, black and white could rally to form "One Big Union." Similar to the KOL, the IWW identified as workers, as producers of wealth, and wanted not only their full value for labor, absent any form of exploitation, but to also place all the means of

---

<sup>155</sup> Quoted in Lukas, *Big Trouble*, 229.

<sup>156</sup> Lukas, *Big Trouble*, 231.

<sup>157</sup> Industrial Workers of the World, "Proceedings of the Founding Convention of the Industrial Workers of the World" (Chicago: Industrial Workers of the World, 1905), accessed November 23, 2015, <http://www.iww.org/history/founding/part1>.

production in the hands of the working class. Haywood, during the first IWW convention, bluntly stated, “There is no man who has an ounce of honesty in his make-up but recognizes the fact that there is a continuous struggle between the two classes, and this organization will be formed, based and founded on the class struggle, having in view no compromise and no surrender, and but one object and one purpose and that is to bring the workers of this country into the possession of the full value of the product of their toil.”<sup>158</sup>

Mocking the AFL for working with capitalism, the IWW felt that there was no possible compromise with capitalism. The message of the IWW was that as “slaves to the bondage of capitalism,” workers would necessarily have to continually fight against capitalism until the workers were in control. The Knights of Labor, the American Federation of Labor, and the Industrial Workers of the World all identified as producers, as workers in a changed capitalistic space. How they attempted to elevate the working class divided them (particularly the AFL and the IWW) as being either producers or consumers, as being either industrial unionists or trade unionists, and as being either violent or conservative. What bound all three unions together, however, was their belief that workers were wage slaves to capitalism. In the final analysis, the KOL, AFL and the IWW differed most over how to eliminate or make bearable their subordinate position as “wage slaves.”

The IWW in its Industrial Union Manifesto of 1905 stated, “The worker, wholly separated from the land and the tools, with his skill of craftsmanship rendered useless, is

---

<sup>158</sup> Industrial Workers of the World, “Proceedings.”

sunk in the uniform mass of wage slaves.”<sup>159</sup> Once more, the wage slave argument is employed to describe labor discontent. However, the IWW, unlike the WFM, spoke out against violence, as acts of violence would conflict with its characterization as wealth producers. In 1969, Philip Taft and Philip Ross concluded that IWW strikes were peaceful and lacked violence.<sup>160</sup> Bill Haywood, learning from the failures of the WFM, personally renounced violence and war. However, this commitment to peace would not keep the U.S. public and government from considering the IWW the most dangerous and radical union to date. The IWW “threat” was mostly due to their rhetoric.

The IWW saw capitalism as a system of slavery and kept the wage slave argument alive, renouncing the AFL's understanding of freedom being attained through the procurement of high wages or the ability to be consumers. Because the IWW saw labor as a class always at odds with the bourgeoisie (ruling class) due to the capitalist need to exploit the laboring class to garner their profit, the IWW would not consider working with capitalism; the contrast being the destruction of capitalism or the constant class struggle between the two.

To understand why this militant view was promoted, a look at the IWW's source of inspiration, Karl Marx, is necessary. Marx wrote in *Wage Labour and Capital* that labor does indeed have the choice to leave employment when dissatisfied and that the employer can discharge the employee at his discretion, but that the worker “whose only source of income is the sale of his labour-power, cannot leave the whole class of buyers,

---

<sup>159</sup> Industrial Workers of the World, “Industrial Union Manifesto” (Chicago IL: Industrial Workers of the World, 1905), accessed September 9, 2014, [http://www.iww.org/history/library/iww/industrial\\_union\\_manifesto](http://www.iww.org/history/library/iww/industrial_union_manifesto).

<sup>160</sup> Philip Taft and Philip Ross, “American Labor Violence: Its Causes, Character, and Outcome,” in *The History of Violence in America: A Report to the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence*, ed. Hugh Davis Graham and Ted Robert Gurr (New York: Bantam Books, 1970), accessed January 1, 2016, <http://www.ditext.com/taft/violence.html>.

i.e., the capitalist class, unless he gives up his own existence.” That is, labor must work for *someone* in the capitalist class or face its own demise. Marx writes that the wage laborer “does not belong to this or that capitalist, but to the capitalist class; and it is for him to find his man – i.e., to find a buyer in this capitalist class” or starve.<sup>161</sup> This passage summarizes labor discontent while providing the reason behind the wage slave argument, as *choice* seems not to play as much into work as does the *necessity* of being a part of a wage-based system.

The IWW considers the above passage key to what it referred to as the class struggle hypothesized by Marx. The class struggle persists because, according to the 1922 IWW published *An Economic Interpretation of the Job*, capitalists will always attempt to drive down wages to make a greater profit while labor will always try to elevate their conditions (more wages, fewer hours, etc.), creating friction between employer and employees. The book reads, “The consciousness of this class struggle should ever be with the worker, for the real position and condition of the 'free laborer' in capitalist society is that of a member of a slave class.”<sup>162</sup> Free labor, according to the IWW, was never free; workers are no better than slaves; in fact, they are worse off than slaves, for they have to labor for a master but are not protected by one, recalling what pro-slavery critics had to say about “free” labor. Interestingly, *An Economic Interpretation* touches on Senator Hammond's mudsill theory, that in order for socially fit persons to exist, there must be a class of “slaves” to do the majority of the labor. The book affirms that “there could not be a capitalist unless there was a class of workers which could not live except by selling

---

<sup>161</sup> Karl Marx, “Wage Labour and Capital,” Marxist Internet Archive, accessed September 22, 2014, <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1847/wage-labour/ch02.htm>.

<sup>162</sup> Industrial Workers of the World, *An Economic Interpretation of the Job* (Chicago: Industrial Workers of the World, 1922), 19-20. Also available at [http://www.iww.org/history/documents/iww/economic\\_interpretation\\_of\\_the\\_job](http://www.iww.org/history/documents/iww/economic_interpretation_of_the_job) and <https://www.marxists.org/history/usa/unions/iww/1922/economic.htm>.

their life energy—a class in a slave position.”<sup>163</sup> Therefore, capitalism exists only because there is a class of wage slaves who must work for a capitalist or perish. This, in a nutshell, is what defines labor as slaves in the eyes of the IWW.

Bill Haywood blamed the defeat of the WFM in Colorado on the AFL. Haywood felt betrayed by the AFL because the AFL railroad unions continued to feed the mills ore from the mines during the strike. Haywood believed that the strike could have been won in three weeks if the trade unions did not transport the ore to the mills.<sup>164</sup> In Haywood's opinion, the WFM was defeated by the AFL because the AFL would not support the WFM even though they were both on the same side espousing the same goals; what Haywood must have failed to realize was that the two unions differed in their strategies to the point where they could not compromise with one another.

Even though the AFL and the WFM were fighting for nearly the same thing, they differed in their approaches. It did not matter that the WFM was integrated in Cripple Creek or that the IWW was considered a radical, “foreign” influenced outsider; the WFM and the IWW were fighting not only the owners but for their fellow laborers as well. No amount of integration from one union was enough to combat what the unions saw as capitalist exploitation of resources and of workers. The owners were much more unified in their opposition and resistance to unions of any kind, trade or industrial, a fact well known to the IWW in 1905. The IWW manifesto reads that the capitalists “wipe out all differences among themselves to present a united front in their war upon labor.”<sup>165</sup> There was, however, no unified front from the labor position, even after the drive to become

---

<sup>163</sup> Industrial Workers of the World, *An Economic Interpretation of the Job*, 20.

<sup>164</sup> Peter Carlson, *Roughneck: The Life and Times of Big Bill Haywood* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1983), 80.

<sup>165</sup> Industrial Workers of the World, “Industrial Union Manifesto,” accessed September 22, 2014, [http://www.iww.org/history/library/iww/industrial\\_union\\_manifesto](http://www.iww.org/history/library/iww/industrial_union_manifesto).



“One Big Union” under the IWW with call after call for labor solidarity. The fact that the WFM left the IWW in 1907, joined the AFL in 1911, and then altogether reorganized itself as the International Union of Mine, Mill, and Smelter Workers in 1916 only supports the evidence that labor unions had, and still have, a very difficult time forming a unified front.

The IWW believed in the 1910s that labor could not be fully organized because the existence of trade unions (specifically, the AFL) divided labor on a worker's craft, thus causing potential in-fighting among workers of different trades (even though they were all concentrated in a single industry). An IWW pamphlet from 1913 titled “Industrial Unionism the Road to Freedom” stated that trade unionism was outdated and that a new industrial union was necessary to account for and to solidify all labor instead of to divide and exploit “workers of every trade in the industry.” The pamphlet records how the IWW saw the AFL as mere lapdogs to the capitalist “ruling class” and that, “The leaders [of trade unions] are always talking of the 'brotherhood of capital and labor’” while “captains of industry...whose opposition to the efforts and hopes of labor is well known and has been marked in historical instances, meet in jolly and sumptuous feast with Samuel Gompers, President of the American Federation of Labor...” where through the trade unions' pacification “wage labor may be linked ever more secure on the limbs of our class, that our hopes and ideals may be dragged in the mire and capitalists given assurance of a long day more of safe and contented slavery on part of the wealth producers” (labor in general).<sup>166</sup>

The IWW, like the KOL before them, supported abolishing the wage system and

---

<sup>166</sup> Joseph Ettor, “Industrial Unionism: The Road to Freedom,” (Cleveland: IWW Publishing Bureau, 1913), accessed September 17, 2014, <http://www.workerseducation.org/crutch/pamphlets/ettor.html>.

replacing it with cooperatives. Nowhere is this made more clear than when the IWW proclaimed, “Instead of the conservative motto, 'A fair day's wages for a fair day's work' we must inscribe on our banner the revolutionary watchword, 'Abolition of the wage system'.”<sup>167</sup> Initial steps toward attainment of this goal were to be accomplished through on-the-job slowdowns (as opposed to off-the-job striking), making it possible for IWW members to retain their character and identity as a working class producing wealth, shunning violence and destruction of property, and avoiding the label of being “wealth destroyers.”<sup>168</sup> The IWW identified as workers and placed the blame of violence instigation on the capitalists (which has a long history of its own).

The dangerous working conditions, the long work hours, the inconsistency of wages, and the lack of control over one's work place or life led to the continuation of the wage slave argument during the nineteenth century and after. The IWW, like the KOL before, failed to organize successfully, even losing the WFM. A successful textile strike in Lawrence, Massachusetts, in 1912 gained popular attention, but even the IWW unions built on that victory withered in two years, similarly to the short lived KOL victory over Jay Gould. It was the IWW's mission to overthrow capitalism. That was one goal too immense even for “One Big Union.” The IWW suffered the same predicament that other unions suffered: organize politically (behind the Socialist Labor Party(SLP)) or conduct direct action operations such as strikes? Haywood favored the latter while SLP's Daniel DeLeon favored the former. DeLeon left the IWW and created his Workers' International Industrial Union which was active until 1924. How one identifies with work and freedom

---

<sup>167</sup> Ettor, “Industrial Unionism.”

<sup>168</sup> Industrial Workers of the World, “The I.W.W. - What it is and What it is Not,” Ch. 3 (Chicago: Industrial Workers of the World, 1928), accessed September 17, 2014, <http://www.iww.org/history/library/iww/isandisnt/3>.

directs and divides the working class movement.

Radicalism added another dimension to the struggle for labor to organize, for labor to compete on an even footing with its employers, to seek economic equality and improve working and social conditions. When labor believed they could not find equality or even understanding between labor and capital, some laborers turned to the more radical rhetoric and arguments used by the Western Federation of Miners and the Industrial Workers of the World. Under their radical banners, wage slavery would be smashed out with the force of all the working men and women of America.

It is important to point out that the presence of the wage slave argument fluctuated throughout this period. Google N-Gram, a phrase recognizer program that searches through thousands of books, indicates that the argument, like the presence of strikes or union militancy, is more active during events of labor discontent. In fact, the working class movement followed a steep wave pattern, much like the pattern N-Gram shows of the wage slave term. Though union activity fluctuated, the working class movement and labor's demands did not go away. The same can be said about the wage slave argument, even if the AFL did its best to turn the term wage slave into wage worker.

One of the shortcomings of Google's N-Gram is its reliance on scanned books as a database for finding the phrases. The more books found that feature the selected words together, the more results it returns. From examining previous chapters, it is apparent that the term wage slave was used freely throughout the 1900s. As such, the N-Gram is a nice visual aid but does not necessarily capture the magnitude or importance of the phrases themselves, nor is it a reliable source revealing when the terms were or were not in general used.

Figure 1 below shows the frequency of the terms “wage” and “slave” and “wage and “slavery” used in books from 1820 to 1865. There are only four results in this date range, perhaps because the term was not widely written about yet (or because books containing the phrase are not yet scanned into the database) and was used more in conversation and articles rather than in books proper. When the phrase is searched for from 1866 to 1945, there are many more results (Figure 2). What these results do show is an increase in the terms’ appearance in books from roughly the Second Industrial Revolution, occurring after the U.S. Civil War, to the close of World War II. This increased appearance of the terms in literature corresponds with the formation of the labor unions featured in this chapter, along with their personal rivalries and struggles to organize working class citizens. These images also beg the question of why would the use of the term wage slave *increase*? It is true that wages remained relatively flat from 1867 until 1899. Indexes that rely on numerous sources and inputs for data tend to generalize the picture they are trying to capture. Wages in general rose but not necessarily for all workers in all industries. Production rose far faster than wages rose, as previously mentioned. This increase in production was due in part to the invention and operation of more efficient machines and the wide use of electricity, both of which historically displaced workers and replaced skilled jobs. Recessions created turmoil in the market and were responsible for layoffs and pay cuts (and a disregard for safety). Larger and more sophisticated machines meant workers could and were expected to complete jobs more efficiently, more quickly and more productively, introducing more hazards and danger to everyday work (such as the large saws that shingle weavers handled and the mine shafts miners navigated).

Wages rose but disproportionately to production and profits, two contentious issues about which labor unions felt strongly enough to see members be imprisoned and, in some cases, die over. Unions made use of the wage slave argument as both rhetorical tool and philosophical reality. The disproportion of wage increases with production and profits, the long hours, and the disdain capital had for labor are some of the reasons for the rise in popularity of the terms throughout the second half of the nineteenth-century and into the first half of the twentieth.

Another interesting fact is that with the decline of the KOL after the Haymarket Square bombing in 1886 turned a demonstration by workers for an eight-hour day into a deadly anarchist conspiracy, the N-gram shows a significant increase in the presence of the wage slave term. By 1891, however, the term flat lines, possibly giving credence to Hallgrimdsottir and Benoit's argument that the AFL was successful in turning the term wage slave into wage worker. This argument is limited though, because the wage slave term continually increases in use after 1891 when the WFM and IWW were most active.

This is not to say the IWW did not achieve anything through their rhetoric or on-the-job slowdowns; in fact, the IWW secured the eight-hour work day for lumbermen due to the need during World War I for wood and other natural resources. Because of the stresses of war, unions were recognized by the American government as beneficial. Under the National War Labor Board during Woodrow Wilson and Franklin Delano Roosevelt's presidencies, unions flourished, particularly the AFL.<sup>169</sup> But, just as the AFL preferred, the government was largely hands-off when it came to issues with the economy and the relations between capital and labor. President Calvin Coolidge in 1926 said, "If

---

<sup>169</sup> AFL-CIO, "Samuel Gompers," Key People in Labor History, accessed January 30, 2016, <http://www.aflcio.org/About/Our-History/Key-People-in-Labor-History/Samuel-Gompers-1850-1924>.

the Federal Government should go out of existence, the common run of people would not detect the difference in the affairs of their daily life for a considerable length of time.”<sup>170</sup>It would not be until the Great Depression that the American government would greatly increase its presence in the population’s every-day life. The government’s response was both a welcome and an unwelcome one for both labor and capital. The worker’s place, despite the rise of society-challenging unions and the rise of radicalism in America in general, would be further shaped by the American government itself, largely as a response to radical labor and growing economic insecurity for both individuals and the nation. The reliance on the wage slave argument by all major American unions, even conservative ones, from the Civil War to World War I signifies how the argument was central to the development of an aggressive labor movement struggling to find the tactics that would bring a particular union or unions the power to bargain or control more of the space of work directly and elevate the worker’s place in society. The call for worker emancipation was not unique to America, but the promise of freedom by the Declaration, concerns for independence which supported and contradicted Republican ideas through how one viewed work effecting one’s will, the abolition of slavery and the U.S. Civil War all created a potent memory bank from which labor continually drew to define the American working class movement and its use of the terms freedom and slavery.

---

<sup>170</sup> Calvin Coolidge, “Address at the College of William and Mary,” Williamsburg, Va., May 15, 1926, The American Presidency Project, accessed December 05, 2015, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=397>.

### Google N-Gram: Wage Slavery 1820-1865



Figure 3.

### Google N-Gram: Wage Slavery 1870-1945

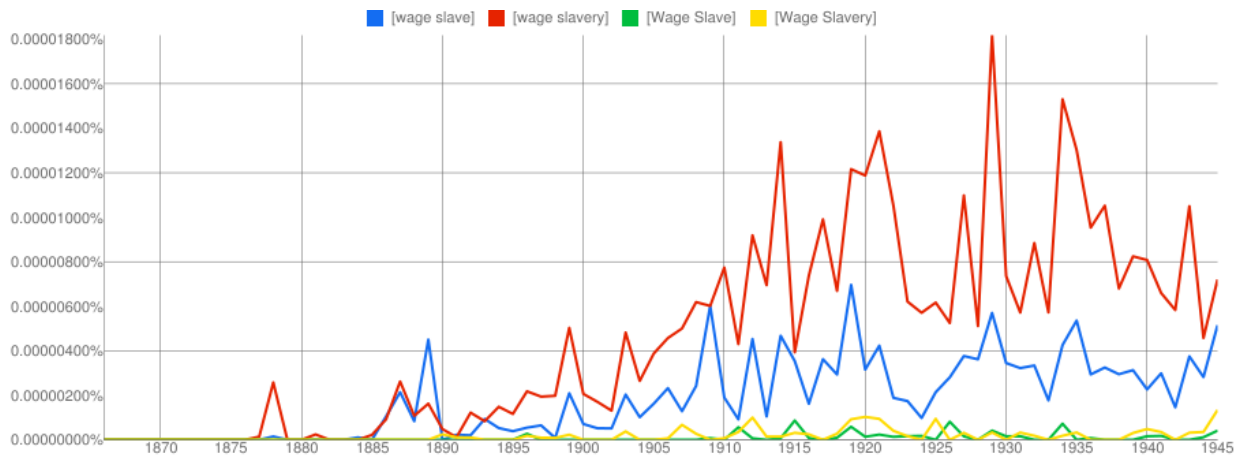


Figure 4.

## Chapter IV: Government Intervention in Labor and Capital

The wage slave argument was used by the common laborer, by radical labor and labor leaders. This chapter explores how the United States government made use of the wage slave argument while showing that wage labor as a class now fully existed, was recognized and needed protections to secure labor's rights. It was the wage slave argument that gave strength, fierceness and even nostalgia to Progressive and New Deal rhetoric, allowing the U.S. government to expand its scope and intervene more forcefully between capital and labor.

Richard Hofstadter, author of the book *The Age of Reform*, argues that the Progressive Era began in the 1890s and was prompted by a "status revolution" which was carried forward by a younger generation of Americans who viewed the "rapid development of the big cities, the building of a great industrial plant, the construction of the railroads, the emergence of the corporation as the dominant form of enterprise" as transforming "the old society and [revolutionizing] the distribution of power and prestige" in America.<sup>171</sup> Hofstadter makes this last point, that the Progressives were attempting to "restore" a version of America which was lost to corporations and to corruption in American politics, the focus of his book.

To a great degree, this paper has pointed out that the labor movement itself fluctuated between looking backward to a "lost" America and necessarily looking forward, like the AFL, to the creation of a better America. Progressives are rather late to realize what labor had known and criticized for over one-hundred years when making use of the wage slave argument to highlight a feeling of lost status and lost independence. It

---

<sup>171</sup> Richard Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform: From Bryan to F.D.R* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1955), 136.



was, as Hofstadter points out, the loss of the middle class's "power and prestige" which prompted the initiation of the Progressive Era after suffering their own sense of lost status.

If Progressives sided with labor, it was more to criticize and attack the power of corporations that threatened their own social positions. The Progressives did not come from the working class and saw themselves as America's guardians rather than as allies to labor, though they did sympathize with labor, which this chapter addresses. The attention Progressives focused on labor also signified that labor as a class now fully existed and that government over the next forty years would expand, slowly at first and then rapidly, to protect labor and fix a troubled economy.

Before the Great Depression, Progressive presidents like Theodore Roosevelt (TR) and Woodrow Wilson made it a goal to eliminate corruption in the government, break up and prevent monopolies and protect American consumers by enlarging the scope and actions of the government. This was also the time during which Upton Sinclair, novelist and socialist, released *The Jungle*, which highlighted the exploitation of workers in the meat packing industry in Chicago, home to the Haymarket Square. The novel's success paved the way for both the Meat Inspection Act and the Pure Food and Drug Act of 1906, signifying that what worried the public more were health issues rather than labor issues. Jack London, fellow socialist and novelist, dubbed Sinclair's book "The 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' of Wage-Slavery."<sup>172</sup> Sinclair's book did not have the effect both Sinclair and London wanted, and the "revolution" London expected never happened.

Theodore Roosevelt, resolving to protect the American consumer, acted in 1906 by signing the Meat Inspection Act and the Pure Food and Drug Act and also wrote to

---

<sup>172</sup> Charmian London, *The Book of Jack London: Volume 2* (New York: Century Co, 1921), 119.

Congress in 1908 concerning corporations that existed on “predatory wealth” which saw to “the oppression of wageworkers[,] to unfair and unwholesome methods of crushing out competition, and to defrauding the public by stock jobbing and the manipulation of securities.”<sup>173</sup> This quote is a good example of Progressives commenting about labor to criticize corporate power.

Due to new political interest and disdain for what Progressives saw was the “defrauding” of the public, Roosevelt believed that corporations were joining together to “attack” his Administration. The combination of corporations to threaten the United States government follows the evolution of capital consolidation. For example, the Mine Owners Associations, threatened by labor demands, combined to combat the Western Federation of Miners.

Roosevelt wrote in the same letter that the corporations’ “endeavor is to overthrow and discredit all who honestly administer the law, to prevent any additional legislation which would check and restrain them, and to secure if possible a freedom from all restraint which will permit every unscrupulous wrongdoer to do what he wishes unchecked provided he has enough money.” Freedom from all restraint is precisely what Locke feared in a State of Nature, which would be left for civilization in exchange for political rights (liberty) and equality, staying true to the roots of Classical Liberalism.

Capitalists, from before the Industrial Revolution, used the argument of the free market and the absence of “rules” in relations of capital-labor to gain enormous amounts of wealth. This is consistent with why capitalists left Guild controlled towns for towns where they could set their own rules. Roosevelt felt that the power corporations held

---

<sup>173</sup> Theodore Roosevelt, “Message to Congress on Worker's Compensation,” January 31, 1908, The American Presidency Project, accessed 12/05/2015, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=69649>.

challenged the federal government and put the American people (where fifty-five percent were living in cities in 1930) at risk economically.

According to Richard Hofstadter, the Progressives felt it their moral duty and responsibility to fix America's social ills, but they also keenly felt their gentry-like social positions being undermined by the "newly rich, the grandiosely or corruptly rich, the masters of great corporations" who were "bypassing [the gentry and middle class], the civic leaders of an earlier era."<sup>174</sup> Roosevelt, who belonged to the class of "gentry," felt it his and the government's duty to prevent capitalism from harming society. Roosevelt summed up his argument warning of the potential dangers of unregulated capitalism with:

We seek to control law-defying wealth; in the first place to prevent its doing dire evil to the Republic, and in the next place to avoid the vindictive and dreadful radicalism which, if left uncontrolled, it is certain in the end to arouse. Sweeping attacks upon all property, upon all men of means, without regard to whether they do well or ill, would sound the death-knell of the Republic; and such attacks become inevitable if decent citizens permit those rich men whose lives are corrupt and evil to domineer in swollen pride, unchecked and unhindered, over the destinies of this country.<sup>175</sup>

To prove his words were unbiased, he added, "We act in no vindictive spirit, and we are no respecters of persons. If a labor union does wrong, we oppose it as firmly as we oppose a corporation which does wrong; and we stand equally stoutly for the rights of the man of wealth and for the rights of the wageworker." This last quote not only helps sum up the Progressive Era belief that combinations are threatening to America but also goes to the heart of the problem of labor's relationship with capital. How can both labor and capital more *equally* benefit from honest capitalism? How can the government prevent "radicalism" in response to "law-defying wealth?" Theodore Roosevelt would not have to

---

<sup>174</sup> Richard Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform*, 137.

<sup>175</sup> Theodore Roosevelt, "Message to Congress on Worker's Compensation," January 31, 1908, The American Presidency Project, accessed 12/05/2015, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=69649>.

wait long to prove the government was up to the task.

The government, headed by Theodore Roosevelt, intervened for the first time in United States history between capital and labor during the 1902 anthracite coal strike in Pennsylvania. The United Mine Workers of America (UMW), an AFL affiliate, had previously won a bituminous (soft) coal strike in 1897 which resulted in increasing membership by over one-hundred percent and raising wages. Believing the UMW could repeat history regarding anthracite (hard) coal workers, the UMW called a strike to raise twenty-year stagnant wages and lower the ten to sixteen-hour work day. The 140,000-member strike began in the spring but was still active in October, threatening the winter supply of coal. The coal was desperately needed to heat homes.

The strike raised the price of anthracite coal from five to thirty dollars a ton. Roosevelt worried that the strike would produce riots the likes of which the country had never seen before and called for both sides to come to Washington and find common ground. The mine owners refused to arbitrate and proclaimed they would never recognize the UMW. Roosevelt then threatened to nationalize the mines and protect them with the U.S. Army. When challenged by the mine owners about the constitutionality of his threat, Roosevelt told them that he had a duty to the American people higher than his constitutional duty. Instead of forcing the nationalization of the mines, the mine owners backed down at the suggestion that a commission be formed which would take testimony and inspect the conditions in the mines and the community. The arbitrating commission suspended the strike.

In the end, the UMW received a ten percent wage increase and a maximum work day of nine hours; however, the mine owners still did not recognize the UMW as a union

with rights to bargain.<sup>176</sup> The importance of the 1902 anthracite coal strike is that Roosevelt believed it was his duty to the American people to intervene between labor and capital. This was progressive, risky action which enlarged the role and scope of government. This was the first time the government believed it was its duty to mediate a labor strike for the good of both the economy and the American citizens. A more active government presence in the affairs of the people was what the Progressive Movement intended. For example, Theodore Roosevelt, in his “New Nationalism” speeches in August, 1910, called for the end of special interests in government by corporations and clarified New Nationalism as “the executive power as the steward of the public welfare.” Roosevelt continued this line of thought with “I believe in shaping the ends of government to protect property as well as human welfare,” choosing welfare over property and capital accumulation.<sup>177</sup>

Roosevelt, in the same series of speeches, also criticized the long-standing argument capital used to prevent government intervention prior to 1902. Roosevelt said, “All who are acquainted with the effort to remedy industrial abuses know the type of mind which declines to allow us to work for the betterment of condition among the wage earners on the ground that we must not interfere with the ‘liberty’ of a girl to work under conditions which jeopardize life and limb, or the ‘liberty’ of a man to work under conditions which ruin his health after a limited number of years.”<sup>178</sup> Here Theodore Roosevelt connects what the welfare of the public means with what wage slavery rhetoric

---

<sup>176</sup> “In the Arena,” in *The Roosevelts: An Intimate History*, directed by Ken Burns (PBS, 2014).

<sup>177</sup> Theodore Roosevelt, “The New Nationalism” (New York, 1910) in *The Progressive Movement 1900-1915*, Richard Hofstadter (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1963), 125.

<sup>178</sup> Roosevelt, “New Nationalism,” 126.

by labor criticized capital over: the supposed “liberty” of the working class, when in reality their choices were largely dictated for them by capital.

The Progressives believed in a big government which could ensure the welfare of the people, even if it meant going against the constitution and against capitalist interests. Many politicians used Theodore Roosevelt’s lack of adherence to the U.S. constitution as proof of him being a radical. On October 14, 1912, during one of his many campaign appearances, an anarchist shot Roosevelt with a pistol. Despite the pain from the bullet, Roosevelt delivered a speech that lasted for more than an hour. He used the assassination attempt to show why the American people needed his Bull Moose Progressive party. Better to improve conditions for all citizens rather than to risk a revolution which would destroy the republic. His would be assassin provided evidence that the revolution Roosevelt feared could in reality take place. Strictly adhering to the constitution when the times called for more government intervention was, to the Progressives, to ignore the immense changes with which the forefathers never grappled. Roosevelt lost the election to the Progressive Democrat, Woodrow Wilson.

Woodrow Wilson promoted a “New Freedom,” which promised to break up corporate trusts and monopolies. He passed anti-trust laws, secured workmen’s compensation and banned child labor in most industries. Samuel Gompers in 1912 was still of the opinion that political affiliation was not the correct path for the AFL and believed that to improve working conditions for the working class the workers themselves would have to improve the day to day conditions. Gompers wrote:

We want a minimum wage established, but we want it established by the solidarity of the working men themselves through the economic forces of their trade unions, rather than by any legal enactment....We must not, we cannot, depend upon legislative enactments to set wage standards. When

once we encourage such a system, it is equivalent to admitting our incompetency for self-government and our inability to seek better conditions.<sup>179</sup>

This statement provides another excellent example of how labor identifies with work. Gompers viewed government intervention or legislative enactments, even to benefit workers, as admitting defeat. It was the responsibility of workers themselves to improve their own conditions through solidarity and collective bargaining. The freedom to do so was paramount to Gompers.

Gompers died in 1924, eleven years before Franklin D. Roosevelt (FDR) signed the National Labor Relations Act (Wagner Act) that made it a right for workers to organize and join unions for the purposes of collective bargaining. How the AFL identified a worker's right, or freedom, to collectively bargaining a minimum wage and a maximum work week was "undercut" by Roosevelt because of the Great Depression and the corresponding high unemployment rate. Whether Gompers would have appreciated the government passing labor laws is debatable, but much of what Gompers achieved for labor rights under Wilson was carried over into the New Deal.<sup>180</sup> Richard Hofstadter contends that even though New Deal legislation shared many of the same goals as the New Deal legislation, the New Deal was fundamentally different because it was the first time in American history an administration confronted head on a depressed capitalist economy. TR took on the mine owners in 1902. FDR took on the responsibility for an entire economy.<sup>181</sup> What was consistent between the Progressive Era and the New Deal

---

<sup>179</sup> Samuel Gompers, "Samuel Gompers to Maud Younger," May 17, 1912, reprinted in The Samuel Gompers Papers, accessed November 20, 2015, <http://www.gompers.umd.edu/quotes.htm>.

<sup>180</sup> See Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform* and David Kennedy, *Freedom From Fear: The American People in Depression and War, 1929-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005)

<sup>181</sup> Richard Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform*, 302.

Era was a commitment to addressing labor concerns and reassessing what it meant to be a free individual in America.

By the time Franklin Delano Roosevelt, cousin of beloved Theodore Roosevelt, became president in 1933, forty million people were without income and one out of three laborers could not find work.<sup>182</sup> If there was nothing to fear but fear itself, it is Paine's fear that ought to be remembered, as he feared the effects of poverty, the effects of being without a source of security. At his re-nomination speech in 1936, Roosevelt spoke about freedom and equality, not political equality but economic equality. His speech, in part, vindicates labor's struggle to find their place in a space largely controlled and constructed by capital. His words are quoted, like many of the other individuals in this paper, because they capture the human side of the wage slave argument. Words themselves, not summaries of words, are what clarify the wage slave argument. The president said, "For too many of us the political equality we once had won was meaningless in the face of economic inequality. A small group had concentrated into their own hands an almost complete control over other people's property, other people's money, other people's labor—other people's lives. For too many of us life was no longer free; liberty no longer real; men could no longer follow the pursuit of happiness."<sup>183</sup> Fear, and the freedom from fear, may have been conquered in his first four years, but his second term reemphasized the need to balance an unbalanced, unequal system of economic power which was "free" to do as it saw fit. The wage slave argument and all the rhetoric, struggle and violence it

---

<sup>182</sup> "In the Arena," in *The Roosevelts: An Intimate History*, directed by Ken Burns (PBS, 2014).

<sup>183</sup> Franklin D. Roosevelt, "Acceptance Speech for the Renomination for the Presidency," Philadelphia, Pa. June 27, 1936, The American Presidency Project, accessed January 08, 2016, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=15314>.



contained was finally being addressed by a United States president who had a track record of improving the life of the common man.

With this speech, Roosevelt acknowledges and, crucially, acts on what labor had spent over one-hundred years protesting: a feeling of subservience and enslavement by capitalist masters. He calls these masters the new royalists who established their “kingdoms” upon “concentration of control over material things” leaving “no place among this royalty for our many thousands of small business men and merchants who sought to make a worthy use of the American system of initiative and profit. They were no more free than the worker or the farmer.” Even the middle class was threatened, no freer than the common wage laborer. As the worker and the farmer were threatened by lack of freedom, the government itself also was threatened.

Roosevelt invokes the language of royalty because it was aristocratic control over which the American Revolution was fought. Now, new aristocratic control has risen and “as a result the average man once more confronts the problem that faced the Minute Man.” FDR then goes on to list the changes in the country which are limiting the workers’ freedom. Farmers were dictated by “men in distant cities.” Monopolies reduced opportunity for individual initiatives and “free business was more and more restricted.” Free enterprise became “privileged enterprise.”

Franklin Roosevelt then, a first for the President of the United States, remarks indirectly about compulsory work with a quote from an English judge who said, “Necessitous men are not free men”, and went on to demand a decent standard of living which “gives man not only enough to live by, but something to live for.” Only through the organized power of government could the workers of America appeal for help. FDR

states, “The royalists of the economic order have conceded that political freedom was the business of the Government, but they have maintained that economic slavery was nobody's business.” Franklin Delano Roosevelt, as President of the United States, joined the argument of wage slavery and promised to “stand committed to the proposition that freedom is no half-and-half affair. If the average citizen is guaranteed equal opportunity in the polling place, he must have equal opportunity in the market place.” Freedom now included equality in the economy, not as subjects but as equals, which the wage slave rhetoric for well over one-hundred years demanded. “These economic royalists complain that we seek to overthrow the institutions of America. What they really complain of is that we seek to take away their power. Our allegiance to American institutions requires the overthrow of this kind of power.” FDR again invokes the Declaration of Independence and its inclusion of the right to overthrow unjust power to better serve the citizens of the nation. Moving to ensure citizens were protected and toward a road to equality, FDR passed New Deal legislation.

Franklin D. Roosevelt said in 1937 at his second inaugural address, “The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have too little.”<sup>184</sup> This quote directly linked FDR to his “Second New Deal,” during which he passed the Social Security Act (1935) that would provide aid to the retired, the unemployed, and the challenged, the National Labor Relations Act (Wagner Act, 1935) that made it a right for workers to organize and join unions for the purposes of collective bargaining, and the Fair Labor Standards Act (1938) that reduced the work week to 44 hours and set a minimum wage at 25 cents an

---

<sup>184</sup> Franklin D. Roosevelt, “Inaugural Address,” January 20, 1937, The American Presidency Project, accessed January 05, 2015, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=15349>.

hour. These controversial acts provided, for the first time, government regulation over the conditions and relations of workers and their employers, as well as over the needs of the elderly and the unemployed.

The National Labor Relations Act specifically pointed out what the wage slave argument always implied, “The inequality of bargaining power between employees who do not possess full freedom of association or actual liberty of contract, and employers who are organized in the corporate or other forms of ownership association...” The Wagner Act’s last sentence critically includes, “restoring equality of bargaining power between employers and employees.”<sup>185</sup> The liberal belief that the wage contract was all that was required to be a free individual in a free market had, during the Great Depression, been questioned and found wanting.

During his fourth term, Roosevelt spoke to the American people in his State of the Union address about a second Bill of Rights, his economic bill of rights. As a juxtaposition to his speech on economic royalists and the reasoning for the American Revolution, FDR’s second Bill of Rights evokes the necessity for the first Bill of Rights and what those rights meant to the citizens of the United States and to the United States itself. FDR outlines the second Bill of Rights as the right to a remunerative job, the right to earn enough to provide for basic needs, the right for farmers to make a living from their farming, the right to a truly free market absent unfair competition and monopolies, the right to a home, the right to education, the right to health care, and protection from unemployment, sickness, old age and accident. These rights “spell security.”<sup>186</sup>

---

<sup>185</sup> United States, “National Labor Relations Act,” accessed 01/01/2016, [http://www.ourdocuments.gov/document\\_data/pdf/doc\\_067.pdf](http://www.ourdocuments.gov/document_data/pdf/doc_067.pdf).

<sup>186</sup> Franklin Delano Roosevelt, “State of the Union Address,” January 11, 1944, The American Presidency Project, accessed 01/18/2016, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=599>.

David Kennedy, in his book *Freedom From Fear: The American People in Depression and War, 1929-1945*, emphasizes that security, “job security, life-cycle security, financial security, market security...was the leitmotif of virtually everything the New Deal attempted”<sup>187</sup> and best summarizes the accomplishments of the New Deal. Fears of being without security first prompted the wage slave argument, particularly early on when wage labor was compared to slave labor. FDR believed these rights were necessary because “true individual freedom cannot exist without economic security and independence” and “[p]eople who are hungry, people who are out of a job are the stuff of which dictatorships are made.”<sup>188</sup> The growth of the United States was due to the political rights the first Bill of Rights granted, in theory, to all citizens. Free speech, free press, free worship, trial by jury. “They were our rights to life and liberty.” This second Bill of Rights would provide the necessary protection to the pursuit of happiness, a promise from the Declaration of Independence which the first Bill of Rights could not adequately keep.

Freedom for the working class was not seriously discussed by political leaders until the Progressive era, and freedom itself was not better defined until FDR distinguished between political rights or freedom and economic rights or freedom. It is FDR’s administration which begins to address what the wage slave argument finds lacking in society: security, equality, and an ideal of happiness. It is also FDR’s administration which most fully embraced the tenants of social liberalism which began in the middle to late 1800s.

---

<sup>187</sup> David Kennedy, *Freedom From Fear: The American People in Depression and War, 1929-1945* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 356.

<sup>188</sup> Franklin Delano Roosevelt, “State of the Union Address”, January 11, 1944, The American Presidency Project, accessed 01/18/2016, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=599&st=second+bill+of+rights&st1>.

### **Focal Study: Recessions and the Committee of Industrial Organization**

Depressions and recessions were common throughout the nineteenth century (see figure 5) and were responsible for labor agitation primarily because of layoffs and reductions in wages. The worst depression known in U.S. history at the time occurred in 1873 and lasted until 1879. The power of unionism as shown by the KOL in 1885, which kept Jay Gould from implementing a ten percent wage reduction during the recession years of 1882-1885, begs a number of questions. First, was the union an effective enough force to protect workers' gains and rights in the face of economic turmoil? Second, gauged by how long worker gains lasted, how effective was that force? For example, the KOL's strike against Jay Gould in 1886 failed and, with the Haymarket bombing, the KOL rapidly declined. Under President Wilson during the 1910s, the AFL and unions in general gained more support from both workers and the government than in the past. Wages rose in general. But did hours decline? Now is a good opportunity to explore how effective unions were in securing a forty-hour work week prior to Franklin Roosevelt's 1938 law.

The hours of work per week for male workers from 1920 until 1930 were between 47 and 50 hours,<sup>189</sup> a far cry from the AFL's program calling for an eight-hour work day. Women worked between 43 and 44 hours a week.<sup>190</sup> After 1930, both male and female required work hours decreased to below forty but stayed above thirty. Even with the AFL's record membership numbers and the support of a President, the limiting of hours

---

<sup>189</sup> National Bureau of Economic Research, U.S., "Average Actual Hours of Work Per Week Per Wage Earner, All Male, Twenty-Five Manufacturing Industries," accessed 12/15/2015, <http://www.nber.org/databases/macrophistory/rectdata/08/m08030.dat>

<sup>190</sup> National Bureau of Economic Research, U.S., "Average Actual Hours of Work Per Week Per Wage Earner, Female, Twenty-Five Manufacturing Industries," accessed 12/15/2015, <http://www.nber.org/databases/macrophistory/rectdata/08/m08033.dat>

would not be initially set by either union or government but by the Great Depression.<sup>191</sup>

Membership in unions fluctuated based on wartime production and recessions but, most importantly, because of the Great Depression. Between 1897 and 1904, membership in unions increased 364 percent, the largest recorded increase in union activity during peacetime, with a total of 1,625,700 members. Membership continued to increase throughout the 1910s, peaking at 2,360,700 members in 1920. This increase in union membership, correlates with the government's stance on unions such as the AFL and the production of war goods for World War I. After 1920, union membership began to decline, losing nearly one million members between 1920 and 1923, a reduction of twenty-eight percent. This trend continued until the New Deal years of 1933 and 1939 when membership increase by 121 percent, the second largest recorded increase, with a total membership number of 3,582,500, then nearly doubling during World War II to 6,006,600 in 1945.<sup>192</sup>

The two largest increases in union membership in America (1897-1914 and 1933-1945) occurred during times when the government was favorable to unions and workers were producing goods for wartime. The opposite also is true. The gains made by unions during wartime often were reversed after the goods were no longer necessary, resulting in decreased membership. Membership between 1953-1957 increased only 2.1 percent.<sup>193</sup> Though favoring the unions which were non-radical and supported the war effort (this excluded the IWW and Socialist/Communist organizations), these numbers indicate that

---

<sup>191</sup> During the Great Depression, lower hours meant more people who were unemployed could work. Also, Henry Ford established the 5 day, 40-hour work week in 1926. Prior to this, Ford raised wages to \$5 dollars per eight-hour shift in 1913. It should be noted that Ford's decision was not a guarantee that this would remain. In fact, during the Great Depression manufacturers who adopted Ford's decision cut wages, including Ford.

<sup>192</sup> Leo Troy, "Trade Union Membership 1897-1962" (NBER, 1965), 4.

<sup>193</sup> Troy, "Trade Union Membership," 4.

government intervention in labor, whether by supporting unions and their goals or by increasing demand for goods because of wars, had a significant influence in union membership. This application of governmental intervention also indicates that how one identified with work, as a “radical”, or as a consumer, or as anti-war, or as non-work oriented (which will be discussed in the epilogue) was promoted or repressed by the government. The government, as much by necessity as by choice, slowly intervened between labor and capital. Under FDR's presidential terms, labor demands would for the first time become national laws.

Roosevelt's New Deal initiatives did not immediately achieve the desired effect, as labor unions continually competed with one another and with capital to gain recognition. As noted previously, the AFL competed against former unions within the AFL which had splintered off and created the Committee for Industrial Organization (CIO) because it wanted to practice industrial unionism, to which the AFL, at the time, was sternly opposed.<sup>194</sup> David Kennedy, in a chapter of *Freedom From Fear* titled “Strike!,” chronicles how John L. Lewis, who demanded more than a living wage, a wage that would allow workers middle-class standards of living, challenged the AFL from within before forming the CIO dedicated to industrial unionism. This now old issue of how to organize workers and who should organize workers resulted in the CIO openly supporting FDR's New Deal policies and the Democrats, which Kennedy argues essentially destroyed the Socialist Party,<sup>195</sup> while the AFL remained rather reserved, as its historical stance on self-determination dictates, on the topic. Kennedy also reminds us that the AFL led by Gompers was first created “when Samuel Gompers had led a handful

---

<sup>194</sup> Kennedy, *Freedom From Fear*, 302.

<sup>195</sup> Kennedy, *Freedom From Fear*, 305.

of craft unionists out of the Knights of Labor.”<sup>196</sup>

Membership in the AFL from 1935 to 1945 more than doubled from 3,218,400 to 6,890,400. Meanwhile, membership in the new CIO rose from 1,991,200 in 1937 to 3,927,900 in 1945. In 1937, a strike was initiated by the CIO to organize steel workers laboring in “Little Steel” companies (as opposed to “Big Steel” companies like U.S. Steel). Big Steel companies quickly agreed to CIO sponsored contracts under the Steel Workers Organization Committee, setting the work day at eight-hours, approving overtime benefits, and conceding a union supported pay scale. The Little Steel companies, however, refused to sign the contract, having been anti-union in the past. This refusal to accept union contracts, or even recognize legal union participation which Roosevelt made law in 1935, created a conflict between workers and owners which erupted in violence and death.<sup>197</sup> Little Steel companies would not recognize unions until 1941 when the threat of World War II became a deciding factor. The AFL continually outpaced the CIO in membership, partly because CIO affiliates were more prone to business cycle interruptions and communist sympathies, which resulted in the CIO expelling these organizations.<sup>198</sup> Again, how one identifies with work creates schisms in organizational efforts and beliefs about what will make one “free”.

The AFL and CIO reconciled their differences in 1955 and agreed to organize based on both industrial and trade unionism. Membership numbers peaked for the AFL-CIO in 1957 at 16,078,400, then losing members thereafter from 1958 on. The legacy of the AFL-CIO is one of deciding how to identify with work, as being both critical of

---

<sup>196</sup> Kennedy, *Freedom From Fear*, 300.

<sup>197</sup> Irving Bernstein, *Americans in Depression and War* (Washington D.C.: United States Department of Labor) accessed January 1, 01, 2016, <http://www.dol.gov/dol/aboutdol/history/chapter5.htm>.

<sup>198</sup> Troy, “Trade Union Membership, 9.



capitalism but working within the bounds of capitalism. This identity was fostered because of the wage slave argument which Gompers said would be a goal of the AFL to eliminate. However, Gompers argued that before focusing on the wage slave “problem”, labor ought to focus on improving everyday conditions. It was also this decision to identify with work (production) and freedom (from wage slavery) which allowed the government to look favorably upon the AFL, benefiting both capitalists and workers.

Government intervention on behalf of the working class did not end the wage slave argument, but it emphasizes how the wage slave argument was central to the working class movement’s demand for an eight-hour day and a “fair day’s wage for a fair day’s work.” It also shows that the wage slave argument had come full circle, with the government joining in on the discussion. The working class on the whole was alone in their struggle against wage slavery until the Progressive Era. Having felt the sting of their own status lost to powerful leaders of corporations, the upper middle class, the “gentry,” began to say uncanny, similar things that labor had, from the inception of the working class, said. The difference between the two classes was that one was in a much better position to act on their criticisms peacefully, having the means, the law on their side and the power that came with holding the highest office in the country. The CIO split from the AFL also highlights that the different strategies used to organize the working class created schisms among labor, emphasizing the difficulty the labor movement faced in finding solidarity when attempting to elevate workers even when the government was passing laws and taking actions to protect labor. The working class, through the institution of unions, the implementation of strikes, shaky solidarity, and the reality of recessions and world-wide depressions (notably in 1873 and 1930), finally saw some

relief from their “wage slave” condition when the U.S. government decided to act and meet the demands of labor. The wage slave argument, though present today but without the force or vigor seen before World War II, is a reminder that it, like fluctuating union support, could again flare up.

## Recessions in the U.S. 1857-1945

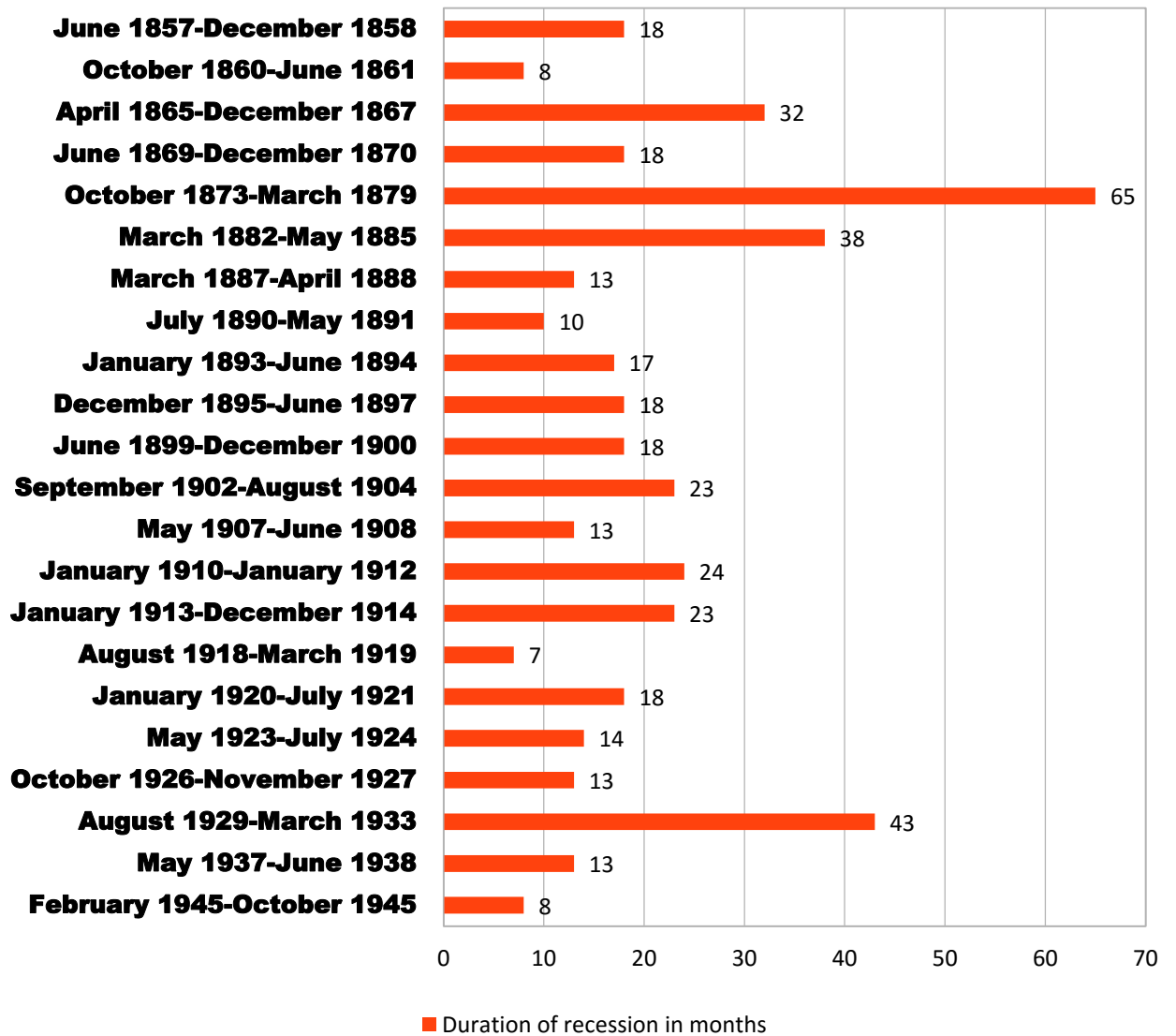


Figure 5. Data obtained from "<http://www.nber.org/cycles.html>."

## Chapter V: Using GIS to Create Collaborative Social Simulations

The ambiguous nature of the term freedom poses challenges to historians because it is a mutable idea, shifting with the times. Historians can trace how the term changes, how it is used, and what the legal definition is but cannot accurately and adequately express what the term *feels* like from the perspective of individuals, such as those featured in this thesis, unless the historians have personally experienced what those presented in this thesis have experienced. Being unable to accurately and adequately transfer to a reader the *feelings* of others on paper is a problem because social questions like what it means to be a free individual in society can have global consequences (the Russian Revolution during World War I for example). Since society is a mutable, evolving, adapting expression of human will, answering social questions may best be accomplished by actively encouraging willful exchanges of information among numerous participants in a risk-free environment.

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) are database driven programs which allow users to create, display, and store spatial and temporal information (qualitative and quantitative). GIS has been used to explore and map historical topics, adding to the toolset of historians. However, ideas are difficult, if not impossible, to map. Because GIS relies on a database, it can be used to create historical simulations which can “map” ideas in addition to classical historical mapping projects. Points, lines, and polygons are the three fundamental objects used by many, if not all, organizations utilizing GIS. Using these three features and some python scripting, ESRI ArcGIS can be used as a platform to create, manipulate and learn from historical simulations focused on space, place and the ideas that produce spatial changes.

The use of GIS as a platform to create and conduct GIS Social Simulations to explore historical topics and ideas is two-fold: first, to better understand ambiguous historical topics by researching, exchanging creative ideas and documents based on primary sources, and reporting on dynamic simulation experiences; and second, to gain valuable real-world GIS experience wherein participants learn the fundamentals of GIS by using the same tools businesses and government entities use while contributing to social projects which all public institutions can appreciate. In short, the goal is to provide a GIS internship experience in a classroom while contributing to the humanities and social sciences (and other disciplines) through exploring, reporting and addressing past and present social questions and concerns. Utilizing GIS to simulate historical topics and events to answer both past and present social questions can add another defining, unique aspect to the study of history, as well as provide further opportunities for GIS innovation and historical research.

A historian can quite easily design a spatial map highlighting concentrations of slavery in a city, a state, or even a country. In fact, a recent ArcUser article featured the use of ESRI's CityEngine 3D object driven program which can create replicas of cities, to recreate the slave trade in Richmond, Virginia.<sup>199</sup> The map depicts a simplified 3D city of Richmond in 1853 with slave auction buildings highlighted in red. Now, instead of just showing these red highlighted buildings, imagine you are placed within that map via a Simulation using existing and custom tools allowing participants to interact with this otherwise static map. Imagine that you can walk around the buildings depicted on the map. You can have conversations with the people depicted on the map. You can even change the map, argue for or against the institution of slavery, provide alternatives to the

---

<sup>199</sup> Justin Madron, "Re-creating Part of Richmond's Past," *ESRI ArcUser* (Winter 2016): 36-37.

predominant practice of the time or even defend the institution with primary documents and poignant arguments. A map alone can never engage or transport an audience like a simulation can which places participants as actors within that very map and asks them to learn from, inform and dynamically alter the map based on historical sources and human choices. GIS Social Simulations provide another layer of depth to historical research and map design, while encouraging other academic departments to participate in both the design and the dynamic interaction which historical simulations foster.

GIS Social Simulations can be used as another tool for the academic world, but it can also help real-world agencies explore social questions and concerns. For example, rapid social changes due to world conflict and climate change create a demand for analysts who work to provide answers which will help inform public policy. Academic and research programs can expand to help meet this need by becoming a state and/or national coordinator/hub for GIS Social Simulations. GIS Social Simulations provide a platform for studying public concerns such as public security, natural disaster, ecological change, and other matters which, when combined with historical analysis, will bring the knowledge gained from studying the past to the present, helping to shape and mold the future.

GIS Social Simulations will provide students the opportunity to design, develop, and contribute custom GIS tools and simulations and by attracting ideas and fulfilling needs of other academic departments and/or government agencies. Students will not only get vital GIS experience through creating custom tools and planning and designing GIS Social Simulations, they will also increase their marketability through gaining the tangential skills required to correspond and collaborate with other professors, students,

government agencies and the general public, adding to the skills already required in academic programs. The tools students help create will become part of a repository of Historical Resources managed by one or more academic institutions aiding future GIS Social Simulations and meeting interested parties' needs.

Dynamic simulations rely on at least three principles: participants, data and visual objects which the participants can manipulate or exchange, and a mission and conflicts representing the simulation's goal(s). The three fundamental GIS objects can be used to form the parameters of a simulation. Points can be used to represent participants, storing information about those participants in the GIS's attribute table. Lines and polygons can be used to show ownership of property or institutions, again storing information about the property or institution in the attribute table. With input for individual data and property (parcels/institutions), a basic map can be created and manipulated by participants. ArcMap also has the function to hyperlink local or web documents, allowing large caches of historical resources to be easily accessed and managed by participants. These hyperlinks can be used with both GIS points and polygons.

ESRI ArcMap has two options available that allow multiple users to contribute to the same map: create an online accessible map using GIS Online, or create a local server using ArcServer and a program such as Microsoft SQL Server. Having multiple users concurrently edit and manipulate data in the GIS simulation is necessary because it provides the essential interaction among participants. Concurrent use poses an obstacle because ArcGIS needs to reconcile after each edit, which could cause conflicts when more than one user edits the same object at the same time (before edits have been saved). This situation can be minimized by using a Python Add-In extension script to auto-save

after each edit. More importantly, ArcGIS does not originally provide robust tools to interact with other users (participants). ArcGIS, however, encourages the use of python scripts which can be used like any other tool in ArcMap toolboxes. The creation of python scripts to add participant interaction tools provides a great opportunity for students to plan and implement these tools while creating and aiding GIS Social Simulations. Scripts can be run when selected by users or can be set to run at a prescribed time (useful for automating daily tasks). Lastly, each ArcGIS user needs an individual license to use ArcMap (which, because of being used by an educational institution, may be waived).

To get the most out of GIS simulations, it is important for the participants to design and create the foundations of the simulations well. This process requires the participants to gain understanding of ArcMap tools and the simulation they are about to conduct and participate in. This process also provides participants with valuable experience which can directly translate to real-world applications and demands. Through the implementation of GIS Social Simulations, the humanities will also have another tool with which to contribute to the social sciences. By applying and teaching GIS in a variety of disciplines and then encouraging interaction among those disciplines, more people will be reached and involved than would be possible before. Below is an example of the process of simulating a topic or an event using the wage slave argument as the conflict and the accumulation of “Influence” (social and economic capital) as a goal.

The wage slave argument is a contentious argument with relevance still today. It is also a highly social argument which may best be explored using active participants who can digitally “act-out” the argument to get a better understanding of what freedom



meant in the past and even what it means today. Having participants simulate historical topics, such as the wage slave argument, not only allows a deeper discussion and appreciation for historical topics but can also offer valuable insights into present day attitudes and biases, both of which, like two sides of the same coin, are necessary to learn from the past to positively impact the future. The wage slave argument can be simulated in a number of ways but, for the purpose of this proposal, the simulation will be based on the tumultuous events occurring in the Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, mining district in the 1890s. The mining district is chosen because it offers at least two distinct yet shifting groups: wage laboring miners and mine owning capitalists (a former miner bought and managed a mine, importantly making these two groups semi-fluid). The question this simulation attempts to answer is: "In what ways does the wage system limit freedom as described by the wage slave argument, if at all?" A specific query helps keep the simulation focused on a single topic, especially useful for a topic featuring a general, mutable or ambiguous idea. However, dynamic simulations encourage unexpected and creative responses from participants which are valid to study and report on. For example, U.S. history contains X number of unions. The simulation can contain X+Y number of unions (because of participant input), each with its own unique message and platform. These dynamic and creative inclusions and corresponding outcomes make learning from the past not only entertaining but, perhaps, future changing.

The simulation creator (usually the course instructor/GIS Social Simulation coordinator) is responsible for the initial set up of the parameters of the simulation as well as for being the moderator of the simulation. The creator needs to outline what actions the participants can choose based on the interactions desired. For example, the

actions suggested to simulate the wage slave argument (based on the Coeur D'Alene/Cripple Creek mining conflicts which will be discussed below) rely on “resources,” since capitalism and the wage system are transactional systems. Actions include the ability to exchange resources from one participant/institution to another, usually upon request (pay employees), but can also be automated. The historian has an edge in planning for the simulation because the historian understands the dynamics of the time or event being simulated. The goal then is to find creative ways to allow participants to dynamically interact within the simulation, bridging the gap as best possible between virtual reality and historical reality, as far as acting on choices is concerned.

The key is to include participants in the construction of the simulation after the basic parameters have been set. The more the participants initially interact with the simulation, the more they will learn important GIS concepts/tools and the ideas behind the simulation in which they are about to participate. Groups are assigned based on a randomly generated resource number for each participant. For example, participant A will be a member of the mine owners group based on the amount of Influence participant A has been assigned in relation to Participant B. The more initial influence a participant has, the more he or she can “claim” the created parcels which have a randomly generated price, dynamically creating a “capitalist class” and a “working class” based on who can initially purchase what.

Simulations benefit from involving a large number of participants, particularly GIS Social Simulations. The fewer participants, the more thematic the simulation becomes. The more participants, the more “social” the simulation becomes. There are both advantages and disadvantages to online and local participation. Simulations which

are accessible online allow for cross-campus, cross-university, and even university-public participation. Online simulations allow more people from different backgrounds and experiences to participate and interact with the simulation, greatly benefiting both the simulation and its participants. However, the more people in the simulation, particularly from other universities or the public in general, the less control the simulation creator will have over solving unforeseen problems and meeting the increased need for coordination between the simulation host and member institutions. Local participation increases simulation control while decreasing the need for more coordination efforts but also limits the much needed numbers and varieties of characteristics of participants. In the end, a good simulation will be successful regardless of whether it is available locally or online. Scripts will be used to prevent unrestricted editing by participants.

City government and title companies spend a great deal of time generating and updating parcels (property boundaries). Using parcels (polygons) is also an excellent way to map property where institutions (another polygon layer) can be created and which will be used in this social simulation to show participant ownership, membership, work hours, pay rate, etc. The application of parcels in the simulation also provides students an opportunity to gain real-world experience in parcel editing (using lines and polygons), parcel creation, including referring to plats or plans, and tracing aerial imagery to create/edit the simulation map. The initial polygon grid created (using the fishnet tool) will serve as parcels for the simulation. The grid size is customizable. Participants will claim these parcels, becoming the owner. Those who do not own a parcel will need to spend their Time resource at these parcels to earn a wage which will be used to purchase Needs to replenish Time. The owner of the parcel sets the pay scale and workday. The

more members of a parcel, the more resources will be extracted from the parcel and the larger the return will be for the owner, creating an incentive to keep wages low and hours high to meet the simulation goal of accumulating the most Influence (of course, this does not mean all owners will or have to keep wages low and hours high and, indeed, the dynamic interplay between the owners and the workers is the reason the simulation is a valuable tool to study the wage slave argument). The workers will desire higher wages (to allow the purchase of parcels/Wants/other incentives) and fewer work hours (actions require X amount of time per action) to better interact and manipulate the simulation. With these few parameters, the wage slave argument/labor-capital relations can be simulated creating a GIS Social Simulation.

ESRI has fully embraced the use of Python programming language. Python is often used to automate GIS processes such as searching for and then selecting parcels or other map features based on the user's needs, allowing the user to quickly view potential conflicts or to speed up processes. For simulation purposes, script tools will be utilized. Script tools are custom tools which can be used from a Toolbox like any other ESRI GIS operation or procedure and can critically request user input which can then be used to manipulate the simulation via updating the geodatabase (and thereby feature class attributes). User input is key to any successful simulation but, because GIS programs do not prioritize user input text boxes and the like, python or another language or program is required (Python Add-Ins). Script tools, however, can be used with or created by Model Builder, which is used extensively in advanced GIS projects and helps speed up geoprocessing procedures. By combining script tools and Model Builder, participants will learn advanced GIS tools, how to create a model and how to export the model's python

code, which provides knowledge necessary in real-world GIS positions.

It is imperative to identify the actions a simulation requires to meet the goals of the Social Simulation. Mechanics can be automated or can use user input to set the parameters of the action using Python and the arcpy module's `arcpy.GetParameterAsText()`. User input is required to select these parameters and can be the participant's password (student ID) to identify who the participant is. Some actions can be automated (upkeep) while others require user input (actions).

To simulate the wage slave argument, it is necessary to use arguments defended by primary sources which help define an Institution's mission and goal. A division of power exists between employers and employees, based on the ability of employers to dictate working conditions of workers because they own the means of production (Needs and Wants) and the capital (Influence) to finance its use, while the employee has only his labor power (Time) to trade for a wage (Influence) to secure his or her survival (Needs). Employers can be further divided into Need based or Want (Prestige) based businesses.

Institutions need to be built within Parcels, signifying participant created institutions (businesses, unions, clubs, etc.). The owner of a parcel and/or an institution has the power to collect Time (or another resource) to create and/or exchange Influence which can then be used to create Needs and Wants that employee participants buy with the exchanged Influence for their Time. Because the owner sets the work hours and pay rate, this will provide the simulated conflict between employer and employee. Institutions also will be used to display participant created Arguments and creations for an Influence fee (set by the owner) through performing an "action" (uses a unit of Time). The Action mechanic is programmed so that if `Time == 0`: Action cannot be performed. After the

Action mechanic is programmed, it will be easy to adjust how much Time is required for each Action (work, donate, create, trade, etc.). Institutions provide the opportunity for participants to form coalitions based on political, social, economic views, etc. and to pool Influence together to perform actions which may be prohibited if endeavored individually. Institutions also provide opportunities to showcase participant created content using hyperlinks to point to this content.

As a rule, each participant created institution needs to have a hyperlink to a primary source to justify the “mission” or purpose of the participant created institution. This rule’s purpose is twofold: first, to have the participants conduct research, learn from that research, and then apply what they learn by managing the institution based on the primary source and, second, to attract participants interested in the institution’s mission/primary source(s) to build membership and to feature participant created content in the form of Arguments and other documents. This rule has both a hard and a soft component. The primary source requirement which informs the institution is the hard component. The soft component is in how the participant(s) (owner and members of the institution) interpret(s) the primary source, retaining its essence but perhaps not its implicit direction. This process allows learning from history, while not being contained or restricted by it, in order to better address the present and the future. The power of these simulations lies in how participants become historic actors and then have the opportunity to be present day social champions and leaders through both how they interact with the simulation and, consequently, how they interact outside the simulation. Since GIS software does not have communication features such as forums or chat windows, and since these simulations may be entirely online or otherwise located where

direct communication would be restrictive, Moodle, other e-learning platforms, or online forums can be used. Forums, especially forums featuring Groups, are an excellent way to manage and encourage participant communication and the sharing of documents, created content, and ideas before being hyperlinked to a particular institution. Communicate, communicate, communicate, and then edit the map and manipulate the simulation.

Every participant option is an Action. Every Action requires the use of X Time. A list detailing the resources used in this simulation follows:

Resources: Parcel resource extracted and added to the owner's Influence minus payroll.

Influence: Currency to donate or buy (and populate) parcels, needs and wants. Every current X Influence adds X to Prestige.

Time: 8 units of two signifying 24 hours minus 8 hours of rest. Used to perform Actions and exchanged for Influence.

Needs: Replenishes a participant's Time resource. Must be used as an Action.

Prestige: A participant's overall social likeability.

The purpose of this Social Simulation is to simulate as well as possible the wage slave argument in order to explore labor relations and their role in society, to learn from primary sources and apply what is learned in the format of participant created institutions, and to offer arguments, create content for participant created institutions, own, manage and extract resources from parcels earning Influence, pay labor, and allow labor to replenish their Time resource via cost of Needs. The wage slave argument directly influences labor relations and unrest. Because labor conflict, though not so pronounced

today, is still a distinct possibility, it is important to find solutions academically and socially before violence is employed. Simulations provide an opportunity for both educators and students, as well as the public, to act out and offer arguments which directly and critically influence the simulation in a risk-free environment.

The following is an example of “A Day in the Simulation.” Participant A started with enough Influence to immediately purchase and become an owner of a parcel with eighty Resources. Participants B, C, and D unfortunately did not start with enough Influence to claim a parcel and decided to join Participant A’s parcel to exchange ten hours of their Time resource for .25 Influence each. They used most of this pay to purchase Needs from participant E who, like participant A, had enough to purchase a low-resource parcel and set up a need-based business. Participants F, G, H, and I agreed on the forums to pool the little Influence they each had and in that way claimed their own parcel extracting the Resources themselves and keeping the profit for themselves. Participants B, C, and D eventually each set aside enough Influence to create an Institution on part of participant E’s parcel to use as local union. To gain as much support as possible, the Institution members hyperlink a number of primary documents about American unions and social, political and economic resources. They then create their own union platform by hyperlinking an argument they themselves drafted together. Besides their argument(s) and primary documents, they call for an increase in wages as .25 is barely enough to sustain themselves, particularly since participants A and E have been in agreement to keep wages low and Needs high to better ensure their current parcel monopoly. A list of six scripts providing a proof of concept are located in the appendix.

Through the manipulation of digital resources and participants via arguments and



the “mapping” of institutions and the members of those institutions using GIS as a platform, social simulations which ask about and learn from historical questions and social concerns can achieve greater participant interaction, greater entertainment, a greater chance to provide valuable information to both students and the public, and provide research opportunities with plentiful amounts of data to report and share with the public and academia. To simulate history is to *experience history in action*.

## **Conclusion**

With the intervention of government and the power it symbolized and exercised on behalf of the American worker, those who do not identify with work were largely ignored. By the time FDR passed away the eight-hour day had been federally mandated, the work week set at 44 hours, a minimum wage was established and more protections for employees and consumers were enacted than ever before. Labor finally had federal protection to collectively bargain to further improve their conditions and establish their place. Now, with the rise of wage work and those who identify with work discussed, those who do not identify with work as defined in a capitalistic space must be included to see how the wage slave argument was used to not only criticize the wage system, but work itself.

Even with the enormous growth of membership in unions and open governmental support from the 1900s to the 1940s, the wage slave argument remains today (see figure 6 below). Labor usually identified with work and differed on how to elevate the conditions of the working class revolving around the concept of the wage system. There were and are those who do not identify with work and see the capitalist world of work itself, rather than only the transaction inherent in the wage system, as the main enslaving element. Work as an end in and of itself, as an ethic, as a social expectation and requirement, “hard work” as a motto was a capitalistic belief created in America after the Revolutionary War. Anything impeding one’s desire or ability to be a hard worker was frowned upon. Therefore, alcohol, drugs, privilege, nonproductive activities, oversleeping, or anything negatively impacting a day’s labor was rejected. As the capitalist middle class assumed the position of power through liberal revolutions throughout Europe and America, the

now ruling class expected these capitalistic values to be spread among themselves and throughout society. Work itself became the prime focus of the ruling class and the prime activity of the working class. Unions combated this focus by reducing the hours of the work day. Some groups believe that further reduction is necessary (the KOL today calls for a six-hour day, twenty-four-hour work week).<sup>200</sup> Others insist that work itself ought to be severely limited or eliminated, citing that even though production and technology has continually increased, the work week has remained the same in America for nearly one hundred years.

Henry David Thoreau, Friedrich Nietzsche, Peter Kropotkin, Paul LeFargue, and Bertrand Russell are presented here because they make use of the wage slave argument to criticize work itself, whether that be in a capitalist, a communist, or even a socialist space. To these individuals, compulsory work is the root cause of slavery, wage slavery or otherwise. Their collective goal is to find a solution to make work agreeable, to decrease the hours of work and not necessarily to end, even if it were possible, all work.

Henry David Thoreau's 1854 *Walden* provides commentary on the cult of efficiency and unnecessary toil as a virtue espoused by capitalist ideals. Thoreau believed that most people are so preoccupied with “factitious cares and superfluously coarse labors of life that its finer fruits cannot be plucked by them.” This is because those who labor have not leisure, which leisure Thoreau believed would create true integrity. Instead, the laborer must consistently look to and react to the market, in fear of depreciating value. Thoreau writes, “He has no time to be anything but a machine,” warning that “there are so many keen and subtle masters that enslave both North and South. It is hard to have a Southern overseer; it is worse to have a Northern one; but worst of all when you are the

---

<sup>200</sup> See <http://www.knightsoflabor.org/>.

slave-driver of yourself.”<sup>201</sup>

For Thoreau, making life work, and the ideal to do so, prevents one from appreciating a life with enough leisure to develop one's own physical, mental, and spiritual capacities. Instead, one is chained to the market, like a machine, overlooking the “finest qualities of our nature.” Thoreau also, in 1854, gave credence to the wage slave argument by calling an employer an overseer and slave-driver. Thoreau's concern that workers had little time for themselves and were treated more like machines than humans was precisely what Samuel Gompers attempted to change when he declared workers were not only producers but also consumers. By recognizing workers as consumers, businesses would also need to recognize the need for leisure and time away from work. Unfortunately, hours did not decrease below forty hours a week until the Great Depression and then remained under forty-five hours because of government intervention.

Friedrich Nietzsche, who asked society to question all activities which take our energy from ourselves, was of the opinion in 1882 that there are at least two types of people, those who work solely for the most wages regardless of their occupation and those “who would rather perish than work without taking *pleasure* [sic] in their work.” He regards the latter as “choosy, hard to please, and have no use for ample rewards if the work is not itself the reward of rewards.” The former are “lesser natures” who do not understand the importance of leisure or “boredom” in ensuring inspiration and personal growth. Nietzsche wrote, “To fend off boredom at any price is vulgar, just as work without pleasure is vulgar.” This is because those who do not identify with work or

---

<sup>201</sup> Henry David Thoreau, *Walden, and On the Duty of Civil Disobedience*, Project Gutenberg, accessed September 11, 2014, <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/205/205-h/205-h.htm>.

“artists...contemplative men of all kinds...men of leisure....the thinker and for all inventive spirits”, are internally compelled *not* to work at something disagreeable while facing a capitalistic space which compels them to do so. Nietzsche points out that these individuals want work, “and the heaviest, hardest work, if need be” but must find pleasure in the work, “Otherwise they are resolutely idle, even if it spells impoverishment, dishonour, and danger to life and limb. They do not fear boredom as much as work without pleasure; indeed, they need a lot of boredom if *their* [sic] work is to succeed.”<sup>202</sup> The individuals who belong to this “rare breed” are at odds with liberal and capitalistic social expectations. To them, compulsory work is akin to slavery wherein they are *forced* to work for capitalistic masters who take time (which Nietzsche identifies as being to them as more important than wages) away from them. Compulsory work being as slavery is reiterated by Karl Marx's son-in-law Paul Lefargue, (1842-1911) an anarchist and Marxist.

Paul Lefargue, like Orestes Brownson (1811-1876), criticized the French Revolution for turning its back on the laboring poor. Brownson was of the opinion that as long as the Revolution was controlled and directed by the middle class to overthrow the monarchy and nobility then the Revolution ought to be supported. However, as soon as the working poor attempted to elevate themselves to the same level as the middle class, “the English nation armed itself and poured out its blood and treasure to suppress it.”<sup>203</sup> Paul Lefargue echoed Brownson’s condemnation, citing that the Rights of Man were merely the rights of capitalists, the new middle class from the Third Estate. The right

---

<sup>202</sup> Friedrich Nietzsche, Bernard Williams, Josefine Nauckhoff, *The Gay Science* (Cambridge University Press, 2001), 57.

<sup>203</sup> Orestes Brownson, “The Laboring Classes, An Article from the Boston Quarterly Review” (Boston, BH Greene, 1840), 8.

retained by the working class was simply the right to work, the right to earn a wage. This “right to work” is what Lefargue criticized because he felt workers exchanged their mission for emancipation for work itself. What Lefargue seems to ignore, at least initially, is what Brownson realized, that the “poor” did not have a real chance to elevate or “emancipate” themselves. They were suppressed and purposefully excluded. Instead of the right to work, Lefargue argues, there ought to be the *right* to be “lazy”, i.e. to be free from compulsory work.

Paul Lefargue wrote *The Right to be Lazy* in 1883 while in Saint Pelagie Prison located in Paris. The article argues that work (in a capitalist society) limits one intellectually and produces bodily deformity and pain. Why, he asks, would workers submit themselves to this kind of work, as “miserable slaves of machines”? It is because “the priests, the economists and the moralists have cast a sacred halo over work.” Those who influence society most have set the standard for work and the rest meet that standard because they have been “perverted by the dogma of work.” “Work,” Lefargue insists, “is the worst sort of slavery.”<sup>204</sup> But this “slavery” is imposed by those who are in control. Napoleon, as well as those who championed trade and manufacture, felt that the more workers worked the better it would be for all. With more work came less vice. More work meant the opportunity to pay lower wages. More work meant more time spent at work, averaging twelve hours a day. This dogma of work was imposed by those who benefited the most from it. Since most of the population belonged to the laboring poor, government was safer if this mass had less time. It can be argued that the fear of radicals and the possibility of revolution in the U.S. during the Great Depression (and why the government relied on the AFL to combat radical unions such as the IWW) was a primary

---

<sup>204</sup> Paul Lefargue, *The Right to be Lazy, and Other Studies* (Chicago, C.H. Kerr & company, 1907), 12.

reason for setting a minimum wage and maximum work week, as well as implementing a number of other New Deal programs. Establishing a minimum wage and maximum work week satisfied working class demands decreasing threat of revolution.

During the numerous revolutions in 1848, particularly in France where socialist sympathies to abolish poverty existed, is when Lefargue points to the proletariat's failure to emancipate itself in exchange for the "right to work," ending the mission of achieving equality through abolition of private property. The year 1848 presented a chance for the working masses excluded during the early period of the French Revolution to become equals. With the right to work came the call to work which required the workers to identify with work. Work, says Lefargue, produces not wealth but slavery to a wage, to poverty. As such, to identify as a worker is to identify as a slave. Upton Sinclair's character Jurgis Rudkus in *The Jungle* illustrates this idea when he says, "I will work harder" only to find himself less well-off. The only way out of poverty, of slavery, is for the proletariat to recognize its strength by trampling "underfoot the prejudices of Christian ethics, economic ethics and free-thought ethics" which helped shape the dogma of work. The proletariat "must return to its natural instincts, it must proclaim the Rights of Laziness, a thousand times more noble and more sacred than the anemic Rights of Man concocted by the metaphysical lawyers of the bourgeois revolution."<sup>205</sup> By not identifying with work, in theory, one frees oneself and, at the same time, ends the cycle of and the poverty of the proletariat by capitalist exploitation in general. In England, economists and capitalists recognized that by lowering work hours required per day to no more than ten and raising wages, production increased.<sup>206</sup> In France, however, by labor

---

<sup>205</sup> Lefargue, *The Right to be Lazy*, 29.

<sup>206</sup> Lefargue, *The Right to be Lazy*, 46.

working more, technology slowed down as the need for machines was less if human bodies could suffice. To limit work would encourage investment in machines, like, Lefargue points out, in the American West. To this end, Lefargue argues that the proletariat ought not accept the Rights of Man “which are but the rights of capitalist exploitation,” not to accept the Right to Work “which is but the right to misery,” but to demand to limit the work day to three hours a day.<sup>207</sup> This would limit overproduction, overwork, and exploitation, all of which create social problems which unions and the general organizing of the working class attempt to solve.

It is important to point out that the individuals discussed in this section are not against the necessity of work per se but against *over work* and making work the primary focus of society. Paul Lefargue wanted to limit the work day to three hours, not eliminate the work day. Like the unions that demanded the eight-hour day, these individuals, like Peter Kropotkin and Bertrand Russell featured below, believed that by limiting work society and individuals would be better for it.

Peter Kropotkin was a Russian anarchist, scientist and philosopher. His two major works include *The Conquest of Bread* published in 1906 and *Fields, Factories and Workshops*. In *The Conquest of Bread*, Kropotkin begins his book by succinctly stating that all inventions, all thought, all progress and all industry is owed to the past. The men and women who provided what the nineteenth century contained belonged to the forgotten workers who were exploited, who did more of the labor but received the least in what they helped create. He asks, “In our civilized societies we are rich. Why then are the many poor? Why this painful drudgery for the masses? Why, even to the best paid workman, this uncertainty for the morrow, in the midst of all the wealth inherited from

---

<sup>207</sup> Lefargue, *The Right to be Lazy* 56.



the past, and in spite of the powerful means of production, which could ensure comfort to all, in return for a few hours of daily toil?" The reason people are poor and some are over-worked while others are without much needed work is because of the power of those who control the means of production, those who appropriated the gifts of the past (remember Paine's argument).

We cry shame on the feudal baron who forbade the peasant to turn a clod of earth unless he surrendered to his lord a fourth of his crop. We call those the barbarous times. But if the forms have changed, the relations have remained the same, and the worker is forced, under the name of free contract, to accept feudal obligations. For, turn where he will, he can find no better conditions. Everything has become private property, and he must accept, or die of hunger.<sup>208</sup>

Kropotkin connects what he considers the theft by the few of and control of human progress with wage slavery while acknowledging his belief that work could be and ought to be limited to a few hours.

A great deal of chapter two of *The Conquest of Bread* could easily be featured in one of the many Progressive Era's muckraking articles about political corruption and shady business practices. In fact, Kropotkin is keenly sensitive to the needs of people and writes something akin to FDR when FDR later encouraged New Deal programs and gave speeches like his economic Bill of Rights speech. Kropotkin says, "All is for all! If the man and the woman bear their fair share of work, they have a right to their fair share of all that is produced by all, and that share is enough to secure them well-being. No more of such vague formulas as 'The right to work,' or 'To each the whole result of his labour.' What we proclaim is The Right to Well-Being: Well-Being for All!" Here Kropotkin criticizes the right to work in line with Paul Lefargue's condemnation of the

---

<sup>208</sup> Peter Kropotkin, *The Conquest of Bread* (New York: Vanguard Press, 1926), accessed 03/27/2016, <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/23428/23428-h/23428-h.htm>.

dogma of work. Like Lefargue, and like Bertrand Russell featured below, Peter Kropotkin aims to reduce work to ensure each working member of society shares in both the production and enjoyment of the economy.

Prescribing a “synthesis of the two ideals pursued by humanity throughout the ages—Economic and Political Liberty,” Kropotkin defends Anarchist Communism, Communism without government. Again, Kropotkin recognizes what FDR came to recognize, that freedom, if it is to be widely shared, required both political *and* economic freedom. For Kropotkin, this freedom would exist best under Anarchist Communism. Keeping to the Progressive Era spirit, FDR believed the combined freedom could exist under the existing economic order, indeed, supported by enlarging government, not eliminating it.

Kropotkin backs Communism because “the coming Revolution could render no greater service to humanity than by making the wage system, in all its forms, an impossibility, and by rendering Communism, which is the negation of wage-slavery, the only possible solution.” It is wage slavery, the subservient, powerless position of the working masses that Communism is expected to eliminate. Yet, this begs the question about the successes of labor unions and their exerting political and direct power in defiance of their supposed powerlessness. There is no doubt that the individual is powerless unless combining with others to exert an orchestrated labor front. The difference between what Kropotkin considers a success of labor is whether they have control over the means of production, much in line with the differences between the AFL and the IWW. He cites the successes of State Socialism as examples of the means of production owned for the benefit of the public rather than for private individuals.

Ultimately, Kropotkin called for a social revolution to obtain the “Right to Well-Being.” He clarified what he meant with, “The “right to well-being” means the possibility of living like human beings, and of bringing up children to be members of a society better than ours, whilst the “right to work” only means the right to be always a wage-slave, a drudge, ruled over and exploited by the middle class of the future.” Here is what can be considered the argument behind those who do not identify with work. Not only is it their goal to diminish the need to work, to eliminate over-work while increasing “mental” work, but crucially eliminating wage slavery so as to live like true human beings; not as tools, not as machines, not as animals to be exploited, but as respected contributors and members of society at-large.

Bertrand Russell, British philosopher and social critic, argued in his 1932 essay “In Praise of Idleness” that “a great deal of harm is being done in the modern world by belief in the virtuousness of work, and that the road to happiness and prosperity lies in an organized diminution of work.”<sup>209</sup> Russell goes on to defend leisure, which not since the beginning of civilization could be readily had without slave labor, as a right which ought to be evenly distributed to all of society (rather than just the privileged society, i.e. the ruling class) through modern technology. Russell writes, “The morality of work is the morality of slaves, and the modern world has no need of slavery.” This sentiment uttered in 1932 links Paul Lefargue and the wage slave argument in general to the events of the Great Depression. It was upon the backs of slaves, serfs, etc. that the ideals of work were founded prior to the Industrial Revolution and kept intact after, which, for Russell, was a problem since “Modern technique has made it possible to diminish enormously the

---

<sup>209</sup> Bertrand Russell, *In Praise of Idleness: And Other Essays* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1960). 1932 essay available online here: <http://www.zpub.com/notes/idle.html>, accessed September 17, 2014.

amount of labor required to secure the necessities of life for everyone.” He refers to experiences during the First World War as proof to this claim writing, “by the scientific organization of production, it is possible to keep modern populations in fair comfort on a small part of the working capacity of the modern world.” For Russell, this experience provided the proof necessary to argue to limit the work day to four hours. “Instead of that, the old chaos was restored, those whose work was demanded were made to work long hours, and the rest were left to starve as unemployed.” This is because, like Lefargue kept repeating, the dogma of work proclaims “work is a duty, and a man should not receive wages in proportion to what he has produced, but in proportion to his virtue as exemplified by his industry.” This is nothing if not the “morality of a Slave State.” Rather than modernity “freeing” humanity, labor was “enslaved” so others could be privileged with liberty, returning to the beginning of Classical Liberalism where those who defined what freedom meant benefitted most.

Work ethics, particularly in America, were a source of confusion for Russell. Instead of one being encouraged to cultivate one's individuality, one's creativity, using one's own time to pursue whatever choice-option existed, the American opinion was that one ought to work, even if one were well off. This “cult of efficiency,” as Russell called it, had not only erased “light-heartedness and play” but also denied leisure from which people derive “whatever happiness they may enjoy,” paralleling FDR’s purpose for a second Bill of Rights, the pursuit of happiness.

An ideal of unending work as virtuous is “evil” because it is coupled with the fact that some workers are overworked while others are left unemployed and unable to maintain their existence. Because of this, Russell declared that “four hours' work a day

should entitle a man to the necessities and elementary comforts of life, and that the rest of his time should be his to use as he might see fit.”<sup>210</sup> If everyone could work four hours a day, it would enable more people to be employed (which was an argument made during the Great Depression) while allowing leisure time for all (fewer work hours for all would give everyone roughly the same amount of leisure time). This idea is important not only to the concept of freedom (less dictated time while still securing survival means more time to the self) but so that “every person possessed of scientific curiosity will be able to indulge it, and every painter will be able to paint without starving, however excellent his picture may be.” Each person would have more time to determine the person they truly want to be, absent coercion and control by a ruling class oppressing those whom they employ or indoctrinating them with mistaken notions of what work means or how one ought to spend one’s time (i.e. life). The diminution of work is a central theme of those who do not identify with work. Russell concludes that in four hours of work a day “there will be happiness and joy of life, instead of frayed nerves, weariness, and dyspepsia. The work exacted will be enough to make leisure delightful, but not enough to produce exhaustion.” Time, fewer hours of work as demanded by labor unions and by social critics, is the defining component of freedom, as one’s choices are limited and, indeed, dictated by those directing one’s time away from the self and toward something and someone else to secure a wage.

Figure 6 below is an N-gram which illustrates that the wage slave argument, though declining after World War II, is present today.<sup>211</sup> The views of the critics included above help explain why the wage slave argument remains today, even if the argument,

---

<sup>210</sup> Russell, *In Praise of Idleness*.

<sup>211</sup> See Bob Black’s essay “The Abolition of Work” as an example. Available here: <http://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/bob-black-the-abolition-of-work>, accessed October 15, 2015.

like many union movements, fluctuates with the growing uncertainty in the market and the world. Liberalism, hundreds of years of enclosure, and the Industrial Revolution catapulted the middle class of the eighteenth century into the position of the ruling class. Wage work became a necessity, as the means of production rested with those who demanded the most capital. Modern work consumed and consumes a tremendous amount of human energy, despite an expanding labor force and advances in all technological fields. Wage slavery, to the critics presented above, is a genre of slavery in general. These individuals also appear to argue between a mean between two extremes, one of overwork championed by the dogma of work, and one of exclusive leisure championed by the outspoken gentry of America's past. Freedom for those who do not identify with "work" is the ability to be both productive and pursue leisure with a ratio of 1:4 respectively while still expecting to live with dignity.

Google N-Gram: Wage Slavery 1950-2005

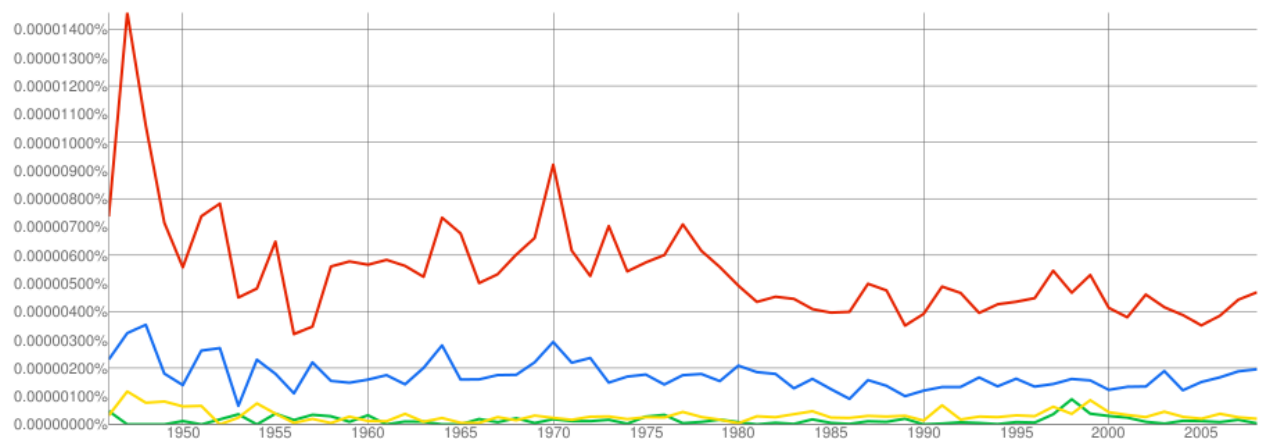


Figure 6.

\* \* \*

The wage slave argument was the driving force, the rhetorical fuel thrown on a simmering cinder illuminating a new reality labor had not yet faced. The demands for higher wages, less work hours, more security and more say in their work spaces were derived from a feeling of being less than free, feeling less than independent because of a dependence of wages needed not only to survive but to pursue and develop happiness in this life. As such, the wage slave argument was the glue with which labor in America was held together. How one identified with work, how one reacted to their place in society, in their work-spaces created the language of wage slavery which in turn helped build momentum for the creation of the labor movement, helped shape the American working class and helped redefine what it meant to be free in America.

Classical Liberalism, with its emphasis on individual rights and civil liberties, provided the background for defining freedom which was carried over into the Industrial Revolution and influenced British and American capitalist values. One is perfectly free in a state of nature, but one's freedom is best protected and developed under the consent of the governed. Declared to the world, prompting both the American and French Revolutions, affirming that humans have inalienable rights such as life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness (and property, and a free market, and a lack of government coercion on individuals unless they harm another), the concept of freedom provided potent political and economic tools to usher in a society of the free.

After the American Revolution, there arose a question over what sort of person ought to govern; anyone from the middle class or only aristocratic “gentlemen?” As more middle class and skilled workers gained the franchise, the more labor had a voice and the

more political parties angled to gain labor's support, giving labor an effective political method of demanding equal rights in the face of growing economic uncertainty.

The Industrial Revolution and mass immigration to America helped shape and define labor relations, especially after the U.S Civil War. The Industrial Revolution intensified the search for cheap labor, employing children, women, and immigrants while at the same time eliminating the need for skilled labor due to reliance on machines and technology which undercut artisans and mechanics and increased the growth of the wage-earning class. The fear of skilled labor becoming unskilled workmen prompted the formation of rude unions during the early 1800s under the name of journeymen associations and then full-fledged national trade and industrial unions after the Civil War. These unions were formed not only to protect their labor but also their political and social rights as American "free labor," championed by Republican ideology and by workers themselves.

Labor, since the Industrial Revolution, has struggled to define what it means to be free in a wage-based system under laissez faire capitalism. Labor's understanding of freedom roughly paralleled liberal thought concerning *rights* and is best exemplified by labor union goals such as higher wages, fewer hours of work, better and safer working conditions, and more control and respect in the workplace, resulting in more security, more choices and less coercion by others. Higher wages (or the overthrow of wages) meant survival (or control over one's life). Working fewer hours meant more individual choices, barring employer coercion. More control meant achieving a feeling of regaining what was lost when one's production was no longer one's own. Classical Liberalism seemingly resulted in a "freedom for the few" which was defended by those in the best



position to participate in the economy. Freedom, to labor, was a freedom Classical Liberalism and Republican ideology *assumed* and what Social Liberalism and New Deal legislation with dedication to a “freedom for the many” *acknowledged*. In every instance, independence was at the core of labor’s discontent. How freedom was defined influenced the relations of American wage workers with capital.

Labor, feeling that they had lost the ability to control their own life and production, bent to the will of an employer under a wage about which they had little say, argued that they felt like slaves to capitalist masters. Guilds were undercut, as were skilled craft members. Access to land was cut off due to enclosure and by the growing industrial cities which would, by the 1930’s in America, shelter more people than homes and farms in rural areas. The wage slave argument began in Britain in the middle of the eighteenth-century to describe the unpleasant conditions of the wage workers in England. The wage slave argument developed as a critique of the hypocrisy of those who wished to see slavery abolished while ignoring the writhing misery of the working poor; worse off “slaves” than those on plantations. These sentiments were read about by American slave owners and abolitionists and began to be used against one another from roughly the 1830s until the U.S. Civil War. However, during the 1830s in both Britain and America, labor began considering their conditions as bad as or even worse than those of slaves. Questioning how free labor was during this period helped start a trend of journeymen associations and local trade unions which sowed the seeds for later national unions, showing that the wage slave argument informed, and in fact, prompted the American labor movement. Labor continued to use the wage slave argument (or simply refer to themselves as slaves) long after the U.S. Civil War as a way to describe their employee-

employer relationship, dependence on a wage, and absence of control over their personal production, workplace, or hours and wages, generating an impression of exploitation and abuse (repressing one's rightful and inalienable freedom to *meaningful* self-ownership) even while real wages were rising.

The worker's space was mainly formed for him and her. The wage slave argument expresses both how space was changed, mostly constructed by capitalism, and how place was being forged and constructed by the workers as a response to their constructed work spaces. Within this space, freedom and its opposite, slavery, competed. As a result, the wage slave argument developed to criticize the lack of freedom workers felt, enveloped in the rapidly changing industrial spaces fueled by capital and controlled by capitalists. Time, in the form of work hours, limited individual choices, as did the nature of compulsory work; the worker is forced to find work with one or another capitalist or seek other means of survival in a nearly exclusive economy of wages. Samuel Gompers promoted the consumer ideology which made it necessary to limit work hours but provide consumer goods at reasonable prices. This argument, which promoted high wages and low cost of goods, was put into practice under FDR and the NRA during the Great Depression.

During the decline of the KOL and the rise of the AFL, arguments over productionist and consumerist ideology altered what it meant to be a "wage slave." According to the AFL, high wages and craft protection meant an escape from slavery by becoming a consumer worker actively benefiting from worker production, while low wages meant feeling like a wage slave without ready access to what the worker helped produce. KOL influence, with its goal of overthrowing the wage system in favor of

cooperatives (reclaiming one's own production/independence), diminished as the union declined. Abolition of the wage system (and capitalism in general) was taken up by the IWW in the early 1900s but, hated and hunted by both capitalist and government alike, members were commonly arrested and the IWW was all but destroyed in the early twentieth-century. However, the IWW was responsible for securing an eight-hour work day for lumber workers in 1918, a common union-wide goal of the 1800s. The IWW's rhetoric remained a powerful reminder of the wage slave argument even after the rise of the AFL and a more conservative approach to union bargaining was implemented. For the IWW, freedom meant the absence of capitalism, for only then would labor fully own themselves. Each of these unions made use of the wage slave argument, continuing the trend of promoting the working class movement via tactics to overcome “wage slavery” and showing that the argument was broadly shared across the spectrum of labor.

In the late-nineteenth century, (during the Second Industrial Revolution) when the concentration of production was firmly in the hands of the few, artisan workers felt even more disenfranchised and obligated to work for factory owners and other manufacturers (less than ten percent still controlled their own production by the end of 1800). Lessons experienced during the world-wide Long Depression (1873-1879), coupled with the poverty and misery of the working class, prompted the emergence of Social Liberalism which held that a managed economy and governmental intervention on behalf of citizens would best guarantee individual freedom. Motivated by discontent labor (particularly in America) and two world-wide recessions, Social Liberals and Progressive presidents like Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, and Franklin Delano Roosevelt set out to reaffirm individual freedom through government intervention in the economy. This

reaffirmation was undertaken so all people could develop their own individuality and make use of this life as best they saw fit under the tenets of the pursuit of happiness. This trend was reinforced by a shifting view on work from one where leisure was considered wasteful and a life of efficiency and hard work was favored to one where leisure was a protected right under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, vindicating those who do not identify with work who defend leisure for the benefit of appreciating nature and life and developing one's own creativity. The United States government passed Progressive and New Deal legislation in part because of the same reasons wage workers made use of the wage slave argument and confirming that wage labor as a class now fully existed, was recognized, and needed protections to secure its rights.

The rise of the Western Federation of Miners in Idaho during the 1890s provides a rich narrative for conducting a social experiment within an educational setting using GIS and forums. This simulation allows participants to become part of the argument, pose solutions, and interact with divergent ideas and attitudes relative to the concept of freedom in a wage-based economy. As the wage slave argument is a social argument, it only seems fitting to allow participants a chance to reenact a clash of ideologies with subsequent participant directed reactions. The use of GIS as a simulation platform doubles as a way to access simulation data, participant actions, arguments and decisions, and report on these sources of data to both the public and academia while giving participants invaluable experience using and working with GIS.

Without a history of wage slavery, labor history is incomplete. The wage slave argument is central to understanding what it means to be free in a post-industrial, capital dominated space. The worker's place in this space is carved out through the need to unify

as a class in order to equally bargain for and benefit from entering into a contract with an employer rather than to engage as a necessary, compulsory need to exchange time and labor to secure wages for survival. Work is the fulcrum from which the individual rises toward freedom or falls toward slavery, based on how the individual relates to the concept of work. An individual, then, is only as free as he or she feels about the concept of work, about how he or she identifies with or does not identify with work. The wage slave argument describes this teeter-totter like system, with all its ups and downs (overwork and underwork), based on the economy, labor relations, and the rock labor felt capital unfairly placed on the side of “slavery,” unbalancing the system from the outset. To rebalance the system, labor attempted to unify and provide a solidified front to better bargain with employers, continually putting the concept of freedom and equality to the test. The attempts to unify to gain needs produced a struggle, class-wide or based on an individual’s trade or on one’s identification with work, which highlighted the way individuals wrestled with the wage slave argument and the concept of freedom from the Industrial Revolution to the Great Depression and after. As human production, or lack thereof, is a prerequisite for creating history, understanding the wage slave argument is a prerequisite for not only understanding how labor organizers used the argument to strengthen their rhetoric against employers, but also for understanding how workers identify with work-spaces and how free their place is, or is not, in the modern world.

Labor in America reflects a history of how the wage slave argument was viewed and used. The wage slave argument chronicles the rise of wage labor and the loss of land either directly or through reliance on the market to make a profit, creating social tensions between employers and employees based on their own views of freedom, equality and

independence. The wage slave argument also chronicles the constructed work spaces for wage workers and their struggles to organize as a working class while attempting to find their individual and collective place in the now forever industrially changed work space. The wage slave argument was used implicitly by the U.S. government which decided to intervene on behalf of the working class, establishing a minimum wage, a maximum work week, social security, and the right to collectively bargain and unionize. This intervention of the government greatly enlarged the role of government, but it also helped workers establish their place, a place approaching being equals with capitalists, not as “slaves” but now as federally protected citizens, to an extent, protected *from* exclusionary capitalism by feeling more a part *of* the economy. The argument also includes a critique on work itself, as a way to identify with wage work and the modern world. Some identified as producers, still others as consumers, and yet some found their identity in the diminution of work. If nowhere else, the vindication of the voices of “wage slavery” can be found entombed in many of the rights listed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights spearheaded between 1946-1948 by FDR’s wife, Eleanor Roosevelt.

The wage slave argument, in the end, is central to all of the views, all of the struggles, and all the victories and failures the working class movement experienced in America. The argument is as much a part of American culture as the American Federation of Labor and the Industrial Workers of the World. The argument was with us from when these states became united and still remains in use today. The wage slave argument crucially expresses the feelings of labor on both an individual level and on a class level, making it an ideal argument to further study and from which to broadly describe the labor movement in America. In fact, the wage slave argument and the

evidence presented in this paper demand a further reexamination of the American labor movement with more attention to what was driving labor's demands. It is a thought-provoking argument persisting in an age which ought to still be actively engaged in defining freedom. Whether one agrees with these voices, with the argument of wage slavery in general, it is undeniable that those who voiced this argument were and still are primarily making an earnest, sincere, humane appeal for a more equal and freer society in which to live and to work.

## Bibliography

- Adams, Ian. *Political Ideology Today*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1993.
- AFL-CIO. "Samuel Gompers." Key People in Labor History. Accessed December 19, 2015. <http://www.aflcio.org/About/Our-History/Key-People-in-Labor-History/Samuel-Gompers-1850-1924>.
- American Federation of Labor. *Report of the Annual Sessions of the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions of the United States and Canada*. Bloomington, IL: Pantagraph Printing and Stationary Company, 1906.
- Bastiat, Frédéric. *Economic Harmonies*. Translated by W. Hayden Boyers. Edited by George B. de Huszar. New York: Foundation for Economic Education, 1996. Accessed September 13, 2014. <http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/79>.
- Bastiat, Frédéric. *Selected Essays on Political Economy*. Translated Seymour Cain. Edited by George B. de Huszar. New York: Foundation for Economic Education, 1995. Accessed September 10, 2014. <http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/956>.
- Bastiat, Frédéric. *The Collected Works of Frédéric Bastiat. Vol. 1: The Man and the Statesman: The Correspondence and Articles on Politics*. Translated by Jane and Michel Willems. Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 2011. Accessed September 12, 2014. <http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/2393>.
- Beaud, Michel. *A History of Capitalism: 1500-2000*. New York: Monthly Review Press, 2001.
- Bernard-Powers, Jane. "O'Reilly, Leonora." American National Biography Online (April 2014). Accessed September 17, 2014. <http://www.anb.org/articles/15/15-00842.html>.
- Bernstein, Irving. *Americans in Depression and War*. Washington: United States Department of Labor, n.d. Accessed January 1, 2016. <http://www.dol.gov/dol/aboutdol/history/chapter5.htm>.
- Brownson, Orestes Augustus. *The Laboring Classes: An Article from the Boston Quarterly Review*. Boston: B.H. Greene, 1840.
- Burke, Edmund. *Further Reflections on the Revolution in France*. Edited by Daniel E. Ritchie. Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1992. Accessed September 9, 2014. <http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/660>.
- Burke, Edmund. *Reflections on the Revolution in France*. New York: Liberal Arts Press, 1955.



- Carlson, Peter. *Roughneck: The Life and Times of Big Bill Haywood*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1983.
- Carsel, Wilfred. "Slaveholders' Indictment of Northern Wage Slavery." *The Journal of Southern History* 6, no. 4 (November 1940): 504-520. Accessed September 14, 2014. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2192167>.
- Chomsky, Noam. *Chomsky on Democracy and Education*. New York: Routledge-Falmer, 2003.
- Coolidge, Calvin. "Address at the College of William and Mary," Williamsburg, Va., May 15, 1926. The American Presidency Project. Accessed December 05, 2015. <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=397>.
- Cunliffe, Marcus. *Chattel Slavery and Wage Slavery: The Anglo-American Context, 1830-1860*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2008.
- Davis, Joseph H. "An Annual Index of U. S. Industrial Production, 1790-1915." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 119, no. 4 (November 2004): 1177-1215. Accessed February 1, 2016. <http://www.nber.org/data/industrial-production-index/>.
- Douglass, Frederick. *Frederick Douglass: Selected Speeches and Writings*. Edited by Philip Sheldon Foner and Yuval Taylor. Chicago: Lawrence Hill, 1999.
- Douglass, Frederick. "Self-made Men." Carlisle, PA, 1872. Reprinted by Monadnock Valley Press. Accessed September 15, 2014. <http://www.monadnock.net/douglass/self-made-men.html>.
- Dubofsky, Melvyn. *Hard Work*. Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2000.
- Dulles, Foster Rhea. *Labor in America: A History*. Northbrook, IL: AHM Publishing Corporation, 1966.
- Engels, Friedrich. *The Conditions of the Working-Class in England*. Moscow: Institute of Marxism-Leninism, 1969. Accessed March 19, 2014. <http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1845/condition-working-class/index.htm>.
- ESRI. ArcGIS Resources. Accessed January 10, 2016, <http://resources.arcgis.com/en/help/>
- Ettor, Joseph. "Industrial Unionism: The Road to Freedom." Cleveland: IWW Publishing Bureau, 1913. Accessed September 17, 2014. <http://www.workerseducation.org/crutch/pamphlets/ettor.html>.

- Faulkner, Harold Underwood. *The Economic History of the United States vol 7: The Decline of Laissez Faire, 1897-1917*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1951.
- Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions of the United States and Canada. "Preamble," 1881. Accessed December 19, 2015. <https://archive.org/stream/ReportOfTheAnnualSessionsOfTheFederationOfOrganizedTradesAndLabor/FOTLU#page/n4/mode/1up>.
- Fitzhugh, George. *Cannibals All! Or, Slaves Without Masters*. Richmond: A Morris, 1857. Accessed 1/08/16. [http://www.gutenberg.org/files/35481/35481-h/35481-h.htm#CHAPTER\\_XII](http://www.gutenberg.org/files/35481/35481-h/35481-h.htm#CHAPTER_XII).
- Foner, Eric. *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party before the Civil War*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1995.
- Foner, Eric. "Meaning of Freedom in the Age of Emancipation." *The Journal of American History* 81, no. 2 (September 1994): 435-460. Accessed September 13, 2014. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2081167>.
- France. "Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen." Accessed September 11, 2014. [http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th\\_century/rightsof.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/rightsof.asp).
- Franklin, Benjamin, and William Temple Franklin. *Memoirs of the Life and Writings of Benjamin Franklin, Volume IV*. London: H Colburn, 1818.
- Gourevitch, Alex. "Wage-Slavery and Republican Liberty." *Jacobin*, February 28, 2013. Accessed February 12, 2016. <https://www.jacobinmag.com/2013/02/wage-slavery-and-republican-liberty/>.
- Groat, George Gorham. *An Introduction to the Study of Organized Labor in America*. New York: Macmillan, 1916.
- Hallgrimdsottir, Helga and Cecilia Benoit. "From Wage Slaves to Wage Workers: Cultural Opportunity Structures and the Evolution of the Wage Demands of the Knights of Labor and the American Federation of Labor 1880-1900." *Social Forces* 85, no. 3 (March 2007): 1393-1411. Accessed February 11, 2014. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/4494978>.
- Hammond, James Henry. "The 'Mudsill' Theory." Reprinted in *Africans in America*. PBS Online. Accessed September 12, 2014. <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/aia/part4/4h3439t.html>.
- Harper, William. "Memoir on Slavery." Charleston: J.S. Burges, 1837. Archive.org. Accessed September 12, 2014. <https://archive.org/details/memoirofslaveryr02harp>.

- Hayes, Rutherford B. *The Diary and Letters of Rutherford B. Hayes, Nineteenth President of the United States*, edited by Charles Richard Williams. Columbus: Ohio State Archeological and Historical Society, 1922.
- Hofstadter, Richard. *The Age of Reform*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1955.
- Hofstadter, Richard. *The Progressive Movement: 1900-1915*. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1963.
- Holbrook, Stewart H. *The Rocky Mountain Revolution*. New York: Holt, 1956.
- Humboldt, Wilhelm von. *The Sphere and Duties of Government*. Translated by Joseph Coulthard. London: John Chapman, 1854. Accessed September 12, 2014. <http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/589>.
- Hyneman, Charles S. *American Political Writing During the Founding Era: 1760-1805*. Volume 1. Edited by Charles S. Hyneman and Donald Lutz. Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1983. Accessed September 12, 2014. <http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/2066>.
- Industrial Workers of the World. "An Economic Interpretation of the Job." Chicago: Industrial Workers of the World, 1922.
- Industrial Workers of the World. "Industrial Union Manifesto." Chicago: Industrial Workers of the World, 1905. Accessed September 22, 2014. [http://www.iww.org/history/library/iww/industrial\\_union\\_manifesto](http://www.iww.org/history/library/iww/industrial_union_manifesto).
- Industrial Workers of the World. "Proceedings of the Founding Convention of the Industrial Workers of the World." Chicago: Industrial Workers of the World, 1905. Accessed November 23, 2015. <http://www.iww.org/history/founding/part1>.
- Industrial Workers of the World. "The I.W.W. - What it is and What it is Not." Chicago: Industrial Workers of the World, 1928. Accessed September 17, 2014. <http://www.iww.org/history/library/iww/isandisnt/3>.
- Jameson, Elizabeth. *All That Glitters: Class, Conflict, and Community in Cripple Creek*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998.
- Kennedy, David M. *Freedom from Fear: The American People in Depression and War, 1929-1945*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.
- King, Bolton. *The Life of Mazzini*. New York: E.P Dutton, 1911.
- Knights of Labor. *Journal* 4, no.4 (August 1883): 537-804. Accessed November 3, 2015. <http://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/000548606>.

- Knights of Labor. "Preamble and Declaration of the Principles of the Knights of Labor of America." Accessed March 5, 2016. <http://www.chicagohistory.org/hadc/visuals/V0010.htm>
- Kropotkin, Peter. *The Conquest of Bread*. New York: Vanguard Press, 1926. Accessed March 27, 2016. <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/23428/23428-h/23428-h.htm>.
- Lefargue, Paul. *The Right to be Lazy: And Other Studies*. Translated by Charles H. Kerr. Chicago: John F. Higgins, 1900.
- Levine, Peter. *The New Progressive Era: Toward a Fair and Deliberative Democracy*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2000.
- Levine, Susan. "Labor's True Woman: Domesticity and Equal Rights in the Knights of Labor," *The Journal of American History* 70, no. 2 (September 1983): 323-339. Accessed September 16, 2014. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1900207>.
- Licht, Walter. *Industrializing America: The Nineteenth Century*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995.
- Linguet, Henri. *Annales politiques, civiles, et littéraires du dix-huitième siècle Volume VII*. Londres, 1779.
- Locke, John, *Two Treatises of Government*, edited by Thomas Hollis. London: A. Millar et al., 1764. Accessed September 12, 2014. <http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/222>.
- London, Charmian. *The Book of Jack London, Volume 2*. New York: Century Co., 1921.
- Lukas, Anthony J. *Big Trouble: A Murder in a Small Western Town Sets off a Struggle for the Soul of America*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1997.
- Madron, Justin. "Re-creating Part of Richmond's Past." *ESRI ArcUser* (Winter 2016): 36-37.
- Marx, Karl. "Linguet." In *Theories of Surplus Value*. Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1968.
- Marx, Karl. "Wage Labour and Capital." Marxist Internet Archive. Accessed September 22, 2014. <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1847/wage-labour/index.htm>.
- Mason, George. "Virginia Declaration of Rights." Accessed September 11, 2014. [http://www.gunstonhall.org/georgemason/human\\_rights/vdr\\_final.html](http://www.gunstonhall.org/georgemason/human_rights/vdr_final.html).
- Mill, John Stuart. "On Liberty and The Subjection of Women." New York: Henry Holt and Co. 1879. Accessed September 10, 2014. <http://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/347>.

- Mill, John Stuart. *Principles of Political Economy*. New York: D. Appleton and Company. 1885. Accessed April 20, 2016.  
<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/30107/30107-pdf.pdf>
- National Bureau of Economic Research. "U.S. Index of Composite Wages 1820-1909." Accessed December 13, 2015.  
<http://www.nber.org/databases/macrohistory/data/08/a08061a.db>.
- National Bureau of Economic Research. "Index of the General Price Level 1860-1939." Accessed December 15, 2015.  
<http://www.nber.org/databases/macrohistory/data/04/m04051.db>.
- National Bureau of Economic Research. "U.S. Average Hours of Work Per Week Per Wage Earner, All Male, Twenty-Five Manufacturing Industries." Accessed December 15, 2015.  
<http://www.nber.org/databases/macrohistory/rectdata/08/m08030.dat>.
- National Bureau of Economic Research. U.S. "Average Actual Hours of Work Per Week Per Wage Earner, Female, Twenty-Five Manufacturing Industries." Accessed December 15, 2015.  
<http://www.nber.org/databases/macrohistory/rectdata/08/m08033.dat>.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich, Bernard Williams, Josefina Nauckhoff. *The Gay Science*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- Oastler, Richard. "Letter to the Leeds Mercury," 1830. Accessed on November 05, 2015.  
[http://www.makingthemodernworld.org.uk/learning\\_modules/history/01.TU.01/?style=expander\\_popup&filename=expandables/01.EX.18.xml](http://www.makingthemodernworld.org.uk/learning_modules/history/01.TU.01/?style=expander_popup&filename=expandables/01.EX.18.xml).
- Paine, Thomas. "Agrarian Justice." London: T.G. Ballard, 1798. Accessed September 12, 2014. <http://www.ssa.gov/history/paine4.html>.
- Peters, Gerhard, and John T. Woolley. The American Presidency Project. Santa Barbara: University of California, 1999-2016. Accessed December 05, 2015.  
<http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/>.
- Price, Richard. *British Society: 1680-1880*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- Rayback, Joseph G. *A History of American Labor*. New York: Macmillan, 1959.
- Ricardo, David. "The Iron Law of Wages." Internet Modern History Sourcebook. Last modified August, 1997. Accessed March 8, 2014.  
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/ricardo-wages.asp>.

- Robinson, Harriet. *Loom and Spindle; or, Life among the Early Mill Girls*. Boston: TY Cromwell & Company, 1898. Accessed September 11, 2014.  
<http://courses.wcupa.edu/johnson/robinson.html>.
- Rousseau, Jean Jacques. *A Discourse on Political Economy*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- Rousseau, Jean Jacques. *A Discourse Upon The Origin and The Foundation of The Inequality among Mankind*. Internet Modern History Sourcebook. Last modified August, 1998. Accessed March 16, 2014.  
<http://www.fordham.edu/Halsall/mod/1782rousseau-inequal.asp>.
- Russell, Bertrand. *In Praise of Idleness: And Other Essays*. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1960.
- Russell, Bertrand. *Proposed Roads to Freedom*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1919.
- Schonhardt-Bailey, Cheryl. *From the Corn Laws to Free Trade: Interests, Ideas, and Institutions in Historical Perspective*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006.
- Schwantes, Carlos A. *In Mountain Shadows: A History of Idaho*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1991.
- Taft, Philip and Philip Ross. "American Labor Violence: Its Causes, Character, and Outcome." In *The History of Violence in America: A Report to the National Commission on the Causes and Prevention of Violence*, ed. Hugh Davis Graham and Ted Robert Gurr. New York: Bantam Books, 1970. Accessed January 1, 2016. <http://www.ditext.com/taft/violence.html>.
- The Norton Anthology of English Literature. "Parliamentary Testimony: Evidence Given Before the Sadler Committee." Accessed March 8, 2014.  
[http://www.wnorton.com/college/english/nael/victorian/topic\\_1/parl.htm](http://www.wnorton.com/college/english/nael/victorian/topic_1/parl.htm).
- The Roosevelts: An Intimate History*. Directed by Ken Burns. PBS, 2014.
- The Samuel Gompers Papers. College Park: University of Maryland. Accessed November 20, 2015. <http://www.gompers.umd.edu>.
- The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2011. Edited by Edward N. Zalta. Accessed September 24, 2014.  
<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2011/contents.html>
- The Victorian Web. "Evidence Given Before the Sadler Committee." Last modified July 22, 2002. Accessed March 8, 2014.  
<http://www.victorianweb.org/history/workers1.html>.

- The Voice of Industry*. The Marxist Internet Archive. Last updated October 14, 2014. Accessed February 10, 2016. <https://www.marxists.org/history/usa/pubs/voice-of-industry/index.htm>.
- Thompson, Fred, and P. Murfin. *The IWW: Its First Seventy Years (1905-1975)*. Chicago: IWW, 1976.
- Thoreau, Henry David. *Walden, and On the Duty of Civil Disobedience*. Project Gutenberg, 1995. Accessed September 11, 2014. <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/205/205-h/205-h.htm>.
- Tomlins, Christopher L. *Law, Labor, and Ideology in the Early American Republic*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.
- Troy, Leo. "Trade Union Membership: 1897-1962." National Bureau of Economic Research, 1965.
- Turner, Mary. *From Chattel Slaves to Wage Slaves: The Dynamics of Labour Bargaining in the Americas*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995.
- UN General Assembly. "Universal Declaration of Human Rights," December 10, 1948, 217 A (III). Accessed September 22, 2014. <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/>.
- United States. "Volume I-Testimony." In *Report of the Committee of the Senate Upon the Relations Between Labor and Capital, And Testimony Taken by the Committee*. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1885. <https://archive.org/stream/reportcommittee00capigoog#page/n5/mode/2up>.
- United States. "National Labor Relations Act." Washington: Seventy-Fourth Congress, 1958. Accessed January 1, 2016. [http://www.ourdocuments.gov/document\\_data/pdf/doc\\_067.pdf](http://www.ourdocuments.gov/document_data/pdf/doc_067.pdf).
- Vapnek, Lara. *Breadwinners: Working Women and Economic Independence. 1865-1920*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009.
- Ware, Norman. *The Industrial Worker: 1840-1860: The Reaction of American Industrial Society to the Advance of the Industrial Revolution*. Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith, 1959.
- Western Federation of Miners. "Official Proceedings of the Tenth Annual Convention of the Western Federation of Miners of America." Denver CO, Colorado Chronicle, 1902.

Wing, Charles. *Evils of the Factory System, Demonstrated by Parliamentary Evidence*. New York: A.M. Kelley, 1967.

Wood, Gordon S. *Empire of Liberty: A History of the Early Republic, 1789-1815*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.



## Appendix

Indentions in the following scripts are intentional.

Script 1:

```
# Description: Creates a geodatabase, 8x8 rectangular cells and populates each cell with
resources, a price, hours of work, and pay
```

```
import arcpy, getpass, random
```

```
userName = getpass.getuser()
```

```
out_folder_path = "C:\Users\\" + userName + "\Desktop\Gis Social Simulations"
```

```
gdbName = r"MiningConflict.gdb"
```

```
arcpy.CreateFileGDB_management(out_folder_path, gdbName)
```

```
arcpy.env.workspace = out_folder_path + "\\" + gdbName
```

```
# Create a fishnet with 8 columns and 8 rows
```

```
arcpy.CreateFishnet_management("parcels", "1 1", "1 8", "2", "2", "8", "8", "#",
"NO_LABELS", "#", "POLYGON")
```

```
# Create Fields for fishnet shapefile
```

```
arcpy.AddField_management("parcels", "Parcel_ID", "LONG")
```

```
arcpy.AddField_management("parcels", "Par_Owner", "TEXT", "", "" "50")
```

```
arcpy.AddField_management("parcels", "Par_Price", "FLOAT")
```

```
arcpy.AddField_management("parcels", "Resources", "LONG")
```

```
#Incorporate in Institutions once finalized
```

```
arcpy.AddField_management("parcels", "Work_Day", "LONG")
```

```
arcpy.AddField_management("parcels", "Pay", "FLOAT")
```

```
#arcpy.AddField_management("parcels", "Par_Inf", "FLOAT")
```

```
#arcpy.DeleteField_management("parcels", "Id")
```

```
#Populate Fields AND Set random # of resources for each Cell
```

```
rows = arcpy.UpdateCursor("parcels")
```

```
i = 1
```

```
for row in rows:
```

```
ranResource = random.randint(1, 100)
parPrice = float(ranResource)
parPrice = parPrice/10
row.setValue("Resources", ranResource)
row.setValue("Par_Price", parPrice)
row.setValue("Par_Owner", "Simulation")
row.setValue("Parcel_ID", i)
#See incorporation note on line 20
row.setValue("Work_Day", "10")
row.setValue("Pay", ".25")
rows.updateRow(row)
i += 1
del row, rows, i
```

Script 2:

# Description: Creates a point feature class, with participant ID, participant password, participant name, participant influence (random), and participant time (16)

```
import arcpy, random, getpass
userName = getpass.getuser()
out_folder_path = "C:\\Users\\" + userName + "\\Desktop\\Gis Social Simulations"
gdbName = r"MiningConflict.gdb"

arcpy.CreateFeatureclass_management(out_folder_path + "\\" + dbName, "participants",
"POINT")

arcpy.AddField_management("participants", "Part_ID", "LONG")
arcpy.AddField_management("participants", "Part_PW", "LONG")
arcpy.AddField_management("participants", "Part_Name", "Text", "", "" "50")
arcpy.AddField_management("participants", "Part_Inf", "FLOAT")
arcpy.AddField_management("participants", "Part_Time", "LONG") # 24hrs - 8 for sleep
= 16

initialInfluence = []
for x in range(0, 90):
    initialInfluence.append(round(random.uniform(1, 6), 1))
for x in range(0, 10):
    initialInfluence.extend([round(random.uniform(6, 10), 1)])

fields = ["Part_ID", "Part_PW", "Part_Name", "Part_Inf", "Part_Time"]

n = 100000
cursor = arcpy.da.InsertCursor("participants", fields)
for x in range(1, 6): #1, num of participants + 1
    cursor.insertRow((x, n, "Part" + str(x), random.choice(initialInfluence), "16"))
    n += 1
del cursor
```

#To create features from these records use editor, select row, advanced editing, replace geometry tool.

# As an alternative allow the participants to create their own points and location of points, #enter in their student id (unique) for password, their names, and then let the script enter their Part\_ID and Part\_Inf.

Script 3:

# Description: Creates a table where participant and parcel information relationships are stored, as well as if a member is on strike

```
import arcpy, random, getpass

userName = getpass.getuser()

out_folder_path = "C:\\Users\\" + userName + "\\Desktop\\Gis Social Simulations"

gdbName = r"MiningConflict.gdb"

arcpy.CreateTable_management(out_folder_path + "\\" + gdbName, "membership")

arcpy.AddField_management("membership", "Parcel_ID", "LONG")
#arcpy.AddField_management("membership", "Inst_ID", "LONG")
arcpy.AddField_management("membership", "Part_ID", "LONG")
arcpy.AddField_management("membership", "Part_Name", "TEXT", "", "", "50")
arcpy.AddField_management("membership", "Part_Inf", "FLOAT")
arcpy.AddField_management("membership", "Part_Time", "LONG")
arcpy.AddField_management("membership", "Strike", "TEXT", "", "", "1")

#If points instead of a table is needed:
arcpy.CreateFeatureclass_management(out_folder_path + "\\" + gdbName,
"membership", "POINT")
```

Script 4:

# Description: Allows a participant to purchase a parcel given the participant has enough Influence

```
import arcpy, pythonaddins, getpass

userName = getpass.getuser()

workspace = "C:\\Users\\" + userName + "\\Desktop\\Gis Social
Simulations\\MiningConflict.gdb"

participantPW = 100000 #arcpy.GetParameterAsText(0)

fields = "Part_Name", "Part_Inf", "Part_ID"

pWQuery = "Part_PW" + " = " + str(participantPW)
#http://help.arcgis.com/en/arcgisdesktop/10.0/help/index.html#//000v00000004n0000000

cursor = arcpy.da.SearchCursor("participants", fields, pWQuery) # Find the following
fields where Participant PW = Parameter

for row in cursor:

    participantName = row[0]
    participantInf = row[1]
    participantID = row[2]

del cursor, row, fields

#SELECT THE PARCEL BEFORE RUNNING THIS PART

fields = "Parcel_ID", "Par_Owner", "Par_Price"

cursor = arcpy.da.SearchCursor("parcels", fields)

for row in cursor:

    parcelID = row[0]
    parcelOwner = row[1]
    parcelPrice = row[2]

del cursor, row, fields

if parcelPrice > participantInf:
```

```

pythonaddins.MessageBox("You do not have enough Influence", "Warning", 0)
else:
    if parcelOwner == "Simulation":
        edit = arcpy.da.Editor(workspace)
        edit.startEditing()
        edit.startOperation()
        parIDQuery = "Parcel_ID" + " = " + str(parcelID)
        rows = arcpy.da.UpdateCursor("participants", "Part_Inf", pWQuery)
        for row in rows:
            row[0] = participantInf - parcelPrice
            rows.updateRow(row)
        del rows, row
        rows = arcpy.da.UpdateCursor("parcels", ("Par_Owner", "Par_Price"),
parIDQuery)
        for row in rows:
            row[0] = participantName
            row[1] = None
            rows.updateRow(row)
        del row, rows
        # cursor = arcpy.da.InsertCursor("membership", ("Parcel_ID", "Part_ID"))
        # for row in [(parcelID, participantID)]:
            # cursor.insertRow(row)
        # del cursor, row
        edit.stopOperation()
        edit.stopEditing(True)
    else:
        pythonaddins.MessageBox("Already Purchased", "Warning", 0)

```

Script 5:

# Description: Allows a participant to become a member of a parcel

```
import arcpy, pythonaddins, getpass
```

```
userName = getpass.getuser()
```

```
workspace = "C:\\Users\\" + userName + "\\Desktop\\Gis Social  
Simulations\\MiningConflict.gdb"
```

#Get participant information

```
participantPW = 100001 #arcpy.GetParameterAsText(0)
```

```
fields = "Part_ID", "Part_Name", "Part_Inf", "Part_Time"
```

```
pWQuery = "Part_PW" + " = " + str(participantPW)
```

```
#http://help.arcgis.com/en/arcgisdesktop/10.0/help/index.html#//000v00000004n0000000
```

```
cursor = arcpy.da.SearchCursor("participants", fields, pWQuery) # Find the following  
fields where Participant PW = Parameter
```

```
for row in cursor:
```

```
    participantID = row[0]
```

```
    participantName = row[1]
```

```
    participantInf = row[2]
```

```
    participantTime = row[3]
```

```
del cursor, row, fields
```

#SELECT THE PARCEL BEFORE RUNNING REST OF SCRIPT. Get parcel  
information

```
fields = "Parcel_ID"
```

```
cursor = arcpy.da.SearchCursor("parcels", fields)
```

```
for row in cursor:
```

```
    parcelID = row[0]
```

```
del cursor, row, fields
```



```

#Search membership table to see if already a member
membershipID = "Null"#if there are no records then set id to Null
parIDQuery = "Parcel_ID" + " = " + str(parcelID)
fields = "Part_ID"
cursor = arcpy.da.SearchCursor("membership", fields, parIDQuery)
for row in cursor:
    membershipID = row[0]
del cursor, fields

if participantID == membershipID:
    pythonaddins.MessageBox("You are already a member", "Warning", 0)
else:
    edit = arcpy.da.Editor(workspace)
    edit.startEditing()
    edit.startOperation()
    fields = "Parcel_ID", "Part_ID", "Part_Name", "Part_Inf", "Part_Time", "Strike"
    cursor = arcpy.da.InsertCursor("membership", fields)
    for row in [(parcelID, participantID, participantName, participantInf,
participantTime, "N")]:
        cursor.insertRow(row)
    del cursor, row, fields
    edit.stopOperation()
    edit.stopEditing(True)

# TO LEAVE INSTITUTION
# participantPW = 100001 #arcpy.GetParameterAsText(0)
# fields = "Part_ID"
# pWQuery = "Part_PW" + " = " + str(participantPW)
#http://help.arcgis.com/en/arcgisdesktop/10.0/help/index.html#//000v00000004n0000000
# with arcpy.da.SearchCursor("participants", fields, pWQuery) as cursor: # Find the
following fields where Participant PW = Parameter

```

```

    # for row in cursor:
        # participantID = row[0]

# SELECT THE PARCEL BEFORE RUNNING REST OF SCRIPT. Get parcel
information
# fields = "Parcel_ID"
# with arcpy.da.SearchCursor("parcels", fields) as cursor:
    # for row in cursor:
        # parcelID = row[0]

# fields = "Parcel_ID", "Part_ID"
# with arcpy.da.UpdateCursor("membership", fields) as cursor:
    # for row in cursor:
        # if row[0] == parcelID and row[1] == participantID:
            # cursor.deleteRow()

```

Script 6:

#Description: Extracts resources from a parcel based on the number of workers, owner pays workers and gains capital, resources subtracted from parcel

```
# Get parcel/inst owner PW #arcpy.GetParameterAsText(0)
import arcpy, pythonaddins, getpass
userName = getpass.getuser()
workspace = "C:\Users\\" + userName + "\Desktop\Gis Social
Simulations\MiningConflict.gdb"

#Get Parcel Owner information
ownerPW = 100000 #arcpy.GetParameterAsText(0)
fields = "Part_ID", "Part_Inf"
pWQuery = "Part_PW" + " = " + str(ownerPW)
#http://help.arcgis.com/en/arcgisdesktop/10.0/help/index.html#//000v00000004n0000000
with arcpy.da.SearchCursor("participants", fields, pWQuery) as cursor:
    for row in cursor:
        ownerID = row[0]
        ownerInf = row[1]

#SELECT THE PARCEL BEFORE RUNNING REST OF SCRIPT. Get parcel
information
fields = "Parcel_ID", "Par_Owner", "Work_Day", "Resources", "Pay"
with arcpy.da.SearchCursor("parcels", fields) as cursor:
    for row in cursor:
        parcelID = row[0]
        parcelOwner = row[1] #Name of owner
        parcelWorkDay = row[2] #Hours per shift
        parcelResources = row[3] #Resources left
        ownerPays = row[4]#Pay
    if parcelResources <= 0:
        pythonaddins.MessageBox("Resources Exhausted", "Warning", 0)
    else:
#Get number of members information
```

```

fields = "Part_ID"
memberQuery = "NOT Strike = 'Y' AND Part_Time >= " + str(parcelWorkDay)
members = []
with arcpy.da.SearchCursor("membership", fields, memberQuery) as cursor:
    for row in cursor:
        members.append(row[0])
numberOfMembers = len(members)
if len(members) <= 0:
    pythonaddins.MessageBox("No Members Available To Work",
"Warning", 0)
else:
    extraction = (parcelWorkDay * numberOfMembers) / 10
    netGain = extraction - (numberOfMembers * ownerPays)
    edit = arcpy.da.Editor(workspace)
    edit.startEditing()
    edit.startOperation()
#Reduce parcel resources
    with arcpy.da.UpdateCursor("parcels", "Resources") as cursor:
        for row in cursor:
            row[0] -= extraction
            cursor.updateRow(row)
#Get Participants Information/Pay Members
    fields = "Part_Inf", "Part_Time"
    i = 0
    for member in members:
        memberID = members[i]
        memberQuery = "Part_ID" + " = " + str(memberID)
        with arcpy.da.UpdateCursor("participants", fields, memberQuery)
as cursor:
            for row in cursor:
                row[0] += ownerPays # payroll
                row[1] -= parcelWorkDay #time spent
                cursor.updateRow(row)

```

```

        i += 1
    #Owner's Profit
    ownerQuery = "Part_ID" + " = " + str(ownerID)
    with arcpy.da.UpdateCursor("participants", "Part_Id", ownerQuery) as
cursor:
        for row in cursor:
            row[0] += netGain # owner inf increase
            cursor.updateRow(row)
edit.stopOperation()
edit.stopEditing(True)

```