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UP FROM EXCLUSION: BLACK AND WHITE WORKERS, RACE, AND THE STATE OF LABOR HISTORY

Eric Arnesen

Over a quarter century ago, historian Herbert Gutman complained with good reason about the "absence of detailed knowledge of the 'local world' inhabited by white and Negro workers" in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.[1] The studies of black urban communities that were proliferating within African-American historiography had relegated black workers to the margins of community development led by black professionals and middle-class activists. Within labor history, an older tradition influenced by industrial relations scholarship emphasized institutional union structures and paid little attention to rank-and-file workers of any race. With the exception of a few studies, black workers remained largely outside the traditional narratives of labor history, entering the picture only as strikebreakers or as a "problem" that white labor had to confront. Writing in 1969, a year after Gutman, James Gross similarly complained that a quarter century's scholarship on the subject merely "amounted to classifications of the racial practices of organized labor: laissez faire, equalitarian, discriminatory, or those unions excluding Negroes by constitutional provision or bylaws." What was needed, Gross proposed, were explorations not of "attitudes *toward* the Negro workers . . . but the ideas and ideals *of* the Negro worker."[2] In the ensuing decade, the first flowering of the new labor history revolutionized the study of the American working class, but through the early 1980s, its emphasis lay with skilled artisans, white industrial workers, and immigrant communities. With few exceptions, neither black workers nor race were the focus of attention, and the agenda proposed by Gutman and Gross remained unaddressed.[3]

Since the late 1980s, labor historians themselves have grown increasingly critical of their field's failure to address issues of race. Inspired in part by the writings of the former National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) labor secretary-turned-academic, Herbert Hill, they charge that labor history has a serious "race problem." Over the years, Hill has offered the strongest academic criticism of the American labor movement's racial practices and, recently, of the new labor history for its treatment of race and racism. Hill has repeatedly denounced white trade unions as racist

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vehicles for excluding black, Asian, and other minority workers. At the same time, he charged labor historians with denying the centrality of race because of their blind devotion to Marxist social theory.[4] Hill's charges have struck a deep chord. The new labor history, Noel Ignatiev similarly argues, has treated racism as "peripheral to the main line of working-class formation and struggle." Historians' search for "the famous 'usable past'" has led them to "denial, and denial [has] led to apologetics."[5]

If the late 1960s complaints of Gutman and Gross accurately reflected a paucity of scholarship, the same cannot be said of the 1990s charges. The characterizations of labor history's encounter with race by such writers as Hill, Ignatiev, and David Roediger are, to say the least, overdrawn. There is no denying that the first generation of new labor historians did not put white labor's racial practices and beliefs or minority workers' perspectives and strategies at the top of its research agenda. Today, however, these issues are central topics in their own right. Since the mid 1980s, labor historians have begun to engage issues of race in significant ways. The past decade has witnessed a veritable outpouring of new scholarship on trade union racial practices, black and other minority workers' experiences and activism, and on white working-class racial identity. Far from being the academic backwater it was in the late 1960s, the study of race and labor has become an academic growth industry. "Scholarship on race in American labor history steadily grows in quantity and quality," concluded Joe Trotter, Jr. and Alan Dawley in a recent special issue of *Labor History* devoted to race and class. "Every month seems to bring added understanding of the intersections of race and class, racial segmentation of the labor market, and the impact of race on culture and community."[6] What is striking is not only that the scholarship on race and labor is far richer, more nuanced, and diverse than the field's critics admit, but the subject itself has become one of the most dynamic within labor history.

The Racial Practices of Trade Unions

Perhaps the most contentious issue pursued by labor historians investigating race is that of trade union attitudes and policies toward minority, or non white, workers. That organized labor often functioned to uphold whites' access to employment and exclude non white workers has been a commonplace in the literature for much of this century. Historians have long acknowledged the notable, if partial, exceptions of the Knights of Labor in the 1880s—which admitted blacks (though it excluded Asian immigrants) in separate unions; the Industrial Workers of the World in the 1910s—which joined blacks and whites in the same locals; and the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO)—which was committed, in theory at least, to organizing workers regardless of skill, race, or gender. Scholars similarly recognized the dismal

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record of the American Federation of Labor (AFL). And yet, the question of trade union racial practices has generated tremendous controversy over the past decade. Few, if any, historians would claim that AFL unions provided genuine equality, as we understand it today, or promoted civil rights for African Americans. But some have cast the AFL as little more than an organizational vehicle for maintaining white privilege and for subordinating non whites. Not just the AFL, but the Knights and the CIO, too, have seen their reputation for egalitarianism sullied by historians who have identified pronounced discrepancies between the movements' ideologies and practices.

Herbert Hill, the chief proponent of the view of unions as "white job trusts," sparked the most widely cited debate about race within labor history when he attacked the work of the late Herbert Gutman shortly after the latter's death. In 1988, Hill published a lengthy critique of Gutman's 1968 essay, "The Negro and the United Mine Workers of America," which had explored in sketch-like fashion the life and letters of Richard L. Davis, a black Ohio coal miner who served as a union official in the fledgling United Mine Workers (UMW) in the 1890s. Hill charged Gutman with seeking "to create a myth" based upon the assumption that the turn-of-the-century UMW "was the advanced model of interracial working-class solidarity, and that this pattern characterized other labor unions in varying degrees as well." Gutman's purpose, according to Hill, was to disseminate a "romanticized vision of the working class," a task that required him to find "examples of class consciousness among workers that transcended race, even if that meant ignoring data which conflicted with cherished ideological assumptions." In contrast, Hill viewed the UMW as a union which subordinated, controlled, and discriminated against its black members and which was marked by "tremendous racial tension." While the "essence" of racial subordination remained the same, to the extent that its form was altered, it was because it was "in the interests of whites to do so."[7] The Hill-Gutman debate, as it has been characterized, pits proponents of a hard-headed portrait of working-class racism, with unions serving the primary function of excluding, marginalizing, or otherwise subordinating minority workers while upholding white privilege, against those who believe in the possibility and reality of an interracial working-class movement in which common class interests transcend race.

The principal problem with such a framing of the debate is that it fundamentally misrepresents the issues in contention. One of the camps simply did not exist, for the "Gutman" side was a caricature. Neither Gutman, nor those who took inspiration from his writings, posited the UMW as an interracial utopia.[8] Gutman himself took considerable pains to demonstrate the racial obstacles that Richard Davis and other black miners repeatedly confronted. Few of those who have taken biracial and interracial

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unionism seriously have shied away from the countless examples of racial inequality or subscribed to any simple assessment of biracial or interracial unionism. Nor has the debate centered on the question of "whether to give priority to race or class identity," as others have charged.[9] While Hill has steadfastly insisted on the centrality of racial consciousness, one is hard put to find a serious historian who actually insists that class was more important than race or who subsumes the latter into the former. A more accurate characterization of the debate would place, on the one side, those who believe that the relationship between race and labor can be reduced to a narrative of exclusion and subordination, and on the other, those who see the relationship itself as more complex and ask a much broader array of questions. Hill has limited his attention largely to chronicling white labor's racism, modeling his arguments after lawyers' briefs which hold no room for ambiguity or appreciation for multiple meanings. By contrast, for many of those he targets, race and class relations are themselves historicized and situated in context; a social and political history of working-class race relations, union practices, and minority workers' activism constitute their agenda.

Building upon an earlier tradition that included not only Hill but Herbert Northrup, Herbert Bloch, and Philip Foner, one recent trajectory within labor history continues to emphasize white labor's role in maintaining and even creating Jim Crow.[10] Henry McKiven, in his book, *Iron and Steel* (1995), insists that for iron and steel workers in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Birmingham, Alabama, "the caste system, and the ideology of white supremacy that supported it, was essential to the defense of their class interests." Carrying the story several decades ahead, Robert Norrell found that little had changed. Even the new CIO unions, whose official ideology promoted interracialism, gave to white workers "new power to enforce job discrimination, thus severely curtailing black opportunities."[11] The railroad industry had few rivals when it came to occupational segregation and the exclusion of blacks from white unions, as a number of historians and legal scholars have shown. Until compelled to do so by federal legislation in the 1960s, none of the large railroad brotherhoods of engineers, brakemen, firemen, and conductors admitted blacks as members; from the 1910s through the 1950s, these unions used their institutional strength to negotiate contracts that barred the employment of blacks in some positions and reduced the numbers of blacks in others.[12] In *Conflict of Interests* (1994), one of the few studies of race and labor in the post-1950 era, Alan Draper is careful to draw a distinction between southern rank-and-file AFL-CIO members who staunchly opposed moves toward desegregation and a handful of leaders of statewide labor councils, whose cautious and at times courageous defense of civil rights alienated their white membership base.[13]

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While many works in this tradition have rightly called attention to white union racism and the impact of exclusionary policies, their treatment of race is not infrequently selective and one-sided. Black workers more often appear as victims of racism, as little more than passive objects manipulated by whites. Agency is bestowed on white workers, while African Americans' own responses and strategies are treated as if they were of secondary or even minimal importance. Yet black workers were themselves genuine actors, even when negotiating extremely difficult terrain. Try as they might, white workers did not always get exactly what they wanted, for black workers and their employers often had different ideas about the role of race in the labor market or on the job. Moreover, while white workers are now seen as having a racial consciousness, black working-class racial identity is taken as a given, rarely requiring sustained exploration. One of the tasks ahead for historians of trade union racial practices is to integrate more fully African-American history—in this case the values, perspectives, and behaviors of black workers—into their labor history narratives.

The scholarly treatment of the racial tensions in the Chicago stockyards in the World War I era demonstrates the indispensability of examining African-American responses to white labor strategies. Black migrants to wartime Chicago generally held themselves aloof from the unprecedented efforts of the Stockyards Labor Council (SLC) to unify packinghouse workers across lines of skill, race, ethnicity, and gender. Why? William Tuttle suggests that the long history of union exclusion and racism led Chicago blacks to reject belated white overtures during the war in his 1970 classic, *Race Riot*. James Grossman, in his sweeping and evocative *Land of Hope* (1989), examines black migrants' prior hostile encounters with white unions in the South, as well as long-time black Chicago residents' greater openness to the SLC. The Council's ultimate failure reflected a too little, too late approach to blacks, who maintained a worldview that gave primary emphasis to race, not class. More recently, Rick Halpern has offered a more favorable view of the SLC's efforts. While he accepts the conclusions of Tuttle and Grossman on black migrants' skepticism of the largely white council, he concludes that the SLC "went out of its way to demonstrate its willingness to defend blacks as equals." His *Down on the Killing Floor* (1997) places greater emphasis on employers' power and the federal government's role in bringing about the SLC's failure. The point is not that these historians have reached any fundamental consensus, for points of disagreement remain. Rather, each rightly treats the backgrounds, beliefs, and goals of African-American workers as central to a story that simply cannot be told without them.[14]

Much recent research has focused on the way individual union internationals and locals "dealt" with race and with minority workers in their ranks. Not surprisingly, just as Gutman himself had suspected in 1968, great variety

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marked local interactions across geographical regions, time, and trades. Recent scholarship on the United Mine Workers—the union about which Hill and Gutman so sharply differed—illustrates this point. Gutman's tentative foray into the UMW's early history and Hill's polemical response rested on only a small number of sources—primarily Davis's letters to the *United Mine Workers Journal*.[15] Later studies have highlighted a far more complex picture. In his *Black Coal Miners in America* (1980), the first schematic overview of race relations within the UMW, Ronald Lewis demonstrates that black miners shared no monolithic experience and that working-class race relations in the union reflected a number of distinctive regional patterns. An overwhelmingly white and hostile labor force in the North sharply resisted blacks' (and Asians') entry into mine jobs in the late nineteenth century. By contrast, a large number of black migrants in central Appalachia came closer to finding "economic equality than in any other coalfield." Some employment discrimination existed, conditions in company towns were harsh, and the level of violence in the region's numerous clashes between operators and miners was high. But in the early twentieth century, black and white miners achieved a "remarkable degree of class unity," at least in southern West Virginia. In Alabama, however, the experience of black miners was shaped by a deepening system of segregation, the widespread use of convict labor, hostile operators, and unsympathetic local and state officials.[16]

Indeed, recent social histories of Alabama mineworkers in the Gilded Age and Progressive eras have produced a picture of working-class and union race relations far more subtle than the model of subordination and exclusion advanced by Hill or even Gutman's more tentative assertions of interracialism. Daniel Letwin's recent book, *The Challenge of Interracial Unionism* (1998), is the first detailed exploration of Alabama's black and white miners, labor conflict, and unionization. The Greenback Labor Party of the 1870s, the Knights of Labor in the 1880s, and the United Mine Workers of America after 1890 all confronted a racially divided labor force and embraced blacks and whites as members. Letwin has shown that race relations in the coal fields were varied; black miners often responded enthusiastically to union drives and participated in the organization and leadership of interracial unions. Self-interest and a broader spirit of solidarity, he argues, prompted organized labor to encourage collaboration across the racial divide. Yet the limits of solidarity were very real: workers "went their separate ways in housing, schooling, worship, and social activity" and the UMW remained largely silent in the face of disenfranchisement and segregation. Blacks held many leadership positions, but whites always monopolized the presidency and held a majority on the union's governing board; and, notably, the Alabama mineworkers' organization drew a sharp line between industrial equality—which it supported—and social equality—an imprecise charge which it rejected. Although

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race played a decisive part in the defeats suffered by the UMW in 1894, 1908, and after World War I, it was not racial divisions within the UMW that undermined the interracial alliance. Rather, it was the success of coal operators, the white press, and state officials in whipping up racial hostility in the broader community that overwhelmed the black and white strikers. Letwin's book, along with studies by Alex Lichtenstein and Brian Kelly, convincingly answer Hill's critique of Gutman by chronicling the travails of a significant, if imperfect, interracial movement.[17]

The historic breakthrough in relations between African-American workers and the larger labor movement came with the formation of the CIO in 1935. A decade after its founding, black scholars Horace Cayton and St. Clair Drake lauded the CIO for its deliberate efforts to win blacks' allegiance. Not merely "expediency" was involved, they argued, for the CIO was "a crusading movement" whose belief in racial equality "was a component part of its ideology."[18] Beginning with August Meier and Elliot Rudwick's *Black Detroit and the Rise of the UAW* (1979), there has been a small but growing stream of historical scholarship on the CIO's relationship with black workers.[19] But the glow captured by Cayton and Drake has faded considerably and the dispassionate tone of Meier and Rudwick's model account of the evolving relationship between the UAW and Detroit's African-American community has been replaced by more strident evaluations from the growing number of labor historians engaged in debates over how to assess those racial practices. If few are prepared to accept Herbert Hill's dismissal of the CIO, neither are labor historians willing to accept at face value Cayton and Drake's enthusiastic endorsement of the industrial union federation.[20]

Much recent debate has centered on the degree of racial egalitarianism within the CIO. Implicitly challenging the celebration of rank-and-file militancy and community-based unionism by historians as diverse as Staughton Lynd, Elizabeth Faue, and Michael Goldfield, Bruce Nelson has drawn a sharp line between a racist white rank and file and an occasionally more enlightened leadership. Persuaded by the work on "whiteness" pioneered by David Roediger, Nelson concludes that white workers' backlash against black demands by the 1940s demonstrated that the "great majority of white workers were unwilling to unite with African Americans around a program that would have challenged deeply-rooted patterns of racial inequality in factory, mine and mill, as well as in the larger society." Some CIO unions offered more "*rhetorical* commitment to the cause of racial equality" through support for civil rights legislation in Washington and the funding of civil rights groups, than substantive commitment, which Nelson defines as willingness to "confront a deeply-entrenched employment structure" that favored whites. Why such union support for legislation and activist groups is merely rhetorical and not itself substantive is not clear from his argument. But

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to the extent that CIO unions did address black demands, it was the leadership that led the way. Meier and Rudwick, always unsentimental and uninterested in explicitly theoretical issues, similarly emphasized the positive role of the UAW's leadership in the late 1930s and early 1940s in *Black Detroit*. Union leaders, recognizing the necessity of winning over black workers' allegiance, courted African-American organizations to construct an historic alliance that would bring black workers into the industrial union fold.[21] Judith Stein, whose study of the United Steel Workers in the South from the 1930s through the early 1950s contradicts the findings of Robert Norrell mentioned above, found that black Birmingham workers conducted "effective, if limited campaigns to achieve a measure of shop-floor equality," often with decisive support from the international's leaders.[22]

Kevin Boyle's recent study, *The UAW and the Heyday of American Liberalism* (1995), anticipated Nelson's distinction between national politics and internal employment structures, but more so than Nelson, Boyle attributes the formation of union racial policies and their *outcomes* to the ongoing struggles *within* the union between factions, black activists, white union leaders, and the white rank and file. The international union's leaders in the 1940s and 1950s prioritized broad social democratic principles and exhibited a strong commitment to racial equality but largely at the level of national politics. (Unlike Nelson, Boyle does not see this as merely "rhetorical.") On the local level, union leaders "grappled with racial tensions" within their ranks, confronting a white rank and file that sometimes used its "newfound bargaining power to institutionalize the auto industry's traditional color line, which relegated African-Americans to a narrow range of low-paying and undesirable jobs." Whites also continued to rely upon hate strikes to block the promotion of blacks well into the post–World War II era. Black auto workers in turn formed "factory-level protest groups," drew upon allies in their communities, and pressured UAW leaders to live up to their commitments. The result was mixed. Where the international exercised influence, it pressured racist locals to reform; where its power was weaker and white opposition stronger, it responded more timidly. As impressive as the UAW's commitment to civil rights in national politics was, its ability to rectify racial inequality in its own ranks rested upon its leaders' assessments of the union's internal balance of forces. UAW locals in the post–World War II era "could and did block shop floor integration," but they "also served as avenues through which African Americans advanced their demands for equal access to industrial work." Boyle's is not merely a tale of white racism and employment discrimination, but of an active process of struggle involving blacks, whites, various leaders, and factions; his approach highlights the role of regional distinctions, internal union divisions, politics, and principle.[23]

Whatever their shortfalls on issues of racial equality, some CIO unions did

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not shy away from supporting black demands for civil rights inside and outside of the workplace. Left-led unions—those with a significant communist presence—generally proved far more receptive to black workers than those to their right. A number of recent studies conclude, for instance, that the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers, the Food, Tobacco, Agricultural and Allied Workers, the United Packinghouse Workers, and the United Farm Equipment Workers all "engaged in significant racially egalitarian struggles on behalf of their African-American members," in Michael Goldfield's words.[24] Michael Honey's *Southern Labor and Black Civil Rights* (1993), a powerful and moving study of black activism and violent repression, similarly argues that the left-led unions of Memphis, Tennessee, proved far better on race than more conservative CIO unions. Two recent studies by Roger Horowitz and Rick Halpern demonstrate convincingly the impressive record of the United Packinghouse Workers.[25] Although historians have yet to seriously and fully evaluate the less dramatic efforts of more centrist CIO internationals on such issues as upgrades, seniority, and job access, it is clear that Communist party (CP) activists and their supporters in CIO unions, fired by hopes for social transformation, were often at the forefront of struggles for civil rights and black equality, both in the labor movement and in the broader society.[26] American communists, particularly in the South, put their lives at considerable risk in overtly challenging the dominant economic and racial order.

Its largely positive role in advancing the cause of racial equality should not, however, exempt the CP from the same scrutiny that other, non-left CIO unions have received. Historians favorably disposed toward the CP have been hesitant to examine the impact of the party's own factionalism and political inconsistency on black workers.[27] It is perhaps understandable that many of American communism's newer historians on the left have sought to distance themselves from the Cold War caricatures of party members' motivation and behavior. But in so doing, they run the risk of creating their own overly romantic vision of the party, and in the process tend to forget that it was a *political* organization and that political organizations, of whatever political stripe, often subordinate ideology to self-interest and sacrifice principle to perceived pragmatism. Appreciating communists' personal courage and collective contributions to labor and civil rights need not obscure the ways the party's authoritarianism, changes in line, and commitment to the Soviet Union informed its dealings with African Americans and its pursuit of black liberation.

Overturning Cold War caricatures, new historians of American communism have persuasively demonstrated that rank-and-file communists often acted quite independently of their party's leadership and that even traditions of democratic centralism could work to black members' benefit in the context

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of the Jim Crow South. As Robin Kelley has shown, black Alabama communists during the 1930s often welcomed direction from New York—or Moscow—and considered national leaders their allies in more local struggles involving white comrades. But Kelley's story also reveals that what the party gave, the party could take away. Local black communists during the Depression had little say in the decision-making process that ordered them to attack the NAACP and then join it, or that first made black civil rights and civil liberties a party priority and then backpedaled by making alliances with southern white liberals the primary concern. In response, black party members voted with their feet, dropping out of the CP for other vehicles to pursue social justice. During World War II, party dictates made advocacy of uninterrupted and intensified production and adherence to the no-strike pledge the duty of its trade union members, sometimes putting black economic advancement off to another day. The party's authoritarian structure and devotion to the Soviet Union meant that politics could overwhelm principle, and that as genuinely important as civil rights were to leaders and rank-and-file communists alike, they too could be sacrificed to other goals.[28] Alex Lichtenstein soberly concludes that in Miami, Florida, in the 1940s, for instance, the "expediency of retaining power in a white-majority union"—Local 500 of the Transport Workers Union—"weakened the Communists' challenge to segregation, undermining African-American workers' faith in their leadership." Both communists and their anticommunist opponents "frequently placed the struggle for power ahead of the needs of rank and file workers in general." Lichtenstein suggests that historians' treatment of American communists has often resembled a "morality play, tailored to the assumptions and programs of anticommunist liberals . . . and post–New Left radicals." Although he recognizes the communists' commitment to organizing black workers and supporting civil rights, he also finds that the "rise and fall of Communist trade unionism in postwar Miami . . . reveals a far grayer picture . . . with few angels on either side."[29] August Meier and Elliot Rudwick, writing in 1982 before the growth of much of the new literature on communism and labor, offered a similarly nuanced interpretation in their study of the left-led Transport Workers Union (TWU) in the 1930s and 1940s. The "actual behavior of individual Communist-dominated unions," they conclude, "was highly varied and depended upon the specific milieu in which they operated." Factors influencing the TWU's stance included not only the racist outlook of the union's white constituency, but the attitudes of employers and the decisions of federal manpower agencies as well. Of particular importance, their work suggests, is the need to examine the "pressures from black community organizations as a factor in shaping the actual policies of these unions."[30]

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To a large extent, recent historiographical discussion of race and the CIO has been dominated by variants of the "how racist/racially egalitarian were they?" question. But the near single-minded focus on the issue has led historians to examine union racism in something of a vacuum. First, much of the recent work in labor history and race leaves unexplored the role of the state in shaping working-class race relations, despite the larger field's increasing interest in integrating political and labor history, in heeding the call to "bring the state back in." This holds not only for the South in the Jim Crow era, but for the North in the New Deal era as well. Nor have many historical studies examined the role of federal agencies, the law, and the judiciary in establishing racial rules in the workplace, policing working-class racial conflict, and legitimizing employment or union discrimination.[31] Second, given their earlier emphasis on the role of capital in driving changes in work relations, contesting unions, and controlling labor, new labor historians also have been surprisingly slow to assess employers' racial policies. Perhaps this avoidance stems from labor historians' fear of resurrecting the clichéd arguments about capital's divide-and-conquer strategies or the fostering of racial divisions from above. But the result has been a strangely lopsided treatment of race, labor, and employment: white workers and white-dominated trade unions are examined in isolation, and white labor is held essentially responsible for its own racism. The current rage to demonstrate the social construction of race and white workers' agency in creating their own racism has let capital largely off the hook, with workers dividing themselves and capital merely walking away with the proverbial shop. The critiques of social and labor history that emerged in the late 1970s and 1980s, which insisted that there can be no history of the working class without a history of capital or the state, are as relevant today to students of race and labor as they were a decades ago.[32]

Finally, while the assessment of the degree of racial egalitarianism within trade unions remains a valid endeavor, the political and moral passions conveyed in many accounts reflect contemporary political sensibilities that historical subjects would have found puzzling. The character of turn-of-the-century southern biracial unionism is a case in point. To expect late nineteenth-century black and white trade unionists to transcend their historical contexts and articulate critiques or adopt courses of action available to their late twentieth-century counterparts is to impose presentist values upon the past. Few late nineteenth and early twentieth-century southern coal miners or longshoremen, for example, would have found biracial unionism problematic. Separate unions for blacks and whites—as politically and morally troublesome as they might have appeared to CIO activists in the 1940s, A. Philip Randolph in the 1950s, the Justice Department in 1960s and 1970s, or to

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labor historians in the 1980s and 1990s—did not necessarily raise the eyebrows of black and white miners or dockers. In some cases, blacks expressed their preference for all-black unions which, in the context of Jim Crow, afforded them control over finances, allowed them to elect their own leaders, and provided them with a greater degree of protection.[33] This is not to say that blacks accepted a second-class status. To the contrary, many saw their own racially distinct union locals as vehicles to protect their members and advance their own agendas. They sought not integration but equality of status with the locals of their white counterparts.[34]

Nor was it likely that most black trade unionists in the Jim Crow era viewed the labor movement's disavowal of "social equality" to be a "stance . . . profoundly out of touch with the real world," as David Roediger has recently argued. Did the "walling off of social and political equality from 'stomach equality'" constitute "commonsense tactical wisdom for organized labor only if the labor movement's key constituency was assumed to be white"?[35] Many black workers, at least before World War I, would have sharply disagreed. Such a "walling off" of demands may run counter to late twentieth-century political beliefs, but it made logical sense to contemporaries, black and white, who had to negotiate a terrain saturated with ideological land mines like social equality. Such trade unionists repeatedly demonstrated their belief that an *embrace* of social equality, as opposed to its rejection, would have been profoundly out of touch with reality. It was a proposition for which few were willing to risk their movements or gamble their lives. To insist that the "extent to which social equality was practiced among members and their families in union affairs" should be one of the criteria upon which trade union racial practices be judged—as has Michael Goldfield for the CIO—ignores the very real choices that historical actors had to make in very real contexts. "To have any chance of bringing white workers into the CIO," Robert Korstad concludes, "many unions had to publicly disavow any intention of promoting social equality." Abstract standards and political criteria for evaluation cannot substitute for the careful reconstruction and analysis of historical circumstances in which the "very meaning of racial egalitarianism is rooted."[36] Assessments of the failure of turn-of-the century trade unionists to live up to the expectations of late twentieth century academics tells us more about the validity of historians' expectations than it does those of historical actors.

African-American Working-Class Activism

Scholars working in the distinct field of African-American working-class history have relegated many of the narrow questions plaguing studies of trade union racism to a back seat. If historians pursuing trade union racial practices are situated more firmly within the historiography of the new labor

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history, black working-class history is often, though not always, more grounded in African-American historiography. Like labor history itself, this subfield has grown in size and sophistication since the 1960s. And if the new labor history had a "race" problem from the 1960s through early 1980s, African-American history had something of a "class" problem in the same years. In the subgenre of urban studies that produced histories of black communities in Chicago, Harlem, Washington, D.C., Detroit, and Cleveland, for instance, black workers played only a minor role in a larger drama dominated by the black elite.[37] By the 1980s, however, this had changed dramatically. Although historians shared different interpretations of the black working-class experience, their studies featured black workers as central actors in their own right.[38]

The route to the study of the African-American working class traveled by Joe William Trotter, Jr. and Earl Lewis emerged primarily out of urban history. In his 1985 study, *Black Milwaukee*, Trotter replaces what he calls the current "ghettoization model" of black urban development with a new one of proletarianization. Trotter argues that proletarianization was the "process by which blacks became urban-industrial workers," a process that involved not merely the making of a ghetto but the "making of an Afro-American industrial working class." Extending his model in *Coal, Class, and Color* (1990), Trotter examines the transition of southern blacks from rural and semi-rural life to "life in a new industrial setting" in southern West Virginia. In both books, proletarianization is presented as something of a step up for black workers, from a world of sharecropping to one of wage labor that, despite its hardships, provided real material improvements in the lives of black migrants.[39] Earl Lewis's case study of Norfolk, Virginia—*In Their Own Interests* (1991)—similarly stresses the role black workers played in actively and creatively shaping their world. Lewis advances a model that demands attention to both the world of work and the "home sphere"—meaning both the "household and the community," where blacks not only devised strategies of resistance to white oppression but also transformed and celebrated cultural values and devised patterns of sociability that allowed them a degree of personal and collective satisfaction. While attentive to divisions within black communities—the black middle class and working class did not always see eye to eye—both Trotter and Lewis suggest that the character of racial oppression fostered a significant degree of racial unity across class lines. In Lewis's words, blacks "agreed more than they disagreed over which strategy to pursue."[40]

Robin D.G. Kelley's *Hammer and Hoe* (1990), a study of African-American communists in Alabama during the Great Depression, presents a starkly different reading of intraracial dynamics within one southern community, one in which blacks disagreed more than they agreed. The key variable was class.

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In Birmingham, Kelley found a black working class alienated from the pretensions and conservative outlook of a small black elite, which in turn expressed indifference or contempt toward black industrial workers, domestics, and sharecroppers. The dynamic force for change came not from the city's small and weak middle-class-dominated civil rights organizations, but from black workers in factory and field who challenged the economic and racial order from the left and from below. Through the Communist party and the city's new CIO-affiliated industrial unions, they offered a powerful if often unsuccessful assault on the bastions of southern white power.[41]

If labor history has now begun to make race central to its analyses, African-American history too has begun to grapple seriously with class. The very notion of "the black community" is itself a construction of black residents, white outsiders, and historians. The black community, like all communities, was and remains divided along multiple axes: occupation, status, class, generation, gender, and sometimes color. Few historians today would suggest that the black elite spoke for the entire community, that non-elites were silent followers of their social betters, or that social and economic differences had little impact. Indeed, as Robin Kelley has argued, to "understand the significance of class conflict among African Americans, we need to examine how specific communities are constructed and sustained rather than to presume the existence . . . of a tight-knit, harmonious black community."[42] That no consensus has emerged as to the salience of class should not be surprising, given the outpouring of new scholarship on African-American urban and working-class history in recent years. Although less prominent today, the long dominant notion of competition between concepts—class or race—still lingers. But it is hardly necessary to even pose the question of whether black workers identified themselves primarily as blacks or as workers. The evidence is clear that they did both, although at certain moments one identification might prove stronger than the other. The reality of racial oppression guaranteed that black workers would remain cognizant of race, but the often harsh conditions of working-class life ensured that black workers' experiences would differ from those of black elites.[43]

Beyond the issue of class are questions of the very character of opposition and resistance. In a subsequent article, "'We Are Not What We Seem,'" Kelley proposes a creative and radical "rethinking" of black working-class opposition. Eschewing the "privileging" of "public utterances of black elites" and historians' focus on formal, public organizations like trade unions or civil rights groups, Kelley directs attention to what he calls the "daily, unorganized, evasive, seemingly spontaneous actions" which form an "important yet neglected part of African-American political"—and by extension, labor—history. The appearance of silence or accommodation by black southerners in

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the Jim Crow era was just that, an appearance designed to deceive whites. "Beneath the veil of consent lies a hidden history of unorganized, everyday conflict waged by African-American working-people."[44] Drawing upon the concepts explored by anthropologist James Scott, Kelley insists that oppressed groups "challenge those in power by constructing a 'hidden transcript,' a dissident political culture that manifests itself in daily conversations, folklore, jokes, songs, and other cultural practices." African Americans' everyday forms of resistance—their infrapolitics—become the focus for historical research. Focusing his sights on seemingly mundane, previously ignored, or dismissed activities, Kelley successfully uncovers a world of opposition that calls into question many southern historians' assertions of black acquiescence, resignation, and passivity, and promises to open up dramatic new areas of investigation to southern, black, and labor historians.

The successful application of an "infrapolitical" approach to the study of the black working class may depend on its proponents' ability to evaluate and differentiate between different kinds of resistance and to recognize the ambiguity or contradictory meanings of the very acts they have uncovered. Kelley's article leaves the impression that daily life itself *was* resistance—that virtually every activity that black workers engaged in, from on-the-job pilfering, absenteeism, quitting, foot dragging, and sabotage to such leisure activities as dancing, drinking, and the wearing of particular clothing—can be understood as offering opposition to the prevailing racial order, to specific white authorities, or even the black elite. Without a doubt, as historians of American labor and slavery have shown in other contexts, such activities could assume political significance and reveal oppositional or, in Raymond Williams' and Roy Rosensweig's formulation, alternative values.[45] But not necessarily, and not always. Although Kelley does differentiate in theory between the oppositional and the alternative, in practice his examples sometimes blur the distinction. In reinterpreting a whole range of working-class behaviors, Kelly has posed exciting new questions for historians of the African-American and working-class experience to pursue. Just as historians of the white working-class have been accused of romanticizing their subject, however, Kelley's reading of "hidden transcripts" also comes close to creating a romanticized portrait of the black working class.

A significant development of the past few years has been the attention paid to categories of workers not only excluded from the labor movement but traditionally ignored by both labor and African-American urban historians as well. In particular, domestic workers and washerwomen, female shipyard workers, migrant farmworkers, and convict laborers have recently emerged as the focus of scholarly investigation, reflecting a significant broadening of the definition of the American working class and reminding us of the sheer diversity of the working-class experience. Tera Hunter, perhaps more than

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any other recent scholar, has maintained a joint focus on both the workplace and the community. In the best tradition of the new social and labor history, her study of Atlanta's domestic servants and washerwomen from the Civil War to World War I, *To 'Joy My Freedom* (1997), charts a world of racial oppression in which black women struggled to make their freedom a reality in the postbellum era. Domestics and washerwomen personally and collectively engaged in on-the-job labor activism and drew strength from a dense network of secular and religious working-class organizations. They also got a reprieve from the world of work through the dedicated pursuit of after-hours leisure activities, such as dancing, where they could "reclaim their bodies from appropriation as instruments of physical toil and redirect their energies toward other diversions." Their workplace and after-hours efforts brought them into continual conflict with the white households that employed them and with city officials who saw challenges to labor discipline and the racial order in these women's workplace resistance and evening leisure activities. Even the black middle class, whose definitions of proper decorum and upright behavior had little place for sensuous expressions, feared that Atlanta's domestics and washerwomen would reflect badly on the race.[46]

Oral history has enabled a small but growing number of historians to explore the lives of twentieth-century black women workers, a group largely excluded from the public record and from much historical writing. Their studies have placed the gendered character of family and community life at the center of the working-class experience, alongside more conventional emphases on work cultures and occupational development. In *Living In, Living Out* (1994), Elizabeth Clark-Lewis eloquently reconstructs the world of domestic service in Washington, D.C., from 1900 to 1920, a world that differed in significant ways from its Atlanta counterpart explored by Hunter.[47] Clark-Lewis examines young southern black female migrants' adjustment to urban life, and their reordering of family life, leisure, work, and worship. Relying extensively upon networks of family and friends, these women found live-in domestic work in Washington to be even more degrading and reminiscent of slavery than domestic service farther south; they were on call virtually twenty-four hours a day, were denied any semblance of privacy, and were unable to partake in the broader religious and cultural life of black Washington. But between 1900 and 1920, these women transformed domestic service by insisting on the right to "live out"—to live in their own homes, not those of their employers, to wear their own clothes and not uniforms, and to have time off on Sundays. "On the historical scale," Clark-Lewis concludes, "the transition to self-employment marked only a ripple of advancement. . . . But in the women's own lives their courageous movement rewarded them with the dignity and personal power they deserved and enabled them to contribute more visibly to the larger African-American community."[48] Gretchen

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Lemke-Santangelo also utilizes oral history in *Abiding Courage: African American Migrant Women and the East Bay Community* (1996) to chart an even more dramatic transformation in women's economic opportunities that occurred during the second great migration of the World War II years. Southern and southwestern black female migrants to California left domestic service for factory, clerical and sales, service sector, and government jobs during and after World War II. Lemke-Santangelo's concerns, though, extend well beyond the workplace, as she reconstructs these migrants' transplanted southern working-class culture, their negotiation of gender roles in their families and paid workplaces, their efforts to construct homes and communities, and their individual and collective activism.[49]

Focusing on labor systems (modes of labor recruitment, discipline, and operation), on the role of the state in shaping those systems, and on groups of previously understudied workers, Cindy Hahamovitch and Alex Lichtenstein have managed to meld social and political history and, like historians of the black working class, move beyond the agenda that preoccupies many of the field's practitioners. Hahamovitch's *Fruits of our Labor* (1997) examines Italian and especially African-American migrant farmworkers on the Atlantic coast from 1870 to 1945. Exploring patterns of migration and farmworker survival and resistance strategies, she situates her social history of farmworkers' lives squarely within a framework emphasizing the operation of labor markets and state regulation.[50] In *Twice the Work of their Labor* (1996), Alex Lichtenstein analyzes the emergence of convict labor in the post–Civil War South, carefully reconstructing its political economy, its contribution to postbellum southern economic development, and its impact on southern African Americans in general and black and white miners in particular.[51] These studies by Hunter, Clark-Lewis, Lemke-Santangelo, Hahamovitch, and Lichtenstein remind us that the American working class was more diverse than the labor movement—and many historians—have often allowed, and that the range of questions explored can be much broader than those posed by historians of trade union racial practices.

White Racial Identity

Perhaps the most widely publicized development in labor history's encounter with race has been the emergence of an approach that centers on the identification and analysis of "whiteness"—of white working-class racial identity. Most closely associated with the writings of David Roediger, the "whiteness" school has achieved a large crossover appeal, attracting the interests not only of labor historians but of scholars in American and cultural studies as well.[52] In an era in which much of politics on and off campus centers on identity, it should not be surprising that white racial identity

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should itself emerge as a dynamic subfield and that its students should insist that it be placed at the center of the analysis of labor history.

Far more explicitly than most historians, Roediger has demonstrated that white workers' collective identity was built not merely on notions of class, but on deeply held and evolving notions of race and that racism and racial identity must themselves be treated as class specific. In *The Wages of Whiteness* (1991), he moves beyond a treatment of antebellum white workers' racism—their negative attitudes towards African Americans—and examines whites' own racial self-definitions. For whites, race was both about the "Other" and about themselves.[53] Implicit in Roediger's work is a resurrected and redeployed notion of working-class agency. White workers actively participated in the construction both of their own "whiteness" and their racist notions of blacks. Racism and racial identity were not imposed from without but were created from within on the basis of workers' own experiences and the advantages they afforded. Acknowledging his intellectual debts to W.E.B. Du Bois and to George Rawick, Roediger draws from the former a conceptualization of the compensatory "psychological wage" that whiteness afforded whites and from the latter the provocative, if highly speculative, hypothesis about racism's origins in the vast transformations of the social, political, economic, and, especially, psychological order prompted by the rise of modern capitalism.[54] As so many labor historians have shown, the process of capitalist industrialization in the early nineteenth century North generated tremendous anxieties and fears on the part of workers who believed it undermined their skills, their autonomy, and their political independence. Such anxieties took the form not only of a critique of avarice, blocked occupational mobility, economic monopoly, and political domination, but also assumed sharp racial dimensions as well. Developing Rawick's arguments, Roediger concludes that the "white working class, disciplined and made anxious by fear of dependency, began during its formation to construct an image of the Black population as 'other'—as embodying the preindustrial, erotic, careless style of life the white worker hated and longed for." Northern whites attempted to "come to terms with their class . . . problems by projecting their longings onto a despised race."[55]

Roediger is strongest when teasing out the intellectual contradictions and assessing the strengths and weaknesses of various linguistic constructions advanced by the labor press, reformers, and politicians. He shows, for instance, that the widely studied ideology of late eighteenth through nineteenth-century artisans—variants of a labor republicanism—was itself conducive to promoting racial thinking and allowing for the criticism of African Americans. The very political and personal independence, skill, and autonomy so prized by artisans and considered central to the maintenance of a

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healthy, democratic republic constituted precisely the attributes that African-American slaves generally lacked. "[*Herrenvolk*] republicanism," Roediger contends, "read African-Americans out of the ranks of the producers and then proved more able to concentrate its fire downward on to the dependent and Black than upward against the rich and powerful."[56] Building on the work of political and gender historians, Roediger convincingly argues that the racial dimensions of republicanism, a concept long celebrated by a generation of new labor historians, cannot be ignored.[57]

By relying so heavily on cultural and intellectual analysis, Roediger's method can provide only limited insight into the social history of white workers themselves. Recently Roediger has acknowledged that "white views on race are quite heterogeneous" and that the "whiteness of white workers" is itself "complex and conflicted."[58] But what emerges in *Wages* is a portrait of antebellum white labor that is one-dimensional and monolithic, with a similar racial identity ascribed to an entire category which itself remained sharply divided along lines of ethnicity, skill, region, employment, and gender. The very thing Roediger seeks to show—the growth of a popular sense of whiteness (as distinct from racism) during the first half of the nineteenth century—is repeatedly asserted but never demonstrated.[59] Ironically, while Roediger is critical of otherwise "useful studies" of "race and popular culture" for relying "mainly on evidence from political leaders, intellectuals and scientists," too often his own portrait of white working-class identity derives from the writings of labor leaders, non-workers sympathetic to labor's cause, foreign travelers, novelists, and keywords of common phrases of speech.[60] The working class whose racial identity he hopes to reconstruct is itself a broadly constructed composite, one which rarely speaks for itself in his book without the extensive mediating assistance of leaders, journalists, dictionary writers, and the like. We should treat as necessarily incomplete and tentative the construction of the identity of a target group—white workers—on the basis of keywords which its members may or may not have used, its leaders' opinions, outsiders' passing comments, the popular entertainments that some of them participated in, or even intellectual or political currents alive in the air.[61]

Ultimately, Roediger's affinity for cultural studies (in its less jargonistic, less postmodernist forms) and psychohistory allows him to engage too easily in open-ended interpretation without the necessary empirical grounding. Take his use of the concept of psychological projection, which is provocative, at times even plausible, but invoked too quickly and unproblematically to explain events themselves only briefly described. It is interesting to speculate, for example, that white rioters who "black-up" before attacking free African Americans in antebellum Philadelphia "both admired what they imagined

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blackness to symbolize and hated themselves for doing so."[62] But at a temporal distance of a century and a half, such psychoanalyzing of rioters who themselves neither share their innermost thoughts nor even speak to historians at all is a risky proposition. To move from vague speculation to solid hypothesis would require a far more detailed examination of those rioters, their beliefs, and their goals than Roediger's psychohistory provides. Alexander Saxton's trenchant critique of Winthrop Jordan is relevant here. "Doubtless one of the special conditions confronting all psychohistorians is that much of their material is metaphorical," Saxton argues in *The Rise and Fall of the White Republic* (1990). "Every external action then becomes a metaphor for internal processes that are alone the real causes of historical events. . . . Since metaphor is indefinitely expansible in its range of meanings, the psychohistorian remains at liberty to tap in at any level that suits the needs of the argument." Saxton similarly finds problematic the "notion of symbolic acting out of inner tensions." Because the collective psyche is not an empirical reality but the historian's own creation, it lacks "much in the way of evidential validation. Like a work of fiction, it must depend upon its power to induce the willing suspension of disbelief on the part of the reader."[63] Roediger's *Wages* might better be read as posing a set of questions that historians might now fruitfully investigate, rather than as the definitive word on the making of white working-class racial consciousness.

Cultural studies and psychohistory are hardly the best routes into the historical exploration of nineteenth-century class and race relations. More rigorous and convincing is the approach found in Iver Bernstein's *The New York City Draft Riots* (1990), which appeared the year before *as The Wages of Whiteness*. Painstakingly reconstructing the social, political, and economic worlds of New York's native-born and immigrant working class, Bernstein chronicles and analyzes immigrant white workers' participation in the "horrifying slaughter" of African Americans in 1863 without undue emphasis on the discourses of identity. Throughout, Bernstein remains attentive to the multiple divisions within the city's working class (by no means did all of the city's workers participate in the orgy of violence) and the varied ideological and material sources of white workers' antipathy to blacks, employers, and the Republican party. Unlike many historians of trade union racial practices and white racial ideology, he considers African Americans not merely as victims or as backdrop, but as agents whose actions have significant consequences, and he situates his narrative squarely within the context of local and national political culture. In sum, Bernstein neither relegates race to a secondary status nor treats race in isolation from the larger constellation of forces that shaped its meaning.[64]

While Roediger's insistence on the need for "class-specific studies of

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racism" promises to open up new avenues of historical inquiry, his cultural analysis and virtually exclusive focus on possible working-class sources of working-class racism do not confront the larger problem of how to determine racism's origins and how to distinguish what is unique or specific to its variants. That white workers would gain a psychological wage through whiteness which in some way compensated for what oppression they suffered elsewhere; that white workers projected onto blacks their fears and anxieties; that slavery constituted a touchstone against which white workers could measure their own status—these are unquestionably plausible hypotheses that should be tested by historians. But largely absent from Roediger's analysis is consideration of the crucial issue of the relative influence of the various sources of racial identity formation. Specifically, to what extent were workers' own experiences, organizations, and agency responsible for shaping white labor's identity? Can anxiety and projection by themselves account for white workers' racism? Was the generalized fear and anxiety generated by capitalist industrialization or the arguments of labor leaders and reformers more influential in forming workers' perspectives than other sources? Did the unquestionably important minstrel show really contribute to "a sense of popular whiteness" and achieve a unity through a "common symbolic language" that "could not be realized by racist crowds, by political parties or by labor unions"?[65] And finally, what role did larger institutions play? The Democratic party and the Catholic church of the antebellum era reached a far greater working-class constituency than did trade unions; the penny press reached a far greater working-class audience than did trade union newspapers. All served up an amalgam of racist beliefs, sometimes based on the racialist science of the day or contemporary religious doctrine, which were often linked to explicit political issues. They likely had a tremendous impact on white workers' thinking—and even on their sense of whiteness. Yet the Democratic party, the church, and the penny press are largely absent from Roediger's analysis. Although Roediger, Herbert Hill, and many scholars of exclusionary union practices approach their subjects from different angles, they share a tendency to portray a world in which there are only white agents and black victims, in which corporations, politicians, and communities (outside of white racial ones) hardly exist.

The recent popularity of whiteness studies is to be cautiously welcomed, but its practitioners would do well to move from generalized cultural analyses to concrete studies which examine class-specific racial identity, situated in an historical context and attentive to the dynamic interplay of multiple discourses produced by multiple institutions. At the same time, they should be careful to avoid reducing all aspects of white labor's identity to race and to interrogate and integrate aspects of a "broader, humane universalism," in Sean Wilentz's words, that often "tugged against the slogans about white

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supremacy." "[L]est the old myths of the infallible fraternal worker give way to a new image of the white American worker as racist, party to an unlikely overarching consensus among all white men," Wilentz warns, the more "tolerant sides of working-class life and culture" similarly demands "intensive investigation."[66]

The new labor history has traveled a vast distance since Herbert Gutman and James Gross penned their laments about the field's inattention to race in the late 1960s. The appearance of so many studies on union racial practices, African-American workers, and white racial ideology is fundamentally recasting the history of American workers and their institutions. Yet for all of the progress in analyzing the troubled relationship of African-Americans and organized labor and in charting the evolving character of working-class race relations, much remains to be learned about the "local worlds" of black and white workers that Gutman called for, about the character of black activism and black working-class goals, about the factors promoting racial animosity and collaboration, and about the interaction amongst the state, capital, and labor in shaping particular outcomes. Unquestionably, interpretive differences will persist. As Rick Halpern has observed, the "emerging revision of the history of black workers and organized labor . . . is animated by sharp differences of interpretation and opinion in a number of areas."[67] This should hardly be surprising, given the highly political character of debates over class and race, in the present as well as the past. The simple fact of the persistence of tremendous racial inequality, in the labor market and broader society, guarantees that the search for the roots of that inequality and its changing dynamics over time will animate and divide historians.

For their critical comments on this essay, I would like to thank Cynthia Blair, Venus Green, Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, James Hall, Bruce Laurie, Daniel Letwin, Alex Lichtenstein, John Lyons, Katrin Schultheiss, and Judith Stein.

1. Herbert Gutman, "The Negro and the United Mine Workers of America: The Career and Letters of Richard L. Davis and Something of Their Meaning: 1890–1900," in *The Negro and the American Labor Movement*, ed. Julius Jacobson (New York, 1968), 117.

2. James A. Gross, "Historians and the Literature of the Negro Worker," *Labor History* 10 (Summer 1969): 538–39, 542. What was true of African-American labor in the historiography was even more true of Asian or Hispanic workers in the United States. The literature on these groups and race and labor has developed along somewhat distinct lines, and to date there has been relatively little dialogue between the subfields. In this essay, I consciously address only the works that deal with African Americans, race, and labor. For overviews of the literature, see Chris Friday, "Asian American Labor History and Historical Interpretation," *Labor History* 35 (Fall 1994): 524–45; Camille Guerin-Gonzales, "Conversing Across Boundaries of Race, Ethnicity, Class, Gender, and Region: Latino and Latina Labor History," *Labor History* 35 (Fall 1994): 547–63.

3. These exceptions include Paul B. Worthman, "Black Workers and Labor Unions in Birmingham, Alabama, 1897–1904," *Labor History* 10 (Summer 1969): 375–407; Alexander Saxton, *The Indispensable Enemy: Labor and the Anti-Chinese Movement in California* (Berkeley, 1971); James Green, "The Brotherhood of Timber Workers 1910–1913: A Radical Response to

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Industrial Capitalism in the Southern U.S.A.," *Past and Present* No. 60 (August 1973): 161–200; Jervis Anderson, *A. Philip Randolph: A Biographical Portrait* (New York, 1972); Peter J. Rachleff, *Black Labor in Richmond 1865–1890* (1984; Urbana, Ill., 1988); Dolores E. Janiewski, *Sisterhood Denied: Race, Gender, and Class in a New South Community* (Philadelphia, 1985).

4. See, for instance, Herbert Hill, "The Importance of Race in American Labor History," *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society* 9 (1995): 317–43, and Hill, "The Problem of Race in American Labor History," *Reviews in American History* 24 (1996): 180–208, which is a shorter and slightly revised version of the same article. Also see Hill, "Black Labor and Affirmative Action: An Historical Perspective" in *The Question of Discrimination: Racial Inequality in the U.S. Labor Market*, ed. Steven Shulman and William Darity, Jr. (Middletown, Conn., 1989), 197.

5. Noel Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White* (New York, 1995), 180–81. Hill, Ignatiev, and David Roediger agree that the "excessively zealous search for a usable and inspiring past," in Roediger's words, inhibited the new labor's history's ability to "engage fully the questions of racial identity and racism." David Roediger, "Race and the Working-Class Past in the United States: Multiple Identities and the Future of Labor History," *International Review of Social History* 38 (1993), Supplement: 129; Noel Ignatiev, "The Paradox of the White Worker: Studies in Race Formation," *Labour/Le Travail* 30 (Fall 1991): 33–40; Herbert Hill, "Myth-Making as Labor History: Herbert Gutman and the United Mine Workers of America," *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society* 2 (Winter 1988): 137. On characterizations of labor history's "race problem," see also Nell Irvin Painter, "The New Labor History and the Historical Moment," *International Journal of Politics, Culture, and Society* 2 (Spring 1989): 369.

6. Alan Dawley and Joe William Trotter, Jr., "Race and Class," *Labor History* 35 (Fall 1994): 486. Robin D.G. Kelley has described the literature on Southern labor—which includes much work on race and labor—as "voluminous." Robin D.G. Kelley, "'We Are Not What We Seem'": Rethinking Black Working-Class Opposition in the Jim Crow South," *Journal of American History* 80 (June 1993): 89.

7. Hill, "Myth-Making as Labor History," 133–34, 158, 167. The single best critique of Hill's critique of Gutman's essay remains Stephen Brier, "In Defense of Gutman; The Union's Case," *International Journal of Politics, Culture and Society* 2 (Spring 1989): 382–95.

8. "What Gutman's essay revealed was neither an interracial utopia nor an Oceania of racial warfare, but a world in tension," Ira Berlin has argued. "Davis himself personified that tension by simultaneously inhabiting different portions of that world, 'one shaped by his experiences as a coal miner and the other as a Negro.'" Ira Berlin, "Introduction: Herbert G. Gutman and the American Working Class," in Herbert G. Gutman, *Power and Culture: Essays on the American Working Class*, ed. Ira Berlin (New York, 1987), 30.

9. A number of historians have nonetheless characterized the issue as "class v. race." See Roediger, "Race and the Working-Class Past," 131; Roediger, "White Workers, New Democrats, and Affirmative Action," in *The House that Race Built: Black Americans, U.S. Terrain*, ed. Wahneema Lubiano (New York, 1997), 57; Daniel J. Walkowitz, review of *The Wages of Whiteness* by Roediger, *Journal of American Ethnic History* 14 (Fall 1994): 98; Dana Frank, "A Class about Race," *Socialist Review* 24 (1995): 246. To the extent that historians have prioritized concepts, it is to insist upon the centrality of race while denying that of class. See Clarence Walker, "How Many Niggers Did Karl Marx Know? Or, A Peculiarity of the Americans," in *Deromanticizing Black History: Critical Essays and Reappraisals* (Knoxville, 1991), 4. I would also argue that historians of race and labor have not portrayed the racial barriers that existed as "external to the working class," imposed upon workers by their employers, nor have they denied the "agency and autonomy to workers in relation to questions of race," as Bruce Nelson has recently suggested. Bruce Nelson, "Class, Race and Democracy in the CIO: The 'New' Labor History Meets the 'Wages of Whiteness,'" *International Review of Social History* 41 (December 1996): 352.

10. Herbert Northrup, *Organized Labor and the Negro* (New York, 1944); Arthur Mann, "Gompers and the Irony of Racism," *The Antioch Review* 13 (June 1953): 203–14; Herman Bloch, "Craft Unions and the Negro in Historical Perspective," *Journal of Negro History* 43 (1958): 10–33; Bloch, "Labor and the Negro 1866–1910," *Journal of Negro History* 50 (1965):

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163–84; Philip S. Foner, *Organized Labor and the Black Worker 1619–1981* (1974; New York, 1981).

11. Henry M. McKiven, Jr., *Iron and Steel: Class, Race, and Community in Birmingham, Alabama, 1875–1920* (Chapel Hill, 1995), 4; Robert J. Norrell, "Caste in Steel: Jim Crow Careers in Birmingham, Alabama," *Journal of American History* 73 (December 1986): 670.

12. William A. Sundstrom, "Half a Career: Discrimination and Railroad Internal Labor Markets," *Industrial Relations* 29 (Fall 1990): 423–40; David E. Bernstein, "Roots of the 'Underclass': The Decline of Laissez-Faire Jurisprudence and the Rise of Racist Labor Legislation," *American University Law Review* 43 (Fall 1993): 105–10; Eric Arnesen, "'Like Banquo's Ghost, It Will Not Down': The Race Question and the American Railroad Brotherhoods, 1880–1920," *American Historical Review* 99 (December 1994): 1601–33.

13. Alan Draper, *Conflict of Interests: Organized Labor and the Civil Rights Movement in the South, 1954–1968* (Ithaca, 1994).

14. William M. Tuttle, Jr., *Race Riot: Chicago in the Red Summer of 1919* (New York, 1970), 108–56; James R. Grossman, *Land of Hope: Chicago, Black Southerners, and the Great Migration* (Chicago, 1989), 210; Rick Halpern, *Down on the Killing Floor: Black and White Workers in Chicago's Packinghouses, 1904–54* (Urbana, Ill., 1997), 57. Also see James Barrett, *Work and Community in the Jungle: Chicago's Packinghouse Workers, 1894–1922* (Urbana, Ill., 1987), 203.

15. Alex Lichtenstein makes this point in Lichtenstein, "Racial Conflict and Racial Solidarity in the Alabama Coal Strike of 1894: New Evidence for the Gutman-Hill Debate," *Labor History* 36 (Winter 1995): 63–76.

16. Ronald Lewis, *Black Coal Miners in America: Race, Class, and Community Conflict 1780–1980* (Lexington, 1987), 156; Lewis, "From Peasant to Proletarian: The Migration of Southern Blacks to the Central Appalachian Coalfields," *The Journal of Southern History* 55 (February 1989): 77–102. Also see David Alan Corbin, *Life, Work, and Rebellion in the Coal Fields: The Southern West Virginia Miners, 1880–1922* (Urbana, Ill., 1981).

17. Daniel Letwin, "Interracial Unionism, Gender, and 'Social Equality' in the Alabama Coalfields, 1878–1908," *Journal of Southern History* 61 (August 1995): 529; Letwin, *The Challenge of Interracial Unionism: Alabama Coal Miners, 1878–1921* (Chapel Hill, 1998); Brian Kelly, "Policing the 'Negro Eden': Racial Paternalism in the Alabama Coalfields, 1906–22," *Alabama Review* (forthcoming); Lichtenstein, "Racial Conflict and Racial Solidarity in the Alabama Coal Strike of 1894." The case of longshore workers similarly reveals a vast range of union racial practices along the Gulf and South Atlantic coasts. See Daniel Rosenberg, *New Orleans Dockworkers: Race, Labor, and Unionism 1892–1923* (Albany, 1988); Arnesen, *Waterfront Workers of New Orleans: Race, Class, and Politics, 1863–1923* (1991; Urbana, Ill., 1994); Arnesen, "Biracial Waterfront Unionism in the Age of Segregation," in *Waterfront Workers: New Essays on Race and Class*, ed. Cal Winslow (Urbana, Ill., 1998). Also see Stephen H. Norwood, "Bogalusa Burning: The War Against Biracial Unionism in the Deep South, 1919," *Journal of Southern History* 63 (August 1997): 591–628.

18. St. Clair Drake and Horace R. Cayton, *Black Metropolis* vol. 1: *A Study of Negro Life in a Northern City* (1945; New York, 1970), 313.

19. August Meier and Elliot Rudwick, *Black Detroit and the Rise of the UAW* (New York, 1979); Bruce Nelson, "Organized Labor and the Struggle for Black Equality in Mobile during World War II," *Journal of American History* 80 (Winter 1993): 952–88; Bruce Nelson, "Class and Race in the Crescent City: The ILWU, from San Francisco to New Orleans," 19–45; and Nancy Quam-Wickham, "Who Controls the Hiring Hall? The Struggle for Job Control in the ILWU During World War II," 47–67, *The CIO's Left-Led Unions*, ed. Steve Rosswurm (New Brunswick, 1992); Toni Gilpin, "Left By Themselves: A History of the United Farm Equipment and Metal Workers Union, 1938–1955" (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1992), 417–568; Rick Halpern, "Interracial Unionism in the Southwest: Fort Worth's Packinghouse Workers, 1937–1954," in *Organized Labor in the Twentieth-Century South*, ed. Robert H. Zieger (Knoxville, 1991), 158–82. Also see Harvard Sitkoff, *A New Deal for Blacks: The Emergence of Civil Rights as a National Issue: The Depression Decade* (New York, 1978), 169–89.

20. Hill, "The Importance of Race in American Labor History," 324, 326–27; Hill, "Race, Ethnicity and Organized Labor: The Opposition to Affirmative Action," *New Politics* 1 (Winter 1987): 32–33. This is not to say that all studies of the CIO featured critical

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assessments of the new federation's racial practices. Among the more positive or at least balanced assessments, see Lizabeth Cohen, *Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919–1939* (New York, 1990); Judith Stein, "Southern Workers in National Unions: Birmingham Steelworkers, 1936–1951," in *Organized Labor in the Twentieth-Century South*, ed. Robert H. Zieger (Knoxville, 1991), 162–222; David Oberweiser, Jr., "The CIO: A Vanguard for Civil Rights in Southern California, 1940–46," in *American Labor in the Era of World War II*, ed. Sally M. Miller and Daniel A. Cornford (Westport, Conn., 1995), 200–216; Roderick N. Ryon, "An Ambiguous Legacy: Baltimore Blacks and the CIO, 1936–1941," *Journal of Negro History* 45 (Winter 1980): 18–33. Studies cited hereafter on left-led CIO unions also tend to evaluate those unions favorably.

21. Nelson, "Class, Race and Democracy in the CIO," 357, 368; Meier and Rudwick, *Black Detroit*.

22. Stein, "Southern Workers in National Unions," 198.

23. Kevin Boyle, *The UAW and the Heyday of American Liberalism 1945–1968* (Ithaca, 1995), 113, 115; Boyle, "'There Are No Union Sorrows That the Union Can't Heal': The Struggle for Racial Equality in the United Automobile Workers, 1940–1960," *Labor History* 36 (Winter 1995): 7.

24. Michael Goldfield, "Race and the CIO: The Possibilities for Racial Egalitarianism During the 1930s and 1940s," *International Labor and Working-Class History* No. 44 (Fall 1993): 23; Goldfield, "Race and Labor Organization in the United States," *Monthly Review* 49 (July–August 1997): 84–86; Robert Korstad and Nelson Lichtenstein, "Opportunities Found and Lost: Labor, Radicals, and the Early Civil Rights Movement," *Journal of American History* 75 (December 1988): 786–811; Karl Korstad, "Black and White Together: Organizing in the South with the Food, Tobacco, Agricultural & Allied Workers Union (FTA-CIO), 1946–1952," in *The CIO's Left-Led Unions*, 64–94.

25. Michael Honey, *Southern Labor and Black Civil Rights: Organizing Memphis Workers* (Urbana, Ill., 1993), Halpern, *Down on the Killing Floor*; Roger Horowitz, *"Negro and White, Unite and Fight!": A Social History of Industrial Unionism in Meatpacking, 1930–90* (Urbana, Ill., 1997); Halpern and Horowitz, *Meatpackers: An Oral History of Black Packinghouse Workers and Their Struggle for Racial and Economic Equality* (New York, 1996). On the history of unionization in the packinghouse industry, also see Shelton Stromquist and Marvin Bergman, eds., *Unionizing the Jungles: Labor and Community in the Twentieth Century Meatpacking Industry* (Iowa City, 1997).

26. Some historians have been critical of the credit accorded to left-led unions for their racially egalitarian strategies. Alan Draper has recently demonstrated that in Alabama, for instance, Mine, Mill's success came before its left turn; that communists played little role in the union's early years; and that the union's success depended less on the union's interracial strategy—most dedicated union members before recognition were black—than on the intervention of the National Labor Relations Board and the decision of U.S. Steel to negotiate with its trade unions, Mine, Mill included. Alan Draper, "The New Southern Labor History Revisited: The Success of the Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers Union in Birmingham, 1934–1938," *Journal of Southern History* 62 (February 1996): 87–108. Judith Stein has observed that "many egalitarian measures, praised in left-wing unions, were standard procedure in 'right-wing unions,'" that historians favorable to the CP have celebrated "left-led attempts to eliminate racially discriminatory wage scales and job classification systems" but do not "mention the actual achievement of these goals" in non-left unions. Stein, "The Ins and Outs of the CIO," *International Labor and Working Class History* No. 44 (Fall 1993): 54.

27. Andor Skotnes, "The Communist Party, Anti-Racism, and the Freedom Movement: Baltimore, 1930–1934," *Science & Society* 60 (Summer 1996): 164–94; Mark Naison, *Communists in Harlem During the Depression* (Urbana, Ill., 1983). This point is developed in Arnesen, "Class Matters, Race Matters," *Radical History Review* No. 60 (Fall 1994): 230–35.

28. On the impact of the party's loyalty to the Soviet Union on American communists, see Bruce Nelson, *Workers on the Waterfront: Seamen, Longshoremen, and Unionism in the 1930s* (Urbana, Ill., 1988), 76; Steve Rosswurm, "Introduction: An Overview and Preliminary Assessment of the CIO's Expelled Unions," in *The CIO's Left-Led Unions*, 10.

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29. Alex Lichtenstein, "'Scientific Unionism' and the 'Negro Question': Communists and the Transport Workers Union in Miami, 1944–1949," in *Southern Labor in Transition, 1940–1995*, ed. Robert Zieger (Knoxville, 1997), 59–60.

30. Meier and Rudwick, "Communist Unions and the Black Community: The Case of the Transport Workers Union, 1934–1944," *Labor History* 23 (Spring 1982): 196–97.

31. On politics, labor, and race in the North, see Thomas J. Sugrue, "Crabgrass-Roots Politics: Race, Rights, and the Reaction against Liberalism in the Urban North, 1940–1964," *Journal of American History* 82 (September 1995): 551–86. Sugrue has also argued that many labor historians now overemphasize "the ability of white workers to shape or contest the segmented labor market" as well as overlook the "power of capital in shaping patterns of discrimination." Historians "need to pay more heed to the behavior of firms, the organization of production and the structure of the economy" in their studies of race and labor. Thomas J. Sugrue, "Segmented Work, Race-Conscious Workers: Structure, Agency and Division in the CIO Era," *International Review of Social History* 41 (December 1996): 395. One important exception to the general neglect of the state role in shaping race and labor relations is Joseph A. McCartin, "Abortive Reconstruction: Federal War Labor Policies, Union Organization, and the Politics of Race, 1917–1920," *Journal of Policy History* 9 (1997): 155–83.

32. Several important exceptions to the neglect of the state are Cindy Hahamovitch, *The Fruits of their Labor: Atlantic Coast Farmworkers and the Making of Migrant Poverty, 1870–1945* (Chapel Hill, 1997), and Alex Lichtenstein, *Twice the Work of Free Labor: The Political Economy of Convict Labor in the New South* (New York, 1996), discussed below. An excellent exception to the lack of focus on political economy is Thomas Sugrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit* (Princeton, 1996). Venus Greene similarly explores in considerable depth both employer and union practices in her study of Bell Telephone workers. See Green, "Race and Technology: African-American Women in the Bell System, 1945–1980," *Technology and Culture* 36 (Supplement to April 1995): S101–S143. Over a decade ago, David Brody identified the one-sided character of Hill's arguments. Hill "consistently masks the role of employers as agents of discrimination," he noted. "What needs pondering is . . . how to assign relative responsibilities to white workers and employers in oppressing black workers." David Brody, "Hill Discounts Larger Context," *New Politics* 1 (Summer 1987): 38–39.

33. This was especially the case with biracial unions—those in which blacks and whites organized racially distinct locals—in the longshore, coal mining, timber and, occasionally, building industries. This was far less the case with auxiliary unions—all black "sublocals" created and dominated by larger, more powerful white unions which excluded blacks from membership.

34. Arguments on black workers' preferences for their own black unions—and the reasons for those preferences—can be found in Earl Lewis, *In Their Own Interests: Race, Class, and Power in Twentieth Century Norfolk, Virginia* (Berkeley, 1991); Arnesen, "Following the Color Line of Labor: Black Workers and the Labor Movement Before 1930," *Radical History Review* No. 55 (Winter 1993): 53–87; and Howard Kimeldorf and Robert Penney, "'Excluded' By Choice: Dynamics of Interracial Unionism on the Philadelphia Waterfront 1910–1930," *International Labor and Working-Class History* No. 51 (Spring 1997): 51–71.

35. Roediger, "What If Labor Were Not White and Male?" *International Labor and Working-Class History* No. 51 (Spring 1997): 87.

36. Goldfield, "Race and the CIO," 6; Robert Korstad, "The Possibilities for Racial Egalitarianism: Context Matters," *International Labor and Working-Class History* No. 44 (Fall 1993): 42.

37. See Arnesen, "The African-American Working Class in the Jim Crow Era," *International Labor and Working-Class History* No. 41 (Spring 1992): 59–75. Also see Joe W. Trotter, "African Americans in the City: The Industrial Era, 1900–1950," *Journal of Urban History* 21 (May 1995): 438–57. Trotter similarly argues that scholars like Alan Spear, Gilbert Osofsky, and Kenneth Kusmer "subordinated the study of black workers to explorations of the dynamics of ghetto formation, which emphasized the role of racism and the institutional

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and political responses of black elites thereto." Trotter, "African-American Workers: New Directions in U.S. Labor Historiography," *Labor History* 35 (Fall 1994): 510.

38. Peter Gottlieb, *Making their Own Way: Southern Blacks' Migration to Pittsburgh, 1916–1930* (Urbana, Ill., 1987); Elizabeth Haiken, "'The Lord Helps Those Who Help Themselves': Black Laundresses in Little Rock, Arkansas, 1917–1921," *Arkansas Historical Quarterly* 49 (Spring 1990): 20–50; Warren C. Whatley, "African-American Strikebreaking from the Civil War to the New Deal," *Social Science History* 17 (Winter 1993): 525–58; W. Jeffrey Bolster, *Black Jacks: African American Seamen in the Age of Sail* (Cambridge, Mass., 1997). One of the few black occupational groups to receive considerable historical analysis is Pullman porters. See William H. Harris, *Keeping the Faith: A. Philip Randolph, Milton P. Webster, and the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, 1925–37* (Urbana, Ill., 1977); Barbara M. Posadas, "The Hierarchy of Color and Psychological Adjustment in an Industrial Environment: Filipinos, The Pullman Company, and the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters," *Labor History* 23 (Summer 1982): 349–73; Greg Leroy, "The Founding Heart of A. Philip Randolph's Union: Milton P. Webster and Chicago's Pullman Porters Organize, 1925–1937, *Labor's Heritage* 3 (July 1991): 22–43; Beth Tompkins Bates, "The Brotherhood," *Chicago History* 25 (Fall 1996): 4–23; Bates, "A New Crowd Challenges the Agenda of the Old Guard in the NAACP, 1933–1941," *American Historical Review* 102 (April 1997): 340–77; Paula F. Pfeffer, "The Women Behind the Union: Halena Wilson, Rosina Tucker, and the Ladies' Auxiliary to the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters," *Labor History* 36 (Fall 1995): 557–78; Melinda Chateauvert, *Marching Together: Women of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters* (Urbana, Ill., 1998).

39. Joe William Trotter, Jr., *Black Milwaukee: The Making of an Industrial Proletariat, 1915–45* (Urbana, Ill., 1985); Trotter, Jr., *Coal, Class, and Color: Blacks in Southern West Virginia, 1915–32* (Urbana, Ill., 1995).

40. Lewis, *In Their Own Interests*, 5–6.

41. Robin D.G. Kelley, *Hammer and Hoe: Alabama Communists During the Great Depression* (Chapel Hill, 1990).

42. Kelley, "'We Are Not What We Seem,'" 80.

43. Arnesen, *Waterfront Workers of New Orleans*, x–xi; Sugrue, "Segmented Work, Race-Conscious Workers," 394.

44. Kelley, "'We Are Not What We Seem,'" 76.

45. Raymond Williams, "Base and Superstructure in Marxist Cultural Theory," *New Left Review* No. 82 (November–December 1973): 11; Roy Rosensweig, *Eight Hours for What We Will: Workers and Leisure in an Industrial City, 1870–1920* (New York, 1983), 58, 61–64.

46. Tera W. Hunter, *To 'Joy My Freedom: Southern Black Women's Lives and Labors After the Civil War* (Cambridge, Mass., 1997), 178–79. On domestic and home workers, also see Sharon Harley, "For the Good of Family and Race: Gender, Work, and Domestic Roles in the Black Community, 1880–1930," *Signs* 15 (Winter 1990): 336–49; Jacqueline Jones, *Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow: Black Women, Work, and the Family from Slavery to the Present* (New York, 1985); Phyllis Palmer, *Domesticity and Dirt: Housewives and Domestic Servants in the United States, 1920–1945* (Philadelphia, 1989). On black women's work, also see Sharon Harley, "When Your Work is Not Who You Are: The Development of a Working-Class Consciousness among Afro-American Women," in *Gender, Class, Race, and Reform in the Progressive Era*, ed. Noralee Frankel and Nancy S. Dye (Knoxville, 1991), 42–55; Eileen Boris, "Black Women and Paid Labor in the Home: Industrial Homework in Chicago in the 1920s," in *Homework: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives on Paid Labor at Home*, ed. Boris and Cynthia R. Daniels (Urbana, Ill., 1989), 33–52.

47. Elizabeth Clark-Lewis, *Living In, Living Out: African-American Domestics and the Great Migration* (Washington, 1994).

48. Clark-Lewis, *Living In, Living Out*, 168–69.

49. Gretchen Lemke-Santangelo, *Abiding Courage: African American Migrant Women and the East Bay Community* (Chapel Hill, 1996). Also see Karen Tucker Anderson, "Last Hired, First Fired: Black Women Workers During World War II," *Journal of American History* 69 (June 1982): 82–97. Two works built around oral histories with Pullman porters are Jack Santino,

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Miles of Smiles, Years of Struggle: Stories of Black Pullman Porters (Urbana, Ill., 1991) and David D. Perata, *Those Pullman Blues: An Oral History of the African American Railroad Attendant* (New York, 1996).

50. Hahamovitch, *The Fruits of their Labor.*

51. Lichtenstein, *Twice the Work of Free Labor.*

52. David W. Stowe, "Uncolored People: The Rise of Whiteness Studies," *Lingua Franca* 6 (September-October 1996): 68–77. Other key works exploring whiteness/white racial identity include Kenneth Durr, "When Southern Politics Came North: The Roots of White Working-Class Conservatism in Baltimore, 1940–1964," *Labor History* 37 (Summer 1996): 309–31; Eric Lott, *Love and Theft: Blackface Minstrelsy and the American Working Class* (New York, 1995); Noel Ignatiev, *How the Irish Became White* (New York, 1995); Theodore W. Allen, *The Invention of the White Race*, vol. 1, *Racial Oppression and Social Control* (New York, 1994); George Lipsitz, "The Possessive Investment in Whiteness: Racialized Social Democracy and the 'White' Problem in American Studies," *American Quarterly* 47 (September 1995): 369–94; Shelley Fisher Fishkin, "Interrogating 'Whiteness,' Complicating 'Blackness': Remapping American Culture," *American Quarterly* 47 (September 1995): 428–66.

53. Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class* (New York, 1991).

54. W.E.B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction in America 1860–1880* (1935; New York, 1985), 700–701; George P. Rawick, *From Sundown to Sunup: The Making of the Black Community* (Westport, Conn., 1972), 125–33. Rawick saw himself as developing Winthrop Jordan's insights into the "development of the psychodynamics of North American racism." Rawick, *From Sundown to Sunup*, 127. In a series of highly influential and brilliant articles, Barbara Jeanne Fields thoroughly undermines comparable approaches which offer sweeping cultural explanations of racial thinking. Barbara J. Fields, "Ideology and Race in American History," in *Region, Race, and Reconstruction: Essays in Honor of C. Vann Woodward*, ed. J. Morgan Kousser and James M. McPherson (New York, 1982), 144, 155–57; and Fields, "Slavery, Race and Ideology in the United States of America," *New Left Review* No. 181 (May/June 1990): 95–118.

55. Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness*, 14.

56. Ibid., 59–60.

57. On race, gender, republicanism, and labor ideology, see Jean H. Baker, *Affairs of Party: The Political Culture of Northern Democrats in the Mid-Nineteenth Century* (Ithaca, 1983), 237; Lawrence Glickman, "Inventing the 'American Standard of Living': Gender, Race and Working-Class Identity, 1880–1925," *Labor History* 34 (Spring–Summer 1993): 226–27; Arnesen, "'Like Banquo's Ghost, It Will Not Down,'" 1614–16; Ruth H. Bloch, "The Gendered Meanings of Virtue in Revolutionary America," *Signs* 13 (Autumn 1987): 38; Christine Stansell, *City of Women: Sex and Class in New York, 1789–1860* (New York, 1986), 139–40.

58. Roediger, "White Workers, New Democrats, and Affirmative Action," in *The House that Race Built*, 58.

59. Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness*, 97, 100.

60. Ibid., 10.

61. Political historian Jean Baker once cautioned against inferring the political beliefs of antebellum rank and file Democratic party voters from views articulated by party leaders. The "invisible attitudes of the Democratic fellowship" were difficult to ascertain, she noted, for some partisans "may not have been listening." Like Roediger, Baker examines minstrelsy in depth; unlike Roediger, she does not insist on its working-class specific character, instead treating it as a part of a broader popular culture in the antebellum north, and she examines the connections between this racialist popular culture and political institutions. Baker, *Affairs of Party*, 212.

62. Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness*, 106.

63. Alexander Saxton, *The Rise and Fall of the White Republic: Class Politics and Mass Culture in Nineteenth-Century America* (New York, 1990), 12. Saxton's argument is a revised version of one put forth in Saxton, "Historical Explanations of Racial Inequality," *Marxist Perspectives* 2 (Summer 1979): 156–61.

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64. Iver Bernstein, *The New York City Draft Riots: Their Significance for American Society and Politics in the Age of the Civil War* (New York, 1990).

65. Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness*, 127.

66. Sean Wilentz, review of *The Rise and Fall of the White Republic: Class Politics and Mass Culture in Nineteenth-Century America* by Alexander Saxton, *International Labor and Working-Class History* No. 42 (Fall 1992): 142.

67. Rick Halpern, "Organized Labor, Black Workers, and the Twentieth Century South: The Emerging Revision," in *Race and Class in the American South Since 1890*, ed. Melvyn Stokes and Rick Halpern (Oxford, 1994), 46.

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