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## "...When We Fight Back": Attempting Social Reconstructions of the Great Industrial Class War in the United States from 1870-1930

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“...When We Fight Back”:  
Attempting Social Reconstructions of the  
Great Industrial Class War  
in the United States from 1870-1930

by Daniel Park

Bard Master of Arts in Teaching  
Academic Research Project  
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## **Introduction**

### *The Hidden Text of Anarchist History*

Paul Buhle, in the 1983 essay “Anarchism and American Labor,” claimed that “syndicalist and anarchist themes have remained a hidden text.” Although there were a few serious historians at the time plumbing the records to shed light on this aspect of labor history—Paul Avrich perhaps being the most well-known among some circles—the claim held a great deal of legitimacy, and to a certain extent still holds true today. There seem to be a number of reasons for this strange exclusion. One is that much of the most lively labor and Marxist historical work occurred during the Cold War, as scholars from both sides of the conflict attempted to defend, criticize, revise, or reinterpret the events leading up to the decades-long period of global polarization. And yet, the very fact that most scholars from both sides viewed Marxist frameworks of history in terms of this polarization left little conceptual room for the anarchist perspective. Paul Buhle called this situation in the early 1980s “...a political knot bound up in the Russian Revolution and the generations of Cold War that have followed.”<sup>1</sup> Although the Russian Revolution and the Cold War are beyond the scope of this project, it serves us well to be reminded that the influence of anarchism was by no means confined to the United States, but indeed, like their socialist cousins, a radically international and transnational phenomenon.

Thus, Buhle’s analysis of the burying of anarchist influence in the global working class movements of the industrial period should be all the more striking for the movement’s scope. Even since the end of the Cold War, however, there has been relatively little work done in the

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<sup>1</sup> Paul Buhle, “Anarchism and American Labor,” *International Labor and Working-Class History* 23 (1983): 21.

United States in trying to untie this knot. One reason might be that much of the anarchist literature of the late 1800s and early 1900s in the United States was written in languages other than English due to the ideology's prevalence in immigrant communities. According to the commonly accepted historiography, German radical immigrants held much of the symbolic authority on anarchist ideology until about the turn of the twentieth century, when Italian radical immigrants took up the mantle. This is a very simplified version of events—and one that excludes the many Scandinavian, Jewish, Slavic, and contributors of other ethnic origins to the movement—but even the traditional German-Italian progression might be a sufficient barrier to many scholars. Any attempt at a complete study of American anarchism in any given decade during the industrial period would require a multi-lingual approach: an intimidating endeavor. Indeed, the very fact that anarchism enjoyed much of its popularity in immigrant communities of several different national-origins—each with its own ideological quirks—complicates the topic even further.

And yet this fractionalization of American anarchism by ethnic lines is simply one manifestation of anarchism's defining characteristic: an active refusal of any centralized or hierarchical organization, philosophy, or method of action. While fascinating as a political idea, the lack of any centralized authority or narrative makes the historian's job especially difficult. Even if there existed a common language in which all major anarchist texts were published, each treatise or manifesto would differ from the last in terms of content and tone; the most they would all be guaranteed to have in common would be their refusal of centralization. Of course, anarchism as an ideology, partially due to its decentralized nature, developed many hyphenated variants (e.g. anarcho-syndicalism, anarcho-collectivism, anarcho-communism, etc.) over the

course of its heyday. Anarchism's ideological cousin, socialism, also underwent periods of ideological fractionalization (indeed, it was such a moment in which anarchism was born), but the situations are incomparable since as each socialist branch split from the last, each branch at least attempted to maintain its own orthodoxy. With anarchism, any attempt at establishing an orthodoxy would be contradictory to the whole ideology.

### *The Cult of Dynamite and Terrorism*

Partially for this reason, many historians who have attempted small-scale studies of anarchism, especially in the United States, have anchored their topics in the activities for which anarchists of the industrial age were most infamous: terrorism. The Haymarket Massacre, the assassination of President McKinley, the mail-bomb campaign of 1919, the Wall Street bomb in 1920, Johann Most, Alexander Berkman, Luigi Galleani—these are some of the most famous anarchists events and individuals in American history. Even the trial and conviction of Sacco and Vanzetti can only be fully understood with the backdrop of terrorist violence in the popular imaginary. This intimate association between anarchism and terrorist violence was contemporary to the industrial era, and remains so today in part due to these historical anchor points. The popularity of the “terrorist” angle—with all its complexities—can be seen in the works of such influential historians as Paul Avrich and William Preston, Jr., as well as somewhat less famous historians as Beverly Gage and Thai Jones. Of course, the association is not without its merits; as most self-identifying anarchists had completely lost faith in the established political process, and as they were driven to increasingly desperate circumstances, the cult of dynamite won more adherents.

It is possible that many labor historians have for the most part avoided anarchism precisely because of this association with violence and terrorism. Labor historians have usually approached the topic already sympathetic to labor's cause; violence and terrorism may be seen to tarnish an otherwise noble endeavor. What is often ignored or obfuscated, however, is the fact that in all the decades of anarchist activity, most self-identifying anarchists never did perpetrate terrorism or violence at all. This is true of the 1880s and 1890s, but especially by the turn of the century, a new generation began to question the efficacy of violent revolution and began to turn instead to cultural revolution: the camp of those like anarchist intellectual Emma Goldman. Although calls for violence would ebb and flow with the circumstances and regional troubles thereafter, anarchism became a more popularly intellectual endeavor in the early 20th century. And yet, besides the scholarship on Goldman and a handful of others, it is the violent episodes which have and continue to attract the most attention, obscuring the somewhat incongruous but nevertheless important philosophies which inspired the few bomb throwers and assassins.

*The History of the Great Industrial Class War*

Ironically, despite the U.S. anarchist narrative often anchored in terrorist events, the scholarship on anarchism and other related political-social radicals in the United States active in the rough time frame of the 1870s-1920s is astounding for its virtual consensus, if not on which side was morally right or wrong, then at least on which side our sympathies should primarily lie. Troy Rondinone, although by no means the first to affix such a name to the collective events of this period, referred to this era of civil unrest and class struggle as "The Great Industrial War." In my own discussion, I prefer to add the pivotal word "class" into Rondinone's nomenclature in

order to emphasize the heart of the struggle: the extreme disproportionality of power between the classes. The dramatic qualities of such a name as “The Great Industrial Class War” is not unfitting to the events in question. The period earns the status of horrific “greatness” both by the length of its duration and by the extent of its consequences on the rest of society. “Industrial” must be included to contextualize the struggle within this historic moment, when the belief in human potential seemed both infinitely vast and infinitesimally worthless. And to call it a “war” is in no way inaccurate.

Rondinone’s book draws connections both in the contemporary mainstream press as well as the language of the belligerents to methods of representation and total war themes coming from the legacy of the U.S. Civil War.<sup>2</sup> But beyond representation and specific language usage, it is obvious from contemporary accounts as well as in the histories of the Class War written later that not only was this period depicted as a war; it was enacted and perpetrated like a war. Powerful industrial-capitalist interests, with consistent collusion with the federal government and most state governments, committed what would later be called crimes against humanity: systematic murder by militias or judicial process; unjust and/or illegal imprisonment; egregious sentences; deportation for explicit reasons of race or ideology; brutal working conditions for near-starvation level wages; the enforcement of starvation conditions on untold numbers of workers through workshop lock-outs; frame-ups and conspiracies to infiltrate, pervert, and dismantle unions and radical groups; the list goes on. As for many workers, and especially anarchists, they refused to be mere victims of such assaults, but rather returned tit for tat as best

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<sup>2</sup> Troy Rondinone, *Framing Class Conflict in the Media, 1865-1950* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2010), 8-9.



they could, with the limited resources they had. Perhaps for more militantly spirited scholars writing about the Great Industrial Class War, the anarchist influence in the working class movements represents a kind of heroism of its own. One gets that sense from Louis Adamic's influential book *Dynamite: The Story of Class Violence in America*, but such feelings of heroism—and especially martyrdom after the Haymarket Affair—permeate much of the scholarship of the Class War. Again, Paul Avrich comes to mind, especially in his romantic literary portraits of his anarchist subjects.

The history of anarchism in the United States occupies a unique space in American historiography. It is no doubt most closely related to American labor history, and some could somewhat justifiably argue that anarchist history (like socialist history) is a subdivision of general labor history. It must be noted, however, that within the now widely accepted narrative of American labor, anarchism as an ideology is generally left out or else only mentioned in the most oblique and passing references.<sup>3</sup> Thus, although anarchist history in the United States is intimately tied to general labor history, the field of anarchist scholarship has remained a relatively isolated topic of study. This project is an attempt at recognizing and categorizing some of the scholarly work done on anarchist history in the United States, as well as an attempt at exploring some of the difficulties in anarchist historiography.

### **Mapping the Historiography**

#### *Chronology and Historical Approaches*

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<sup>3</sup> Thomas A. Krueger, "American Labor Historiography, Old and New," *Journal of Social History*, 4:3 (1971): 277.

The eight monographs consulted for this research project can be grouped into four different periods within the historiography of the Great Industrial Class War: (1) the roughly contemporaneous and almost socio-ethnographic account which begins at the end of the U.S. Civil War and ends with the beginning of the unemployment crisis caused by the stock market crash of 1929; (2) the beginning of “true” social history mixed in with top-down administrative approaches in the early 1960s; (3) the socio-cultural historians of the 1980s and early 1990s clearly influenced by the legacy of the New Left and second-wave feminism; and (4) the post-9/11 social and cultural historians looking back with a critical eye through the lens of a “new” era of terrorism. Within this limited scope, these chronological groupings reveal a few shifts in general history-writing as well as shifts in the writing of anarchist and radical leftist histories.

Besides by chronology, these eight monographs can be regrouped by similarities in the way their authors approached the topic of American radicalism. Social history runs deep throughout all eight books, present even as early as in 1931. Along with the social history current, however, are various other common themes and approaches to history-writing. Some give stronger emphasis to federal suppression through legal and extralegal means, using an administrative history approach. Others focus on the radicals themselves using mini-biographies, placing them in a specific narrative about the broader radical movement. Still others seek to reconstruct and critically analyze the life-worlds of these radicals through ethnographic approaches. Most of the included monographs have as a major theme the division between immigrant and “native” American radicals. And then the last three by chronological order, perhaps inescapably, take up as a major theme the issue of terrorism, elucidating the

history of terrorism in the United States and destroying the myth that terrorism in this country is only a very recent development.

*1) Living Memory: 1931*

By chronology, first on the list is Louis Adamic's *Dynamite: The Story of Class Violence* (1931). The narrative attempts to tackle every major strike, bombing, murder or attempted murder, trial, criminal racket and street battle involving labor, capital, and the state from the Molly Maguires in the Pennsylvania coal mines from 1865-1875, up to the moment of writing in 1930. Unlike the other authors consulted, Adamic wrote this book just as the most dramatic episodes of the Great Industrial Class War in the United States were drawing to a close, although he did not know it when the book was published. Thus, Adamic's proximity in time to the events about which he wrote presumably gives his account a vividness that wouldn't be reconstructed for decades. Adamic himself, as he revealed in the last three chapters of his book, personally interviewed many kinds of people (presumably all men) involved in the labor movement: from labor "racketeers" and AFL union thugs<sup>4</sup> to IWW guerrillas and nondenominational working "stiffs" with or without underlying anarchistic leanings.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, Adamic was able to get "in" with these folks and hear their stories because Adamic himself was also a poor migrant laborer scrambling to survive in the tail-end of this period, which gives his account a strong ethnographic authority. One must wonder whether early American anthropology, with its

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<sup>4</sup> Louis Adamic, *Dynamite: The Story of Class Violence in America* (New York: The Viking Press, 1931), 367.

<sup>5</sup> Adamic, *Dynamite*, 373.

emphasis on analyzing the cultural practices and institutions of so-called “primitive” peoples, or sociology, focusing on similar themes on the domestic front, influenced Adamic.<sup>6</sup> Due to the vast scope of this work, *Dynamite* is quite different from the other books included in this survey, giving a general overview of the Great Industrial Class War.

## 2) *The Second Red Scare: 1963*

Next by chronology, we would have to jump forward about three decades to William Preston’s *Aliens and Dissenters: Federal Suppression of Radicals, 1903-1933* (1963). Preston, writing in the wake of the heavily discriminatory Immigration Act of 1952<sup>7</sup> and the McCarthy Red Scare period of the later 1950s, clearly had his own era of political repression in mind as he explored the same topic in the period roughly between the 1890s and 1930s (despite the subtitle of the book). The Introduction to the book explains explicitly how the legal repression of Preston’s time was not new or unique, but rather quite consistent with the policies and precedents of previous decades. Preston’s work examines the major legal and extralegal policies the federal government used to justify repression against both immigrants and political radicals, especially the IWW, including several specific federal laws: immigration laws, deportation laws, sedition laws, etc. His work also reconstructs a few major court cases against important IWW members and others. Despite the monograph viewing the topic of radical oppression primarily through an administrative and legalistic lens, however, much time is devoted to exploring who these radicals

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<sup>6</sup> Joyce Appleby, Lynn Hunt, and Margaret Jacob, *Telling the Truth About History* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1994), 153-154.

<sup>7</sup> William Preston, Jr., *Aliens and Dissenters: Federal Suppression of Radicals, 1903-1933*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963), 1.

and immigrants actually were, if for no other reason than to prove how the vague wordings of federal law can and almost inevitably do lead to outrageous and extralegal abuses of power.

Thus, Preston's work also strongly and skillfully exhibits the trend toward social history developing in his time.

### 3) *The Legacy of Feminism and the New Left: 1983-1991*

Jumping ahead another couple decades, the three monographs that follow maintain the new intellectual trends of the New Left and second-wave feminism. Mari Jo Buhle's *Women and American Socialism, 1870-1920* (1983) explores intellectual frontiers opened up by the feminists of the 1970s. Buhle's work, in line with the trends in academia at the time, is rooted in the social history approach, but self-consciously also deploys a few tools from the just-forming school of cultural history as well. Indeed, the very idea of feminism—that the history of class is decidedly *not* the whole history of oppression—challenges the Marxist foundation on which social history stood. *Women and American Socialism* is particularly interesting because the topics discussed therein are framed mostly in binaries: socialist women and patriarchal socialism, suffragettes and female socialists, native-born American socialist women and German-born immigrant-American socialist women, “bourgeois” female socialists and “proletarian” female socialists, etc. The scope of the book is almost overwhelming, yet also specific. Framed by certain theories pioneered by scholars before her (whom the book credits in the Introduction)—the double strains of traditional domestic obligations and the new need for women to participate in industrial labor after the Civil War as the impetus for gender-consciousness in American women; the strict gender roles and extreme formality between the sexes which brought women together to form

strong, informal, intimate, sisterly bonds of mutual support; and the use by American activists of Christian imagery as a claim to legitimacy and as a powerful common language—Buhle reconstructs the complex and overlapping worlds in which these women moved and organized and advocated. Although not a history of anarchism, Buhle’s work elucidates a radical female perspective in the Great Industrial Class War, offering much insight into female anarchists of the period as well.

Paul Avrich was for some time considered the premier historian of American anarchism, unsurpassed in his ability not only to unearth and analyze old evidence to produce new insights, but also in his impressive capacity to convey such information in strong, exciting narratives with all the richness of texture and personality as the best fiction novels. Avrich made no pretense at trying to write an “unbiased” account; his narratives were meant to make the reader empathize with these historical anarchist figures. And yet, despite the heroism or villainy with which certain historical figures are portrayed, he also presented both the strengths and flaws in character or ideology of these figures within the broader context of their times, judging them primarily by their own contemporary conditions. Backed up by prodigious archival research, both *The Haymarket Tragedy* (1984) and *Sacco and Vanzetti: The Anarchist Background* (1991) are biography-driven with strong narratives and vivid portrayals of their respective times and places. Both works heavily rely on the words of the anarchists themselves, filtered through speeches recorded afterwards; writings they published, edited, or read in radical newspapers; and the memories of surviving family members and friends. Through these records, Avrich, perhaps inspired by cultural anthropology and literary theory, constructed “thick descriptions” of these historical events. Avrich was also somewhat unique in the attention he devoted to non-English

sources—primarily German in *Haymarket* and Italian in *Sacco and Vanzetti*—which further gave his works an on-the-ground feel, displaying the best of social history and its transition into cultural history. Indeed, central to both of these books is the theme: who were these anarchists *really*; what motivated or inspired them, what conditions led them to the anarchist ideology, and what kinds of lives did they live outside of their radical politics? Both of these books read almost like mystery or true-crime story, except with the crucial distinction that the main question is not “did they do it?” but rather, “why were they executed?”; thus, the indictments fall not on the anarchist defendants, but on the wider societies to which they belonged.

#### 4) *The Age of Terrorism: 2007-2012*

The last grouping by chronology could be called the “Age of Terrorism,” but it is difficult to tell to what extent our present era colors each work. Tom Goyens’ *Beer and Revolution: The German Anarchist Movement in New York City, 1880-1914* (2007) is an ethnographic social history which attempts to reconstruct and reveal how German immigrant anarchists reacted to their social and economic conditions in the greater New York City area during the Gilded Age and into the Progressive Era. Yet, for a social history, the work devotes a large amount of attention to Johann Most, perhaps the most famous German-immigrant anarchist in the U.S. and somewhat of an anarchist “leader,” at least in the press. It is true that Most and his paper *Freiheit* exercised much influence on German-American anarchists, but even Goyens admits that “...Most’s persona has been overblown. Too often his fame has obscured other aspects of the

German anarchist movement.”<sup>8</sup> Perhaps, in the spirit of post-9/11 reflection, the emphasis on Most—and the divisions he caused in the German-immigrant communities of greater New York City—is meant to evoke how a single violent figure can make an entire community vulnerable to racial stereotyping. The only problem with this is that it is unclear where the qualities of an immigrant community end and where the qualities of German-immigrant anarchists begin; but, then again, perhaps that is the point. Regardless, *Beer and Revolution* is above all an attempt to establish a more grassroots understanding of the German-American anarchist movement than previous works have reconstructed, while also exploring how one man with his words became the face of terrorism.

Next up is Beverly Gage’s *The Day Wall Street Exploded* (2009). Parts of the book read almost like a mystery novel: it is suspenseful, with just enough clues for competing detectives to use competing theories to reconstruct the first major bombing in the heart of American finance. Indeed, the majority of the book follows these competing detectives, all with differing allegiances and sometimes shady motives, as they attempt to piece together the events of September 20, 1920. Of course, the parallels to the 9/11 terrorist attacks in 2001—especially on the World Trade Center buildings—are quite clear, at least on the surface. In briefly drawing the connections between the two terrorist attacks standing 81 years apart, Gage attempts to reframe “terrorism” in the United States. Gage implies in the Introduction that the attacks of September 11, 2001 were viewed at the time as unique and unprecedented; that within the post-9/11 rhetoric

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<sup>8</sup> Tom Goyens, *Beer and Revolution: The German Anarchist Movement in New York City, 1880-1914* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2007), 87.



was the assumption that terrorism was “new,” that it did not have a history.<sup>9</sup> Gage sets out to reveal some of that history of terrorism in the United States, transporting the reader from the post-9/11 world (during which, since 2001, another such act of terrorism has not occurred in the United States) back to the early 20th century: a time when (mostly) empty bomb-threats, public speeches promoting violent revolution, and actual battles between workers and the armed guards of industrialists had been a part of the national milieu for decades. When a mass-casualty bomb actually did explode in 1920, it was no less outrageous, horrifying, and influential in policy-making for years later, but it was also somewhat anticipated, and even seen by some as inevitable.<sup>10</sup> It is through this lens—the “inevitability,” the investigations into the “usual suspects,” the industrial class war as a whole—that Gage tells the story of this particular terrorist bombing.

Lastly, by chronology, there is Thai Jones’ book *More Powerful Than Dynamite* (2012). Using a few better-known figures as pivot-points for the narrative—Alexander Berkman, Emma Goldman, John D. Rockefeller, Jr., Mayor John Purroy Mitchel, and even Upton Sinclair—Jones’ thick reconstruction of the events in New York City in 1914 (and the events to which they led later) actually involves an even wider cast of lesser-known characters, each one introduced in turn and given their moment of drama, if not glory. The world which Jones has recreated is depicted as existing in a unique moment in which so many people—groups and individuals, with a certain fluidity of group-affiliations—were vying to shape the future of the city and perhaps the

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<sup>9</sup> Beverly Gage, *The Day Wall Street Exploded: A Story of America in Its First Age of Terror*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 4.

<sup>10</sup> Gage, *The Day Wall Street Exploded*, 3.

world. It was a moment in which anything seemed possible, whether the possibility was progressive reform, violent revolution, or something in between; the winds of change were all around, but in which direction would it blow, and how hard? Ultimately, the dream of revolution would end in tragedy—tragic not least due to the sympathetic portrayals of all parties involved—and the reforms would not last, but knowing how the story ends does nothing to take away from the dramatic events leading to it, nor the excellent and deeply humanizing characterizations of each of the pivotal figures. The reader learns of their convictions, self-doubts, and world-views, all within the context of decades of national and international labor struggles, all threatening or committing violence, and all inescapably standing on the eve of The Great War which would bring unprecedentedly oppressive and irreparable changes to the nation's political and cultural fabric. One wonders if Jones, as a son of members of the Weather Underground, had the anarchistic People's Global Action movement in mind, especially as affiliation with the group become more dangerous following the signing of the Patriot Act.<sup>11</sup> The parallels are present, if not so obvious. Regardless of such intentional or unintentional parallels, however, Jones' work successfully and terrifically captures the uncertainty of the moment, the scales tipping between one utopian dream and another before it would all come crashing down.

#### *Analysis of Chronology by Thematic and Historical Approach*

All of the eight books of this survey use social history approaches to varying degrees. Perhaps this is in part due to social history's multiplicity of approaches and angles, as many of the variants are represented in this survey. As mentioned before, all of these works by virtue of

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<sup>11</sup> David Graeber, *Direct Action: An Ethnography* (Edinburgh: AK Press, 2009), xiii, xvi-xvii.

being radical leftist histories can be filed under “general labor history,” one of social history’s earlier branches. Beginning as a non-Marxist project to construct sympathetic narratives of working class people, the field has since been broadened with terms like “people’s history” or “history from below.”<sup>12</sup> Still, it seems that general labor history can rightly be considered a subtopic, even if the approach pioneered by early labor historians has found wider applications, and all of the monographs included in this survey fall under this subtopic and affiliated approach. Perhaps more interesting than the similarities across the eight works, however, is the evolution of the social history and specifically labor history approaches as they interacted with and adopted other new historical approaches.

As mentioned before, Adamic’s *Dynamite* (1931) is quite different from the other works included in this survey. Strictly speaking, it is not really a monograph due to its immense scope, but it is valuable in this study for a number of reasons. Foremost is the fact that it was written just as the Great Industrial Class War was concluding, or perhaps more accurately, evolving into a very different kind of ideological struggle. This fact gives the work the dual qualities of historical overview as well as a primary source. Exerting much influence on subsequent anarchist and general labor historians, Adamic might be credited for first constructing the narrative of the whole of the Great Industrial Class War. Considered within the greater trajectory of American historiography, *Dynamite* is especially noteworthy for its seamless blend between the still emergent field of social history and the more established political history decades before social history would gain any kind of widespread prominence. Indeed, it seems quite ahead of its

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<sup>12</sup> John Tosh and Seán Lang, *The Pursuit of History: Aims, methods and new directions in the study of modern history* (Harlow, UK: Pearson Education Limited, 2006), 132.

time, and one must wonder if the subject-matter, as well as the author's own personal involvement in the latter years of the narrative, lent themselves to such an early expression of social history.

Historians living through the Second Red Scare, like William Preston, attempted to fill in some of the gaps in Adamic's monumental work. Preston presents a balance of social history (which had developed and matured since Adamic's time) and administrative history. Drawing from John Tosh, I define "administrative history" as the interpretation of government functions and personnel with respect to the state and the various people within the state.<sup>13</sup> Putting somewhat less emphasis on a broader narrative, Preston's *Aliens and Dissenters* (1963) shifts attention to repressive federal laws and which bodies carried out these laws. In this way, some of Preston's influence can be seen in Beverly Gage's much later work *The Day Wall Street Exploded* (2009). Gage, to a much greater extent than Preston, focuses more on the federal administrative and private detective side of her subject, rather than on the anarchists themselves. In a sort of return to more top-down approaches of history-writing, she presents her subject completely from the perspective of those trying to solve the mystery of the bomb.

In addition to his administrative historical approach, Preston focused the effects of the laws on specific groups, explicitly conflating European immigrants with American radicals: a not unjust connection, as the laws themselves conflated the two groups. Adamic certainly included much discussion on both immigrants and "natives," but Preston made the connection an essential anchor of understanding the Great Industrial Class War. This key concept was clearly very influential in the historiography of general American labor, as can be seen in Mari Jo Buhle's

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<sup>13</sup> Tosh, *The Pursuit of History*, 119.

(1983) ethnographic comparisons between German-immigrant and “native” American socialist women, especially in relation to the initial difference in social values between the two groups. The comparison can also be seen later, although not to the same extent, in Tom Goyens’ (2007) study of German-American anarchists in the Greater New York City area. Some of the most vivid moments in Goyens’ work include the confusion and moral outrage of native New Yorkers as they would witness German immigrants openly drinking beer on their outdoor picnics.<sup>14</sup>

Although a direct influence from Buhle to Goyens cannot be established, as Buhle does not appear in Goyens’ bibliography, both of them also seem to take inspiration from a more ethnographic method of history-writing, first developed in the field of cultural anthropology. This method lends itself especially well to writing about such fundamentally misunderstood groups like leftist radicals in the United States, as the method was originally developed to elucidate the lives and cultural meaning-makings of “exotic” and “Other” peoples. For Buhle’s work, the “Other” is women in the most general sense. As Buhle’s book goes deeper, however, we come to realize that socialist American women in particular were othered in several ways: not only by the broader patriarchal society, but also by socialist men—some of them their very husbands!—who claimed to believe in the dignity of all humans. These women would, of course, be othered by the broader society for their socialist affiliations as well. Going deeper still, it is revealed that German-immigrant socialist women in the United States experienced much of the same alienating misogynistic and anti-socialist treatment, but that due to differing family values compared to those of Americans, these German women were comparatively far better respected, with their husbands often actively seeking their advice and opinions. Goyens’

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<sup>14</sup> Goyens, *Beer and Revolution*, 177-182

book, in so far as it is meant to reconstruct and reveal the texture of the German-immigrant anarchist social world in Greater New York City, similarly gives the subject an ethnographic treatment, even as through the decades that world evolved, matured, and even to a certain extent, assimilated. Goyens' coverage of anarchist self-defense clubs, singing groups, mutual aid funds, and even recreational activities such as the aforementioned picnics all reveal both an immigrant group's cultural cohesion as well as the conscious anarchist attempt at creating "oppositional spaces": temporary or permanent spaces in which the ideals of anarchism could be made manifest in the here and now.<sup>15</sup> Exploring such conceptions of meaning-making and symbolic importance among the German-immigrant anarchist communities, Goyens has firmly placed himself in the relatively young lineage of ethnographic history.

The focus on the division between immigrant and "native" seen in Preston's, Buhle's, and Goyens' works is also very present in Avrich's *The Haymarket Tragedy* (1984). The point is made especially apparent in Avrich's emphasis on the "Americanness" of one of the martyrs, Albert Parsons, and how Parsons' "American" identity became somewhat suspended through his association with mostly immigrant anarchists. Avrich, however, is probably better known for his "thick description" and biographical-narrative style, which he used in both of his books included in this survey, and which also had a profound influence on the subsequent writing of anarchist history. Perhaps responding to the renewed challenges posed by the *Annales* historians in the 1980s to reconstruct the mentalities and cultures of past peoples,<sup>16</sup> Avrich's works do a significant amount of "world-building" to give the reader the emotional experience of witnessing

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<sup>15</sup> Goyens, *Beer and Revolution*, 178-179.

<sup>16</sup> Tosh, *The Pursuit of History*, 303.

dramatic historical events. Despite the narrative style, one can see in Avrich's works the influence of the then-emerging postmodern cultural approach to history-writing; Avrich's narratives are narratives-in-miniature, snapshots of heroic and tragic events, seemingly actively resisting connections to any "grand narrative" of progress so common in social histories.<sup>17</sup>

Avrich's influence is most felt in Thai Jones' *More Powerful Than Dynamite* (2012), which is, like Avrich's works, anchored by a handful of strong personalities and driven by the vividness of the events and emotions of the time. Yet, with Jones, the historical figures whom Avrich and others might implicitly (or explicitly) classify as "villainous" or "heroic" become more multidimensional, sympathetic, and relatable. There is less judgment from Jones, perhaps reflecting an attitude of a matured postmodern moral relativism. Perhaps this somewhat ironic biographical-narrative approach to history-writing, given the trend in cultural histories to stray from "Great Men" and "grand narratives" to explore deeper dimensions of past times and places, is actually a reaction to the unique difficulties of the by-nature fractured anarchist history; the biographical-narrative approach might be the best way to vividly reconstruct and put into context the mentalities of historical anarchists without placing these radically individualist and self-consciously situational spirits into a singular (and somewhat contrived) "anarchist project."

Both Jones and Beverly Gage (2009) self-consciously place themselves as post-9/11 historians, looking back at a previous age of terrorism through the colored lens of the present age. Or, perhaps they have both attempted to recontextualize the present age of terrorism through the lens of an all-but-forgotten time of ever-present terroristic danger. And yet despite the common lens, the two works have very different foci. Jones seems to attempt to describe

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<sup>17</sup> Tosh, *The Pursuit of History*, 305.

what living in a society “under terrorism” of a different age felt like, exploring the question from the perspective of contemporary anarchist “terrorists,” progressive politicians, morally conflicted capitalists, and others. Gage, instead, focuses on how law enforcement and federal administration reacted to a mass-casualty (relatively speaking) terrorist act, investigating the multiple competing parties seeking to uncover the truth, the resources available, and the mass public reaction.

Although a rough chronological analysis is helpful to laying a foundational understanding of the historiography, arranging the works strictly by chronological order is not the most accurate or helpful way to understand the progression of influences in anarchist historical writing. Besides by chronology, these monographs can also be divided roughly by thematic approach. Some of these “approaches” overlap within the same work, especially as the date of publication approaches the present, revealing the diversity and versatility of the historian’s tools that have developed in the past century.

### **Problems of this Study**

#### *Terminology*

This study began as an investigation into anarchism in the United States during the Gilded Age and the Progressive Era; indeed, most of the monographs here presented fall under that boundary. Quickly, however, it became obvious that the distinctions between “anarchist,” “socialist,” “communist,” “IWW” and so many other ideological groups were never very clear. This is true in the times contemporary to their activities as well as in the most current historiography. In part because of their unanimous identification and sympathies with the



working class, in part because of the common suppression and popular hatred often mounted upon them, and in part because these radical leftist ideas (as well as the industrial working conditions that created them) were so relatively new and ever-evolving, ideological identities of radical leftists constantly bled each into another. There were certainly unequivocal and consistent anarchists or socialists, maintaining for decades the convictions unique to their particular brand of radical leftism, but those same diehard ideologues would often at the same time maintain subscriptions to the newspapers of their ideological cousins, and would even participate in the many common actions or campaigns between leftist ideologies.

While this cross-fertilization occurred in the beliefs, actions, and memberships of various radical leftists ideologies, differences of nationality, ethnicity, or cultural expression often divided political groups who claimed to espouse the same beliefs. Due to the incredible influx of European immigrants to the United States during the period of this study, there developed a powerful reactionary nativist sentiment all across the country. Although American-born radical leftists were the more likely to intermingle with immigrants, differences in priorities, strategies, or general world-views often became fissure lines between American socialists and German socialists, or American anarchists and Italian anarchists. Thus, even while the boundaries of these ideologies were hazy on all sides, the exact definitions were even more obfuscated from within.

All of these factors caused problems of boundaries and terminology which even in the present historiography does not seem to ever have been resolved. Socialist historians seem to generally ignore the anarchist element; or, they will include IWW members but rarely refer to them as anarchists. Neither do most IWW and general labor historians. Anarchist historians (the

few who specialize in the relatively narrow field) often acknowledge the influence of socialist and IWW elements, and some even acknowledge the frequent ideological crossovers; but even still, I suspect for the sake of consistent terminology, the anarchist historians usually keep the various ideologies in their separate spheres. Thus, what began as a project with an already too-broad topic—anarchists in the United States from the Gilded Age and Progressive Era—quickly became a project rife with this complex problem of terminology and historiography. Once begun, however, I could see no choice but to include some aspects of socialist, IWW, and general labor history of the United States within the scope of the project in order to even attempt what would resemble a full account of the original topic.

### *Inclusion/Exclusion*

With the above having been said, what is regrettably absent from this project is any mention of *nonwhite* socialists, anarchists, IWWs, or other nondenominational radical leftists in the United States during the Gilded Age or Progressive Era. In my research I noticed scattered mention of African-American IWWs and Chinese socialists, but none of those texts were included in the present survey of monographs. Although it is true that socialism and anarchism originally developed more or less independently in Europe and the United States (with much more intimate connections between the two continents as the 20th century neared), the economic and social conditions that produced these ideologies affected working people of color just as much, if not more than native-European or European-descendent workers. Indeed, it is arguable that Italians, Jews, or some other ethnic groups usually considered “white” in today’s American racial definitions were considered as such until after the period with which this study is

concerned. It is true, however, that most of the scholarship concerning radical leftist activity in the United States during this time period emphasize “white” individuals and groups. Perhaps this is because the most infamous individuals and groups of anarchistic or socialistic proclivities were “white” (Alexander Berkman, Leon Czolgosz, the Haymarket martyrs, the Galleanist Group, Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti). It is hard to imagine that an African-American or Chinese assassin (or attempted assassin) during the Great Industrial Class War would not become as infamous in their time as a “white” person of similar deeds, let alone as worthy of historical study later on. But perhaps in my narrow research, I simply missed the few great works on the topic; or, perhaps those great works are yet to be written.

Similarly, but to a lesser extent, there is not as much inclusion of women in this survey as there should be. The two monographs in this survey written before the Feminist Revolution of the 1970s cannot be expected to include women to any great extent in their respective narratives; the other six, however, should be held to this higher standard. Some of those six post-1970s books exclude women simply because of their narrow scopes: both of Paul Avrich’s books seem to fall under this category, as does Beverly Gage’s book, *The Day Wall Street Exploded*. Tom Goyens’ *Beer and Revolution*, however, has relatively little on anarchist German women despite the book having been first published in 2007. Before judgment is cast, however, one may well consider one of the important findings presented in Mari Jo Buhle’s book *Women and American Socialism*: that German socialist women during this time differed from many American-born socialist women in that the former strongly believed that their place was in the home, raising socialist children. It is perhaps for this reason that Goyens could find so relatively little on female German-American anarchists.

Moreover, coming into this project aware that Emma Goldman is perhaps the most famous “American” anarchist, I consciously avoided biographies of her and monographs with her as a central figure. I hoped to survey a movement—a phenomenon—not a few famous individuals: especially not in such a self-consciously “decentralized” and “leaderless” ideology as anarchism. In retrospect, this seems to have been a foolish decision, as there are few female “American” anarchists—or indeed, anarchists of any gender or nationality—who even approach her fame; and of the few individuals who do, such as Nicola Sacco and Bartolomeo Vanzetti, I ended up devoting a relatively large amount of attention to them anyway. Therefore, it is difficult to tell exactly how much of this relative scarcity of references to female anarchists is due to patriarchal influences in the field of history, patriarchal conditions on Industrial War anarchists, differences in cultural understandings of gender between various groups during the Industrial War, or simply my own gaps in research.

## **Conclusion**

John Tosh’s criticism of Marxist and “other goal-oriented interpretations of history” may on the surface be applied to the history of anarchism: “...it distorts our understanding of the past by concentrating unduly on those people and movements which were on the side of ‘progress.’”<sup>18</sup> And yet, despite the general sympathies with historical radical leftists, it is debatable whether the historians of radical leftist people and movements would consider their activities as contributing to “progress.” If such a thing exists, and if these historical radical leftists did contribute to it, then from our vantage point so many years after the close of the Great

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<sup>18</sup> Tosh, *The Pursuit of History*, 237.

Industrial Class War, it is obvious that they primarily contributed to it negatively in the role of the losers whose opposition (and sacrifices) helped justify expanding the powers of the state, as well as a myriad other unintended consequences.

Thus, anarchism as a historical subject, speaking from the grave a century after its heyday, echoes the postmodern criticism on social history: that there might not be any such thing as “progress,” or, if there is, that it is not a singular thing, but a plurality of trajectories and destinations determined solely by the people dreaming, building, and moving towards them. Perhaps it is a kind of confirmation bias or simply an accident—or that this really is this case—but what is striking about this selection of books is that they all approach the topic of historical anarchists and other radical leftists in the United States with enormous sympathy, even or especially when the analysis of these historical radicals is also strongly critical. Judging from this selection of works and the consensus of the narrative of events between them, one could possibly conclude that any serious scholarly inquiry into anarchists, socialists, the labor movement, or any class issue or immigration issue of the 19th and early 20th centuries in the United States will reveal a sort of historical truth that the allied powers of capital and state systematically and brutally crushed the above mentioned groups with little regard for ethics, legality, or even general practicality.

And yet to regard all leftist radicals, or even all anarchists, as united primarily in their victimhood might obscure the enormous variation between leftist radicals and especially anarchists. As historians, we must be wary not only of inaccurate representations, but more insidiously, the danger of representing through a single lens. Like anarchists themselves, the works in this survey are most valuable not each individually—although their individual strengths

are noteworthy—nor even in the possibility of their respective positions in a grand anarchist narrative, but in their patchwork, almost incidental but perfectly fitting complements to each other. Through this filling of historical gaps and stitching on the seams of tangential works, anarchist historians in particular remind us of how the United States came to take its present form: “To tell the story of striking miners, Southern sharecroppers, or factory-working mothers, as they have, does more than give voice to the previously inaudible, it exposes the costs of capitalism.”<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Appleby, *Telling the Truth About History*, 158.

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**A Critique of the Presentation of Anarchists and The Great Industrial Class War in  
The American Nation**

I recall using John Garraty's *The American Nation* in my own high school experience. It was the designated textbook for the AP U.S. History class, and my teacher was quite fond of it for its occasional humor and narrative "balance." I do not recall, however, learning or being required to learn anything involving radical leftism or what I have called in this project The Great Industrial Class War. This is not to say that I was not required nor that I did not learn such material. The eight-hour movement and the movement to end child-labor were covered, but nothing that I can remember about the people or organizations who fought for and were responsible for such gains, nor the obstacles and opposition in their way. Perhaps I read the relevant pages, but nothing quite stuck with me, which is surprising given my interest in radical politics at that time. Examining the textbook now, it appears that part of the reason for my present inability to recall anything about anarchism or radicalism from that class—or, indeed, anything resembling a war—may be in part because of the manner in which the material is treated in this textbook.

As mentioned in the Monograph Synthesis portion of this project, due to the nature of the industrial anarchist movement, the scope of this project is very wide. Covering a span of roughly half a century, and the subject matter being intimately connected to so many other social movements and issues of the time, much has already been left out of this project. Unfortunately, this textbook critique will be similarly limited, not because there is a dearth of references to anarchists and the Great Industrial Class War (at least, compared to other material also truncated for textbook presentation), but because radical leftism and anarchism in particular is presented in



such a disjointed and dispersed fashion. Therefore, I have structured this critique around a few broader problems of the treatment of industrial radicalism in John Garraty's *The American Nation*, with several references to specific passages from the textbook to reveal how seemingly minor choices in wording and emphasis can (re)produce incomplete or distorted narratives.

### The Anarchists and the Industrial Capitalists

As much as the textbook repeatedly mentions anarchism, the ideology is never explained. If we take the textbook account, anarchism has no origin or goals, no history or trajectory, no values or scruples. Anarchists primarily appear in these textbook pages to cause violence and “to take advantage of the excitement [in labor strikes] to win support” for themselves. The textbook usually lumps all anarchists together, while at the same time alienating them from other radical leftist groups (socialists, communists, general labor): a double-crime since, on the one hand, every anarchist sect was self-consciously unique and independent in its development and strategy; but on the other hand, there was so much cross-pollination of ideas and identities between the various radical leftist ideologies, despite the “internal fighting.” Indeed, this “internal fighting” is not explained either: how did the various radical factions differ, and how did labor radicalism differ from the trade unionism of the American Federation of Labor? Both aspects, autonomy and trans-ideological association, are crucial to understanding the anarchists of this period, as well as the general texture of industrial radical left politics.

Garraty initially seems perhaps bold and sympathetic to laborers when he writes that “The average employer behaved like a tyrant when dealing with his workers.” What follows, however, makes this characterization seem somewhat like an exaggeration: “He discharged them

arbitrarily when they tried to organize unions; he hired scabs to replace strikers; he frequently failed to provide the most rudimentary protection against injury on the job.”<sup>20</sup> What is not mentioned was the frequent and more decidedly tyrannical behavior of hiring private armed security to wage literal battles against severely outgunned (sometimes largely unarmed) workers: a major feature of the times, and one of which contemporaries were acutely aware.

Moreover, Garraty seems to appeal for sympathy for the industrialists, characterizing them with tongue-in-cheek as “not all ogres,” but “probably more frightened by the uncertainties” of the “rapid changes of the times...since they had more at stake materially”<sup>21</sup> than the workers. It is hard to imagine the starvation and near-starvation level poverty many of these workers suffered; the uncertainties, not of competition and profits, but of how to feed one’s children. It is hard to imagine the reality that many of these workers’ literal and immediate survival were determined by the slightest changes. It is harder still when a textbook—with all of its trappings of authority—elevates the fears of material loss above the fears of survival, let alone want of every other basic human need.

### Manipulating Vocabularies and Numbers

Although the textbook certainly acknowledges violent conflict in the Great Industrial Class War, it subtly minimizes violence perpetrated by the “haves” and emphasizes violence on the part of the “have-nots.” Some of this may simply be the limited vocabulary around the issues. For example, when Garraty writes that “When strikes broke out, some [were]

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<sup>20</sup> John A. Garraty, *The American Nation*, 9th ed (New York: Longman, 1998), 498.

<sup>21</sup> Garraty, *The American Nation*, 498.

accompanied by violence,”<sup>22</sup> regardless of the careful wording, he unintentionally associates *strikers* with causing violence; the factory owners and private security forces (e.g. Pinkerton “detectives”) are invisible, even though they had not only caused the conditions to which strikes responded, but who also caused the most violence. Still, the actual numbers or even estimates for the working-class human lives or livelihoods destroyed in these encounters is rarely mentioned (possibly because no such counts have ever been made).

Yet, in other instances, this minimization of capitalists’ culpability comes from not a limitation in vocabulary, but from consistent omission of key facts. One, for example, is the set-up to the so-called “Haymarket bombing.” The textbook claims that the event was precipitated by the death of a single striker. Paul Avrich, however, claims that there were at least two strikers’ deaths, and perhaps several others. Moreover, in the case of these McCormick Company strikers, there is no mention of the other nonlethal casualties (nor, for that matter, who was culpable, or how and why the violence erupted). In the treatment of the “Haymarket bombing,” however, in the last sentence of the section, Garraty makes it a point to include that “Seven policemen were killed and many others injured.”<sup>23</sup> What he does not mention is that at least four other workers were killed as the police shot into the crowd in response, and that most of the other injuries were also caused by the indiscriminate shooting by police, including the injuries of other police officers.<sup>24</sup> Another example is the treatment of the Triangle Shirtwaist Fire of 1911. The textbook, in a rare instance, actually gives the number of victims (146 lives), but never says

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<sup>22</sup> Garraty, *The American Nation*, 659.

<sup>23</sup> Garraty, *The American Nation*, 498.

<sup>24</sup> Paul Avrich, *The Haymarket Tragedy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 209-210.

explicitly that those victims all died, nor that they died most immediately because the owners had locked the doors to the building. Instead the wording of the event is as follows: “In 1911, a fire at the Triangle Shirtwaist Company caused workers to leap to their deaths...when blocked exit doors and the lack of fire escapes trapped them.”<sup>25</sup> The causes of this tragedy, according to the textbook account, seem to have been a combination of accident, a lack of safety precautions, and mysteriously blocked exits.

Even small subtleties in language use contribute to minimizing the importance of these clashes between capital and labor. The Great Railroad Strike of 1877 is uncapitalized in the textbook account, the Haymarket Affair is mentioned but unnamed, and the same is true for the Pullman Strike of 1894, which Garraty calls the “most important strike of the period.”<sup>26</sup> One can perhaps be excused for not calling this period “The Great Industrial Class War” since that nomenclature and variations of it are not widely accepted in the historiography. It is inexcusable, however, to refuse to assign proper nouns to such enormously influential events as those just mentioned. This is not a simple matter of grammatical correctness. By denying these events their proper status and commonly accepted nomenclature, the uncapitalized forms indicate to students that such events are forgettable and inconsequential.

### The Government and the People

Government attitudes and actions are almost always veiled by “national” will and “national” demands, giving the appearances of grassroots, “power of the people” democratic

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<sup>25</sup> Garraty, *The American Nation*, 632.

<sup>26</sup> Garraty, *The American Nation*, 499.

campaigns. Sometimes, indeed, popular will demanded action against foreign-born and radical people in the United States, as Garraty somewhat accurately depicts in the account of the Palmer Raids and the First Red Scare. Little mention, however, is made of the government manipulation of public opinion during the First World War, nor of the secret actions and files kept by the “Radical Division” of the Bureau of Investigation (later reconstituted as the FBI), nor of the use of the occasional use of federal troops to put down labor strikes, nor of any of the blatant collusion of federal and state level politicians with industrial capitalist interests.

The treatment of the Sacco-Vanzetti case in the textbook is an excellent example of this veiling. Although Garraty calls the trial “a travesty of justice,” putting much of the blame on the unscrupulously presiding Judge Webster Thayer, Garraty fails to mention that both Sacco and Vanzetti had been known to and watched by several law enforcement agencies, including the Bureau of Investigation, in large part for their radical politics and their WWI anti-conscription activities. Instead, the trial and execution are framed as merely an example of how nativist extremism could ruin the lives of innocent people, and how intellectuals felt alienated by the growing strength of conservative fundamentalists. There is almost no mention of the two anarchists’ beliefs, but only this one line: “Sacco and Vanzetti were anarchists and Italian immigrants.” Even when Vanzetti is quoted, all signs of his politics are erased, and all that remain are a few generic lines reflecting how “Vanzetti’s quiet dignity and courage in the face of death wrung the hearts of millions.”<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Garraty, *The American Nation*, 681.

## Conclusion

At times, Garraty seems to have tried to present a “balanced” perspective of the Great Industrial Class War. The overall treatment of the Class War, however, is weighed down with other serious problems spread across over one hundred pages and often found in the subtleties of language. Much of these problems, inaccuracies, and omissions can only be noticed if one already knows what to look for. Indeed, it took several days of rereading these passages for me to notice what was not present. What’s more, attempting to present a “balanced” perspective of the Great Industrial Class War is perhaps in itself a problematic endeavor precisely because the War was so severely unbalanced: a fact exacerbated by the manipulations of vocabularies and numbers in the textbook narrative. Because of the isolated treatment and nonsequential ordering of events, too, it is difficult to form an accurate progression of events in the Class War; for the same reasons, and also due to the absence of any explanation of industrial anarchism, it is nearly impossible to do the same for anarchists in the United States.

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# “The Pittsburgh Proclamation” of the IWPA, 1883

*After the historic split between socialists and anarchists in the International Workingmen’s Association (aka the First International), anarchists and social revolutionaries created a new organization in London in 1881 called the International Working People’s Association (aka the Black International). Radicals from New York who attended this first meeting in London brought those ideas back to the United States and, in conjunction with the Chicago radicals and the firebrand Johann Most just recently immigrated to the United States, they established the IWPA in Pittsburgh in 1883.*

*Johann Most was famous (and to many, infamous) in the United States and Europe for his newspaper Freiheit (German for “freedom”), in which he frequently and unapologetically encouraged violence against the powerful capitalist classes, particularly with the recently-invented dynamite. He advocated “propaganda by the deed,” a particular tactic meant to empower individuals in acts of terrorism in order to inspire others to do the same. Johann Most’s influence can be felt in this document.*

*In the 1880s, Chicago was the undisputed center of anarchist activity in the United States. The anarchist “leaders” who participated in the IWPA congress of 1883 were mostly former socialists who became disillusioned with the electoral system as a means of change, but who often allied with traditional socialists when they thought it could help poor workers. Eight of these “leaders” would be implicated in the famous Haymarket tragedy of 1886. Four would unjustly be executed by hanging, one would commit suicide, and the remaining three would be pardoned years later by a sympathetic governor, but the anarchist movement in Chicago would never recover after Haymarket.*

*This is the full-text of the document.*

*Source: <https://archive.org/details/ThePittsburghProclamation>*

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(The proclamation of the 1883 Congress of the International Working People’s Association, taken from the English edition of *Freiheit*, 27 December 1890)

Comrades!

In the Declaration of Independence of the United States we read: "When in a long Train of Abuses and Usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object, evinces a Design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their Right, it is their Duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future Security."

Has the moment not arrived to heed the advice of Thomas Jefferson, the true founder of the American Republic? Has government not become oppression?

And is our government anything but a conspiracy of the ruling classes against the people -- against you?

# “The Pittsburgh Proclamation” of the IWPA, 1883

Comrades! Hear what we have to say. Read our manifesto [this Proclamation], written in your interest and for the welfare of your wives and children and toward the good of humanity and progress.

Our present society is founded upon the exploitation of the property-less class by the propertied. This exploitation is such that the propertied (capitalists) buy the working force body and soul of the property-less, for the price of the mere cost of existence (wages) and take for themselves, i.e., steal the amount of new values (products) which exceeds the price, whereby wages are made to represent the necessities instead of the earnings of the wage-laborer.

As the non-possessing classes are forced by their poverty to offer for sale to the propertied their working forces, and as our present production on a grand scale enforces technical development with immense rapidity, so that by the application of an always decreasing number of [the] human working force, an always increasing amount of products is created; so does the supply of working force increase constantly, while the demand therefor decreases. This is the reason why the workers compete more and more intensely in selling themselves, causing their wages to sink, or at least on the average, never raising them above the margin necessary for keeping intact their working ability.

Whilst by this process the property-less are entirely debarred from entering the ranks of the propertied, even by the most strenuous exertions, the propertied, by means of an ever increasing plunder of the working class, are becoming richer day by day, without in any way being themselves productive.

If now and then one of the property-less class become rich it is not by their own labor but from opportunities which they have to speculate upon, and absorb the labor- product of others.

With the accumulation of individual wealth, the greed and power of the propertied grows. They use all the means of competing among themselves for the robbery of the people. In this struggle generally the less-propertied (middle class) are overcome, while the great capitalists, par excellence, swell their wealth enormously, concentrate entire branches of production as well as trade and intercommunication into their hands and develop into monopolists. The increase of products, accompanied by the simultaneous decrease of the average income of the working mass of the people, leads to so called "business" and "commercial" crises, when the misery of the wage workers is forced to the extreme.

For illustration: the last census of the United States shows that after deducting the cost of raw material, interest, rents, risks, etc., the propertied class have absorbed -- i.e., stolen -- more than five-eighths of all the products, leaving scarcely three-eighths to the producers. The propertied class, being scarcely one-tenth of our population, and in spite of their luxury and extravagance, and unable to consume their enormous "profits," and the producers, unable to consume more than they receive -- three-eighths -- so-called "over-productions" must necessarily take place. The terrible results of panics are well known.



# “The Pittsburgh Proclamation” of the IWPA, 1883

The increasing eradication of the working forces from the productive process annually increases the percentage of the property-less population, which becomes pauperized and is driven to "crime," vagabondage, prostitution, suicide, starvation and general depravity. This system is unjust, insane, and murderous. It is therefore necessary to totally destroy it with and by all means, and with the greatest energy on the part of everyone who suffers by it, and who does not want to be made culpable for its continued existence by his inactivity.

Agitation for the purpose of organization; organization for the purpose of rebellion. In these few words the ways are marked which the workers must take if they want to be rid of their chains; as the economic condition is the same in all countries of so-called "civilization"; as the governments of all the Monarchies and Republics work hand in hand for the purpose of opposing all movements of the thinking part of the workers; as finally the victory in the decisive combat of the proletarians against their oppressors can only be gained by the simultaneous struggle along the whole line of the bourgeois (capitalistic) society, so therefore the international fraternity of people as expressed in the International Working Peoples' Association presents itself a self-evident necessity.

True order should take its place. This can only be achieved when all implements of labor, the soil and other premises of production, in short, capital produced by labor, is changed into societary. Only by this presupposition is destroyed every possibility of the future spoliation of man by man. Only by common, undivided capital can all be enabled to enjoy in their fullness the fruits of the common toil. Only by the impossibility of accumulating personal (private) capital can everyone be compelled to work who makes a demand to live.

This order of things allows production to regulate itself according to the demand of the whole people, so that nobody need work more than a few hours a day, and that all nevertheless can satisfy their needs. Hereby time and opportunity are given for opening to the people the highest possible civilization; the privileges of higher intelligence fall with the privileges of higher birth. To the achievement of such a system the political organizations of the capitalistic classes -- be they Monarchies or Republics -- form barriers. These political structures (States), which are completely in the hands of the propertied, have no other purpose the upholding of the present disorder of exploitation.

All laws are directed against the working people. In so far as the opposite appears to be the case, they [laws] serve on one hand to blind the worker, while on the other hand they are simply evaded. Even the school serves only the purpose of furnishing the offspring of the wealthy with those qualities necessary to uphold their class domination. The children of the poor scarcely get a formal elementary training, and this, too, is mainly directed to such branches as tend to producing prejudices, arrogance, and servility; in short, want of sense. The Church finally seeks to make complete idiots out of the mass and to make them forgo the paradise on Earth by promising a fictitious Heaven. The capitalistic press, on the other hand, takes care of the confusion of spirits in public life. All these institutions, far from aiding in the education of the

# “The Pittsburgh Proclamation” of the IWPA, 1883

masses, have for their object the keeping in ignorance of the people. They are all in the pay of and under the direct control of the capitalistic classes. The workers can therefore expect no help from any capitalistic party in their struggle against the existing system. They must achieve their own liberation by their own efforts. As in former times a privileged class never surrendered its tyranny, neither can it be expected that the capitalists of this age will give up their rulership without being forced to do it.

If there ever could have been any question on this point it should long ago have been dispelled by the brutalities which the bourgeoisie of all countries -- in America as well as in Europe -- constantly commits, as often as the proletariat anywhere energetically move to better their condition. It becomes, therefore, self-evident that the struggle of the proletariat with the bourgeoisie must have a violent revolutionary character.

We could show by scores of illustrations that all attempts in the past to reform this monstrous system by peaceable means, such as the ballot, have been futile, and all such efforts in the future must necessarily be so, for the following reasons:

The political institutions of our time are the agencies of the propertied class; their mission is the upholding of the privileges of their masters; any reform in your behalf would curtail these privileges. To this they will not and cannot consent, for it would be suicidal to themselves.

That they will not resign their privileges voluntarily we know; that they will make no concessions to us we likewise know. Since we must then rely upon the kindness of our masters for whatever redress we have, and knowing that from them no good may be expected, there remains but one recourse -- FORCE! Our forefathers have not only told us that against despots force is justifiable because it is the only means, but they themselves have set the immemorial example.

By force our ancestors liberated themselves from political oppression, by force their children will have to liberate themselves from economic bondage. "It is, therefore, your right, it is your duty," says Jefferson, "to arm!"

What we would achieve is, therefore, plainly and simply:

First: -Destruction of the existing class rule, by all means, i.e., by energetic, relentless, revolutionary, and international action.

Second: -Establishment of a free society based on co-operative means of production.

Third: -Free exchange of equivalent products by and between the productive organizations without commerce and profit-mongery.

Fourth: -Organization of education on a secular, scientific, and equal basis for both sexes.

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Fifth: -Equal rights for all without regard to sex or race.

Sixth: -Regulation of all public affairs by free contracts between the autonomous (independent) communes and associations, resting on a federalistic basis.

Whoever agrees with this ideal let him grasp our outstretched brother hands!

Proletarians of all countries untie!

Fellow-workmen, all we need for the achievement of this great end is ORGANIZATION and UNITY!

There exists now no great obstacle to that unity. The work of peaceful education and revolutionary conspiracy well can and ought to run in parallel lines.

The day has come for solidarity. Join our ranks! Let the drum beat defiantly the roll of battle:  
"Workmen of all countries unite! You have nothing to lose but your chains, you have a world to win!"

Tremble oppressors of the world! Not far beyond your purblind sight there dawns the scarlet and sable lights of the JUDGEMENT DAY!

## “Why I am an Anarchist” by Voltairine de Cleyre, 1897

*Voltairine de Cleyre was born in Leslie, Michigan in 1866. She was an influential writer and speaker, taking on such controversial topics as birth control, marriage, women's suffrage, religion, government, and others. She was a well-known political radical and a close friend of perhaps the most famous American anarchist of the time, Emma Goldman. The following is composed of excerpts from her essay first published in 1897, and republished in Goldman's monthly magazine Mother Earth in 1908. In this essay, de Cleyre briefly examines some of the deep questions and observations she had about life growing up, especially having to do with fairness, liberty, oppression, power, and property.*

*Source: <http://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/voltairine-de-cleyre-why-i-am-an-anarchist>*

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[...] Now my feelings have ever revolted against repression in all forms, even when my intellect, instructed by my conservative teachers, told me repression was right. Even when my thinking part declared it was nobody's fault that one man had so much he could neither swallow it down nor wear it out, while another had so little he must die of cold and hunger, my feelings would not be satisfied. They raised an unending protest against the heavenly administration that managed earth so badly. They could never be reconciled to the idea that any human being could be in existence merely through the benevolent toleration of another human being. The feeling always was that society ought to be in such a form that any one who was willing to work ought to be able to live in plenty, and nobody ought to have such “an awful lot” more than anybody else. Moreover, the instinct of liberty naturally revolted not only at economic servitude, but at the outcome of it, class-lines. Born of working parents (I am glad to be able to say it), brought up in one of those small villages where class differences are less felt than in cities, there was, nevertheless, a very keen perception that certain persons were considered better worth attentions, distinctions, and rewards than others, and that these certain persons were the daughters and sons of the well-to-do. Without any belief whatever that the possession of wealth to the exclusion of others was wrong, there was yet an instinctive decision that there was much injustice in educational opportunities being given to those who could scarcely make use of them, simply because their parents were wealthy; to quote the language of a little friend of mine, there was an inward protest against “the people with five hundred dollar brains getting five thousand dollar educations,” while the bright children of the poor had to be taken out of school and put to work. And so with other material concerns.

[...] An eager wish, too, for something better in education than the set program of the grade-work, every child's head measured by every other child's head, regimentation, rule, arithmetic, forever and ever; nothing to develop originality of work among teachers; the perpetual dead level; the eternal average. Parallel with all these, there was a constant seeking for something new and fresh in literature, and unspeakable ennui at the presentation and re-

## “Why I am an Anarchist” by Voltairine de Cleyre, 1897

presentation of the same old ideal in the novel, the play, the narrative, the history. A general disgust for the poor but virtuous fair-haired lady with blue eyes, who adored a dark-haired gentleman with black eyes and much money, and to whom, after many struggles with the jealous rival, she was happily married; a desire that there should be persons who should have some other purpose in appearing before us than to exhibit their lovesickness, people with some other motive in walking through a book than to get married at the end. A similar feeling in taking up an account of travels; a desire that the narrator would find something better worth recounting than his own astonishment at some particular form of dress he had never happened to see before, or a dish he had never eaten in his own country; a desire that he would tell us of the conditions, the aspirations, the activities of those strange peoples. Again the same unrest in reading a history, an overpowering sentiment of revolt at the spun-out details of the actions of generals, the movements of armies, the thronement and dethronement of kings, the intrigues of courtiers, the gracing or disgracing of favorites, the place-hunting of republics, the count of elections, the numbering of administrations! A never-ending query, “What were the common people doing all this time? What did they do who did not go to war? How did they associate, how did they feel, how did they dream? What had they, who paid for all these things, to say, to sing, to act?”

[...]It is extremely hard for an American, who has been nursed in the traditions of the revolution, to realize the fact that that revolution must be classed precisely with others, and its value weighed and measured by its results, just as they are. I am an American myself, and was at one time as firmly attached to those traditions as anyone can be; I believed that if there were any way to remedy the question of poverty the Constitution must necessarily afford the means to do it. It required long thought and many a dubious struggle between prejudice and reason before I was able to arrive at the conclusion that the political victory of America had been a barren thing: that a declaration of equal rights on paper, while an advance in human evolution in so far that at least it crystallized a vague ideal, was after all but an irony in the face of facts; that what people wanted to make them really free was the right to things; that a “free country” in which all the productive tenures were already appropriated was not free at all; that any man who must wait the complicated working of a mass of unseen powers before he may engage in the productive labor necessary to get his food is the last thing but a free man; that those who do command these various resources and powers, and therefore the motions of their fellow-men, command likewise the manner of their voting, and that hence the reputed great safeguard of individual liberties, the ballot box, become but an added instrument of oppression in the hands of the possessor; finally, that the principle of majority rule itself, even granting it could ever be practicalized — which it could not on any large scale: it is always a real minority that governs in place of the nominal majority — but even granting it realizable, the thing itself is essentially pernicious; that the only desirable condition of society is one in which no one is compelled to accept an arrangement to which he has not consented.

# Preamble to the IWW Constitution (1905)

*The IWW (Industrial Workers of the World) was founded in 1905 with the goal of uniting all workers—skilled and unskilled, foreign-born or U.S.-born, regardless of skin color or gender—under “One Big Union.” It was a revolutionary, militant group that believed that powerful industrialist-capitalists, militias, the courts, and the federal government was waging a war against them. The IWW was formed in part to defend the poor worker through guerrilla tactics; thus, some members of the IWW bombed construction sites and committed sabotage on the job. Much violence was blamed on the IWW, but in fact, it was the powerful capitalist class and those who followed them who committed the vast majority of violence in the “labor war.”*

*Source: <http://www.iww.org/culture/official/preamble.shtml>*

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The working class and the employing class have nothing in common. There can be no peace so long as hunger and want are found among millions of the working people and the few, who make up the employing class, have all the good things of life.

Between these two classes a struggle must go on until the workers of the world organize as a class, take possession of the means of production, abolish the wage system, and live in harmony with the Earth.

We find that the centering of the management of industries into fewer and fewer hands makes the trade unions unable to cope with the ever growing power of the employing class. The trade unions foster a state of affairs which allows one set of workers to be pitted against another set of workers in the same industry, thereby helping defeat one another in wage wars. Moreover, the trade unions aid the employing class to mislead the workers into the belief that the working class have interests in common with their employers.

These conditions can be changed and the interest of the working class upheld only by an organization formed in such a way that all its members in any one industry, or in all industries if necessary, cease work whenever a strike or lockout is on in any department thereof, thus making an injury to one an injury to all.

Instead of the conservative motto, "A fair day's wage for a fair day's work," we must inscribe on our banner the revolutionary watchword, "Abolition of the wage system."

It is the historic mission of the working class to do away with capitalism. The army of production must be organized, not only for everyday struggle with capitalists, but also to carry on production when capitalism shall have been overthrown. By organizing industrially we are forming the structure of the new society within the shell of the old.

## “Patriotism: A Menace to Liberty” by Emma Goldman (1908)

*Emma Goldman was and is perhaps the most famous American anarchist. After immigrating to the United States at the age of sixteen in 1885, Goldman soon became inspired by the Haymarket trial and subsequent martyrdom of the Chicago anarchists. From that point on, Goldman became an anarchist, primarily of the “intellectual” kind, but kept close personal relationships with the most radical of anarchists, including Alexander Berkman and Johann Most. Goldman also became a public intellectual and well-known social critic, as well as an outspoken proponent of birth control and other women’s issues. Emma Goldman was an invaluable communicator of radical ideas to the American public. She, along with Alexander Berkman and many other radicals, would be arrested and deported during the 1919-1920 “Red Scare.”*

*In the following excerpts of a longer essay, Goldman connects patriotism to militarism and imperialism, making controversial arguments about the detrimental aspects of patriotism to peace and justice, both nationally and internationally. Many of her arguments would be justified and her predictions come true during and after the First World War.*

*Source: <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/2162/2162-h/2162-h.htm#patriotism>*

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What is patriotism? Is it love of one's birthplace, the place of childhood's recollections and hopes, dreams and aspirations? Is it the place where, in childlike naivety, we would watch the fleeting clouds, and wonder why we, too, could not run so swiftly? The place where we would count the milliard glittering stars, terror-stricken lest each one "an eye should be," piercing the very depths of our little souls? Is it the place where we would listen to the music of the birds, and long to have wings to fly, even as they, to distant lands? Or the place where we would sit at mother's knee, enraptured by wonderful tales of great deeds and conquests? In short, is it love for the spot, every inch representing dear and precious recollections of a happy, joyous, and playful childhood?

If that were patriotism, few American men of today could be called upon to be patriotic, since the place of play has been turned into factory, mill, and mine, while deafening sounds of machinery have replaced the music of the birds. Nor can we longer hear the tales of great deeds, for the stories our mothers tell today are but those of sorrow, tears, and grief.

What, then, is patriotism? "Patriotism, sir, is the last resort of scoundrels," said Dr. Johnson. Leo Tolstoy, the greatest anti-patriot of our times, defines patriotism as the principle that will justify the training of wholesale murderers; a trade that requires better equipment for the exercise of man-killing than the making of such necessities of life as shoes, clothing, and houses; a trade that guarantees better returns and greater glory than that of the average workingman[...]

## “Patriotism: A Menace to Liberty” by Emma Goldman (1908)

Indeed, conceit, arrogance, and egotism are the essentials of patriotism. Let me illustrate. Patriotism assumes that our globe is divided into little spots, each one surrounded by an iron gate. Those who have had the fortune of being born on some particular spot, consider themselves better, nobler, grander, more intelligent than the living beings inhabiting any other spot. It is, therefore, the duty of everyone living on that chosen spot to fight, kill, and die in the attempt to impose his superiority upon all the others.

The inhabitants of the other spots reason in like manner, of course, with the result that, from early infancy, the mind of the child is poisoned with blood-curdling stories about the Germans, the French, the Italians, Russians, etc. When the child has reached manhood, he is thoroughly saturated with the belief that he is chosen by the Lord himself to defend his country against the attack or invasion of any foreigner. It is for that purpose that we are clamoring for a greater army and navy, more battleships and ammunition[...]

An army and navy represents the people's toys. To make them more attractive and acceptable, hundreds and thousands of dollars are being spent for the display of these toys. That was the purpose of the American government in equipping a fleet and sending it along the Pacific coast, that every American citizen should be made to feel the pride and glory of the United States. The city of San Francisco spent one hundred thousand dollars for the entertainment of the fleet; Los Angeles, sixty thousand; Seattle and Tacoma, about one hundred thousand. To entertain the fleet, did I say? To dine and wine a few superior officers, while the "brave boys" had to mutiny to get sufficient food. Yes, two hundred and sixty thousand dollars were spent on fireworks, theatre parties, and revelries, at a time when men, women, and children through the breadth and length of the country were starving in the streets; when thousands of unemployed were ready to sell their labor at any price.

Two hundred and sixty thousand dollars! What could not have been accomplished with such an enormous sum? But instead of bread and shelter, the children of those cities were taken to see the fleet, that it may remain, as one of the newspapers said, "a lasting memory for the child."

A wonderful thing to remember, is it not? The implements of civilized slaughter. If the mind of the child is to be poisoned with such memories, what hope is there for a true realization of human brotherhood?



## “Patriotism: A Menace to Liberty” by Emma Goldman (1908)

We Americans claim to be a peace-loving people. We hate bloodshed; we are opposed to violence. Yet we go into spasms of joy over the possibility of projecting dynamite bombs from flying machines upon helpless citizens. We are ready to hang, electrocute, or lynch anyone, who, from economic necessity, will risk his own life in the attempt upon that of some industrial magnate. Yet our hearts swell with pride at the thought that America is becoming the most powerful nation on earth, and that it will eventually plant her iron foot on the necks of all other nations.

Such is the logic of patriotism[...]

Thinking men and women the world over are beginning to realize that patriotism is too narrow and limited a conception to meet the necessities of our time. The centralization of power has brought into being an international feeling of solidarity among the oppressed nations of the world; a solidarity which represents a greater harmony of interests between the workingman of America and his brothers abroad than between the American miner and his exploiting compatriot; a solidarity which fears not foreign invasion, because it is bringing all the workers to the point when they will say to their masters, "Go and do your own killing. We have done it long enough for you."

This solidarity is awakening the consciousness of even the soldiers, they, too, being flesh of the flesh of the great human family. A solidarity that has proven infallible more than once during past struggles, and which has been the impetus inducing the Parisian soldiers, during the Commune of 1871, to refuse to obey when ordered to shoot their brothers. It has given courage to the men who mutinied on Russian warships during recent years. It will eventually bring about the uprising of all the oppressed and downtrodden against their international exploiters.

When we have undermined the patriotic lie, we shall have cleared the path for that great structure wherein all nationalities shall be united into a universal brotherhood,--a truly FREE SOCIETY.

# “The Preacher and the Slave” by Joe Hill, 1911

*Joe Hill was a famous IWW member (aka “Wobbly”) and acerbic song-writer for the workers’ movement. He often included parody in his songs either by changing the words of a familiar tune, using sarcastic or ironic language, or making a pun out of an enemy’s name. In “The Preacher and the Slave,” Hill employed the use of all three tactics. This song is perhaps his most famous song, and was well-known by radicals and non-radicals in its time and for decades after. The song criticizes, in particular, religious leaders who showed little sympathy for poor and migrant workers.*

*Just a few years after writing this song, Hill would be indicted and found guilty for a murder Hill almost certainly did not commit. Despite all evidence to his innocence, Hill was executed by firing squad in 1915.*

*Source: <http://www.folkarchive.de/pie.html>*

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Long-haired preachers come out every night,  
Try to tell you what's wrong and what's right;  
But when asked how 'bout something to eat  
They will answer with voices so sweet:

## CHORUS:

You will eat, bye and bye,  
In that glorious land above the sky;  
Work and pray, live on hay,  
You'll get pie in the sky when you die.

And the starvation army they play,  
And they sing and they clap and they pray.  
Till they get all your coin on the drum,  
Then they tell you when you are on the bum:

If you fight hard for children and wife —  
Try to get something good in this life —  
You're a sinner and bad man, they tell,  
When you die you will sure go to hell.

Workingmen of all countries unite,  
Side by side we for freedom will fight:  
When the world and its wealth we have gained  
To the grafters we'll sing this refrain:

## LAST CHORUS:

You will eat, bye and bye.  
When you've learned how to cook and to fry;  
Chop some wood, 'twill do you good,  
And you'll eat in the sweet bye and bye.

# “Solidarity Forever” by Ralph Chaplin, 1915

*Written for the IWW (Industrial Workers of the World), and since taken up by many other unions and worker movements worldwide, “Solidarity Forever” is one of the most famous union songs in the English language. The word “solidarity” refers to the belief that workers could only change their impoverished conditions by becoming conscious of themselves as an oppressed class and by working in cooperation with another against their oppressors (the capitalist class). The music is to the tune of “John Brown’s Body” and “Battle Hymn of the Republic.”*

*Source: <http://unionsong.com/u025.html>*

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When the union's inspiration through the workers' blood shall run,  
There can be no power greater anywhere beneath the sun;  
Yet what force on earth is weaker than the feeble strength of one,  
But the union makes us strong.

## CHORUS:

Solidarity forever,  
Solidarity forever,  
Solidarity forever,  
For the union makes us strong.

Is there aught we hold in common with the greedy parasite,  
Who would lash us into serfdom and would crush us with his might?  
Is there anything left to us but to organize and fight?  
For the union makes us strong.

It is we who plowed the prairies; built the cities where they trade;  
Dug the mines and built the workshops, endless miles of railroad laid;  
Now we stand outcast and starving midst the wonders we have made;  
But the union makes us strong.

All the world that's owned by idle drones is ours and ours alone.  
We have laid the wide foundations; built it skyward stone by stone.  
It is ours, not to slave in, but to master and to own.  
While the union makes us strong.

They have taken untold millions that they never toiled to earn,  
But without our brain and muscle not a single wheel can turn.  
We can break their haughty power, gain our freedom when we learn  
That the union makes us strong.

In our hands is placed a power greater than their hoarded gold,  
Greater than the might of armies, magnified a thousand-fold.  
We can bring to birth a new world from the ashes of the old  
For the union makes us strong.

## “Why the IWW Is Not Patriotic to the United States” (1918)

*As a radical, anarchist-inspired labor organization, the IWW (Industrial Workers of the World) was vocally and militantly against U.S. involvement in the First World War. They, like many radicals, believed that the capitalist class in the United States was seeking involvement in the European war to make vast war-profits in weapons, materials, supplies, food, etc. The IWW, along with other anarchists and socialists, actively championed anti-conscription campaigns, which caused many of these radical activists to be beaten up, imprisoned, and, for some, ultimately deported.*

*The following is an excerpt from a speech given by an IWW “Wobbly” at a court hearing after being arrested and put on trial for violating the Espionage Act of 1917.*

*Source: Zinn, Howard and Anthony Arnove, Voices of a People’s History of the United States (New York: Seven Stories Press, 2004), 291-292.*

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You ask me why the IWW is not patriotic to the United States. If you were a bum without a blanket; if you had left your wife and kids when you went west for a job, and had never located them since; if your job had never kept you long enough in a place to qualify you to vote; if you slept in a lousy, sour bunkhouse, and ate food just as rotten as they could give you and get by with it; if deputy sheriffs shot your cooking cans full of holes and spilled your grub on the ground; if your wages were lowered on you when the bosses thought they had you down; if there was one law for [Herman] Ford, [Blackie] Suhr and [Tom] Mooney, and another for Harry Thaw;<sup>1</sup> if every person who represented law and order and the nation beat you up, railroaded you to jail, and the good Christian people cheered and told them to go to it, how in hell do you expect a man to be patriotic? This war is a business man’s war and we don’t see why we should go out and get shot in order to save the lovely state of affairs which we now enjoy.

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<sup>1</sup> Ford, Suhr, and Mooney were IWW members indicted for leading or being involved in workers’ strikes; Thaw was the son of a coal and railroad “baron” who murdered a rival in front of many witnesses, was put on trial for first-degree murder, but escaped indictment for being “temporarily insane.”

## “Step by Step” in the *New York Evening Telegram*, 1 Nov 1919

*The year 1919 saw the beginning of the first Red Scare in the United States. It was an eventful year for radicalism in the United States: there was a general strike in Seattle, a national steel strike, a national coal strike, a police strike in Boston, two mail-bomb campaigns directed at anti-immigrant and anti-radical government officials, and frequent street violence across the country. On top of all that, with the First World War just recently ended and the Russian Revolution descended into civil war, many in the United States were wary of European immigrants and some even called to deport “dangerous” foreigners back to Europe.*

*Bolshevism was the ideology to which the Bolshevik Party in Russia ascribed. The Bolsheviks were a revolutionary political party who sought to create a government run by the “proletariat,” or the working class, including industrial laborers, soldiers, and sailors. The Bolshevik Party was the most popular, the most powerful, and the most militant socialist party in Russia from 1912 (at its founding) to the October Revolution of 1917 and beyond. When the Bolshevik Party seized government power in the October Revolution, creating the first socialist state in history, they inspired working class and leftist peoples across the world for years to come. The Russian Civil War, which lasted from November 1917 to October 1922, was a conflict between the Bolshevik Red Army and the multinational imperialist White Army.*

*Source: [http://www.baruch.cuny.edu/library/alumni/online\\_exhibits/digital/redscare/HTMLCODE/CHRON/RS075.HTM](http://www.baruch.cuny.edu/library/alumni/online_exhibits/digital/redscare/HTMLCODE/CHRON/RS075.HTM)*

