

Naftali director of Tamiment / Wagner Labor Archives, NYU

Accomplished historian and museum director Timothy Naftali has succeeded Michael Nash (1946-2012) as head of the Tamiment Library and Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives at New York University. Naftali served as director of the Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum (2007-2011), taught at the University of Virginia, where he directed the Miller Center of Public Affairs' Presidential

Recordings Program, and is an expert in the history of counterterrorism and the Cold War. Naftali is the author of four books, including *Blind Spot: The Secret History of American Counterterrorism*. He served as a consultant to the 9/11 Commission, and has taught at the University of Hawaii and Yale. A native of Montreal, Canada, Naftali earned his undergraduate degree from Yale and graduate degrees from Johns Hopkins and Harvard.



photo credit: NYU Tamiment

British documentary captures untold story

PRIDE (2014), dir. Matthew Warchus

BRITAIN'S NATIONAL UNION OF MINERS began its bitter battle with the National Coal Board and Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher's conservative government in March 1984. This was the longest strike in British history. A year later, miners returned to work without a contract, their communities reduced to semi-starvation. Their industry's future was dim, yet they marched back to the pits proudly "with their heads held high."

PRIDE, Matthew Warchus' excellent feature movie, shows one mining village receiving support from Lesbians and Gays Support the Miners, a ragtag crew of queer activists from London. LGSM collected cash in Soho, then shuttled north to the Dulais Valley to pay bills and distribute food and blankets. In the depth of that terrible winter, they brought miners down to London for "Pits and Perverts," a successful and joyous benefit.

Thirty years later, *PRIDE* dramatizes this untold story with astonishing exuberance, dignity and sympathy. Some villagers welcome the queers with giddy curiosity; others cling to prejudice. They debate their disagreements, they brawl, and their wives appreciate the fun. A fabulous soundtrack



connects "Do Ya Wanna Funk" by Sylvester to "Bread and Roses" by a choir of Welsh women.

To set this history straight: LGSM's other chapters worked with other communities. *PRIDE* concludes with a convoy of NUM-sponsored buses arriving at London's Gay Pride parade in June 1985. The miners and their union banners form

the lead contingent. Later that summer, backed by the NUM, the UK's Labour Party passes its first resolution ever for lesbian and gay equality.

—Miriam Frank

Update, December 2014: Sony has released *PRIDE* by Matthew Warchus as a DVD and the British Independent Film Awards has named *PRIDE* as best film of the year.

Work History News



New York Labor History Association, Inc.

A Bridge Between Past and Present

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Awards ceremony honors CWA leader and American Labor Museum

By Jane LaTour

The 28th John Commerford Labor Education Awards Reception on December 3 featured a stellar cast of honorees. The Local 1199/SEIU penthouse provided a spectacular backdrop for the presentations, beginning with labor attorney Larry Cary's tribute on behalf of the NYLHA to Philoine Fried. Cary, an early member of the organization, paid tribute to Fried for her commitment and service to the organization. "She is someone every person here should know," he told the packed auditorium. "Philoine is an exceptional person. The daughter of Sidney Hillman and Bessie Abramowitz Hillman (leaders of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers), married to a labor economist, the mother of two children, a great-grandmother, and the most humble of persons. She has served the labor movement now for going on a century. We honor her for what she has done and for what she continues to do." As she accepted a bouquet of red roses, Fried told the gathering, "I was born with a union spoon in my mouth. The labor history association is the place that best represents everything I believe in and have wanted to work for—it's a remarkable organization," she said.

As it does every year, the event served as a show case and an introduction for some, to a broad array of labor history stories. This year, the 2014 Barbara Wertheimer Prize for best undergraduate labor history research paper went to two recipients: Connor Kenaston of



Jane LaTour and Philoine Fried



Well-wisher with Angelica M. Santomauro

Yale University, for "If the Men Don't Fight, the Women Will: Women and Gender Roles in the West Virginia Mine Wars," and Kathryn Tokle of the University of Montana, "In the Wake of Disaster and Disease: Widowhood in Butte, America, 1900-1920." The Bellush Prize for best graduate paper went to Trish Kahle of the University of Chicago, who was present to accept her award from Professor Brian Greenberg for her essay: "The Graveyard Shift: Energy Industry Reorganization and Rank and File Rebellion in the UMWA, 1963-1973." (Abstracts are available on the NYLHA website.)

In her presentation of the Commerford Award to the American Labor Museum, NYLHA Board Member Gail Malmgreen

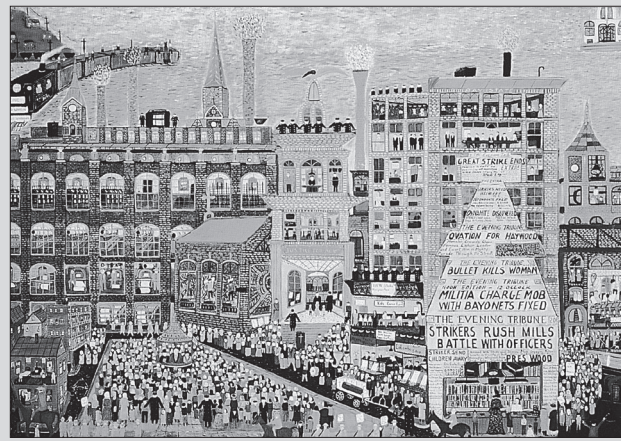
noted that she was appearing in her new role as an advocate for all things New Jersey and remarked on the excellent fit of the two recipients. "Arthur Cheliotos and CWA Local 1180 have been staunch supporters of the American Labor Museum. When it comes to labor solidarity, the Hudson River should be a very artificial barrier." Malmgreen outlined the many accomplishments of the museum and Executive Director Angelica Santomauro, who accepted the award on behalf of her organization. For those who remain unaware of the range of offerings provided at the museum, Malmgreen encouraged a visit to Haledon and support through membership. In addition to the history that unfolded at the home which houses the museum, the wealth of offerings is impressive. They include poetry readings, film showings, major exhibits, classes for students and teachers and an annual Labor Day Parade. "Support from the labor community allows the museum to plan these programs and to grow," she said.

In accepting the award, Santomauro noted that both she and Arthur Cheliotos were raised by veterans of World War II. "I believe that their service taught us how to care for others. When our work is recognized, it makes you feel so humble. You know that there are so many other people who are part of it. Thank you for the recognition of the museum, which is a national labor

(Continued on page 6)

Ralph Fasanella *Lest we forget*

LABORARTS has a new online Fasanella exhibit — launched while the actual exhibit was at the Folk Art Museum, this past November. The site is still available at [LaborArts.org](http://www.laborarts.org) or to find it directly <http://www.laborarts.org/exhibits/fasanella2014/>



Immigrant miners in opposition to UMWA

Sixteen Tons: A Novel by Kevin Corley.
Brooklyn, NY: Hard Ball Press, 2014, 377 pages. SBN: 978-0-9911639-9-1
Reviewed by Janet Wells Greene

FORMER HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER
Kevin Corley shares what he has learned about coal mining history in his new novel, *Sixteen Tons*. The heart of this book is the story of the formation of the Progressive Mine Workers of America and the ways in which its characters fight against the United Mine Workers of America for control of organized labor in Illinois.

Like most stories of mining life, whether they are fiction or non-fiction, this one is packed with dramatic events: strikes, mining disasters, and death in the years from the 1890s to the 1950s. In 20th century America, coal miners led the way in organizing unions to protect their lives at work and the health and welfare of their families. These organizing efforts involved gunfights, bloodshed, federal troops and inter-union conflict.

Kevin Corley's novel focuses on the work and fortunes of a group of immigrant miners and their socialist supporters in Christian County, Illinois. His characters travel more than one would expect, meet Mother Jones and Al Capone, and are present for historic labor struggles in West Virginia and Ludlow, Colorado, as well as major events in Illinois mining history.

Mr. Corley gives us tales of duplicity, love and remorse featuring fictional characters,



according to his publisher, “loosely “ based on the stories he shared with his students in the classroom and on oral histories he conducted for the book *Divided Kingdom* by Carl Oblinger (Springfield: Illinois State Historical Society, 2nd edition, 2004).

A work of historical fiction can lead the reader to want to know more about the past. Unfortunately, neither the author nor his publisher provided a bibliography of sources or suggested readings, and that is a major shortcoming of this book of fiction for readers interested in labor history.

In these times, we need more than a good story. We need accuracy and analysis of the struggles of the past, the bitterness of rival labor organizations, the role of race, ethnicity, gender, treacherous double agents, organized crime and corrupt politicians. And we also need it to be readable and interesting.

Readers, writers and publishers who seek a model for a well-documented, highly readable non-fiction account of mining life could examine *The Great Coalfield War*, originally published in 1972 by George S. McGovern and journalist Leonard F. Guttridge. McGovern, the late senator and presidential candidate, was an historian of

the Colorado mine wars. (Boulder: The University Press of Colorado, reissued 1996). Or better yet, revisit *Labor's Untold Story: The Adventure Story of the Battles, Betrayals and Victories of America's Working Men and Women* (Pittsburgh: Electrical, Radio, and Machine Workers of America, 1955), still in print after 59 years. This classic, written by historian Herbert Morais and journalist Richard O. Boyer, contains a wealth of primary and secondary sources that form the foundation for historians writing labor history today.

Work History News

New York Labor History Association, Inc.

Work History News is published two times per year to keep NYLHA's members informed of labor history events, activities and tours.

For more information and brochures contact:

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Anne Balay, Rachel Bernstein, Bette Craig, Miriam Frank, Janet Wells Greene, Kelsey Harrison, Robert Parmet, Maynard Seider

What topics would you suggest for a program/panel discussion/conference or book talk? _____

Any additional kinds of programming you would like to see the NYLHA take up? _____

Is there some project that you would like to help organize? _____

Would you consider helping out as a volunteer? Yes No

If so, please provide your contact info: (e-mail address; snail mail address; telephone number)

Thank you for your contribution! We value your input. Fill this out on-line at NYLHA website or mail to:

Jane LaTour
72 Seaman Ave., 6-B
NY, NY 10034

NYLHA Membership Survey

(Available on NYLHA Website)

Name: _____

Organizational Affiliation: _____

Approximate length of your membership in the NYLHA? _____

Which of the following events have you attended? (Please check.)

2013:

February 12: Book Talk: Marjorie Heins

February 27: Henry Foner Book Party

April 3: Clara Lemlich Social Activist Awards

March 18: Museum Talk: "Curating Activism/Museums and Labor History"

May 14: NYLHA Film Program: Workers Unite Film Festival

May 18: UFT / NYLHA Labor in the Classroom Conference

June 5-8: LAWCHA Conference in NYC

Oct. 10: Fall Program: *Farewell to Factory Towns?* Film and Filmmaker Discussion

Sept. 26: "On Equal Terms" Reception Honoring Tradeswomen

Nov. 1: Closing Reception for "On Equal Terms"

Dec. 2: Commerford Awards: Eric Foner / Barbara Bowen, Honorees

2014:

February 1: UFT/NYLHA Social Studies Conference

April 2: Clara Lemlich Social Activist Awards

April 9: Talk: Paul Washington on Morris Schappes

May 8: Labor History Conference: "Attack on Public Sector Workers"

May 12 / May 13: NYLHA Film Programs: Workers Unite Film Festival

Sept. 17: Fall Program: Book Party for Miriam Frank

Dec. 3: Commerford Awards: American Labor Museum / Arthur Cheliotas

Steel Closets: Scintillating book talk at Bluestockings

By: Jane LaTour

Author Anne Balay arrived in New York City from Gary Indiana to speak at Bluestockings Bookstore on September 17, the independent bookseller on the Lower East Side, and brought with her a tremendous blast of fresh air. Balay's new book, *Steel Closets: Voices of Gay, Lesbian, and Transgender Steelworkers*, published by the University of North Carolina Press, is an exceptionally well-written and deeply felt oral history of steelworkers in Indiana. As she noted, while the lives of gay, lesbian and transgender people living on the east and west coasts have greatly improved, things are still very tough out in the heartland, especially in its working-class precincts.

When the author, a college professor at Indiana University Northwest, moved to Gary from Chicago, she was struck by the huge steel mills and wondered: what was it like to work there—as a LGBTG steelworker? Her research led nowhere and she realized she would have to ask. To pursue her subjects, Balay carried out her forays in local bars wearing a jacket from her prior life as a mechanic. What she found was that people were hiding for a very good reason. As she explained, the backlash that's followed the political gains of the civil rights movement of the LGBTG community has been getting increasingly more hostile. Balay's book is based on interviews with 20 men, 20 women, and four transgender witnesses.

Commitment to the job

She spoke about the reasons why—despite gross harassment—people stay: the good pay, where there are few other options for a decent paycheck; the pride in the work—the feeling that an individual is doing meaningful and important work; also a tradition of family legacy—following in fathers' and grandfathers' footsteps. Another stark fact: the mills that used to employ hundreds of workers now operate with far fewer employees, and are huge—"incredibly empty, desolate, with plenty of space for



Anne Balay reading from her new book, *Steel Closets*, to old friends and newfound supporters at independent bookstore.

photo credit: Jesse Weaver Shipley

conditions that are a perfect environment for gross forms of violence and abuse that goes undetected and unreported." Balay described the dangerous nature of the work, the exposure to toxic substances, such as benzene and asbestos, and the high rate of cancer among mill workers in Northwest Indiana. "Steelworkers don't get to enjoy the retirement they've earned. One or two years—and then they die."

The book is excellent for use in the classroom; accessible and compelling, a good, old-fashioned, gripping story—harrowing and ultimately, inspiring. The story continued after publication. Balay's subjects, seeing their stories in the book, took it to their union

and demanded that the USWA take action. To their credit, the union did. In August, at their annual convention in Las Vegas, the Steelworkers added gender identity to their Constitution. The resolution passed overwhelmingly and USWA President Leo Gerard was outspoken in his support. Thanks to the courageous action of these steelworkers and the eye-opening stories in the book, union delegates approved adding gender identity to classifications such as race, creed, and age, for protection against harassment. As reported in the *Post-Tribune* by Jerry Davich: "Members stood, cheered and applauded as Leo Gerard shouted, 'We are all human beings in this union and, as long as I am president, we will not tolerate any form of discrimination against any human being for any reason.'"

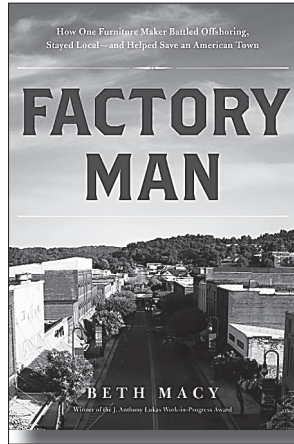
A happy ending: indeed.

Factory owners and the workers

By Kelsey Harrison

"Factory Man" by Beth Macy is a well-written and well-researched book on the Bassett family's

owning of the largest wood furniture company in the world and the subsequent downfall of the entire industry due to low-cost knock-offs being built in Indonesia, China and Vietnam.



But the story doesn't end there as the black sheep of the Bassett family, John Bassett III, goes to war with China over its flooding the market with furniture sold below cost, a major violation of World Trade Organization (W.T.O.) rules. The book is a great chronicler of one industry, centered in Virginia, and a metaphor for the of America in the last 30 years as globalization and the "free market" seek out the largest sweatshops in the world, sending thriving cities all over the south from near full-employment to ghost towns where the remaining population live off of unemployment or disability checks or low-paying part-time jobs that carry them to retirement on inadequate Social Security.

Family histories

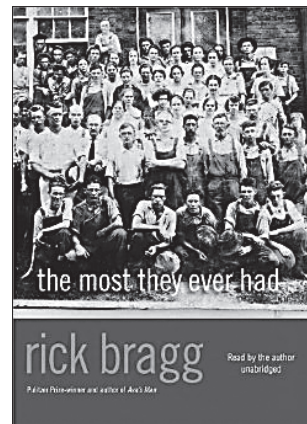
Though the book focuses on three generations of the Bassett family (history from the top down), the author goes out of her way to interview the factory workers and servants who worked for the Bassetts. Ms. Macy covers the very interesting mulatto history of the family through the servants as well as life in the non-union south, where wages are kept low and unions are kept out. In fact, Ms. Macy only twice alludes very briefly to successful anti-union drives by the company, and more coverage of the anti-union battles would have made the book a lot

more interesting. Even though John Bassett III does successfully win tens of millions of dollars in penalties against sweatshop labor in China, his company is still just breaking even at the present time and many of his smaller competitors went out of business anyway. Even after winning cases and smaller amounts of money from W.T.O. sanctions. To top off what was a pyrrhic victory, many of the Chinese companies that were fined simply relocated to Vietnam, where there were no penalties or duties imposed on imports to the United States. Another angle Ms. Macy covers well is the fact that the southern companies originally put higher-wage furniture makers in New England and Michigan out of business years ago and the practice of making cheap knockoffs of popular products is a widespread one within the United States as well. Overall, the book is more of an industry study than a labor history but its illumination of the horrors of globalization and the international sweatshop industry is magnificently done. And you will never look at a piece of wooden furniture again without thinking of this detailed portrait of the company towns of the Southern U.S. that went from the lowest unemployment rates in their states to the highest.



On the other hand, Rick Bragg's book, "The Most They Ever Had," focuses exclusively on

workers' lives in a series of vignettes in the Appalachian textile factories of northwest Alabama. Though a short book at 156 pages, it very convincingly portrays life in the cotton factories: both the life the factory gives and



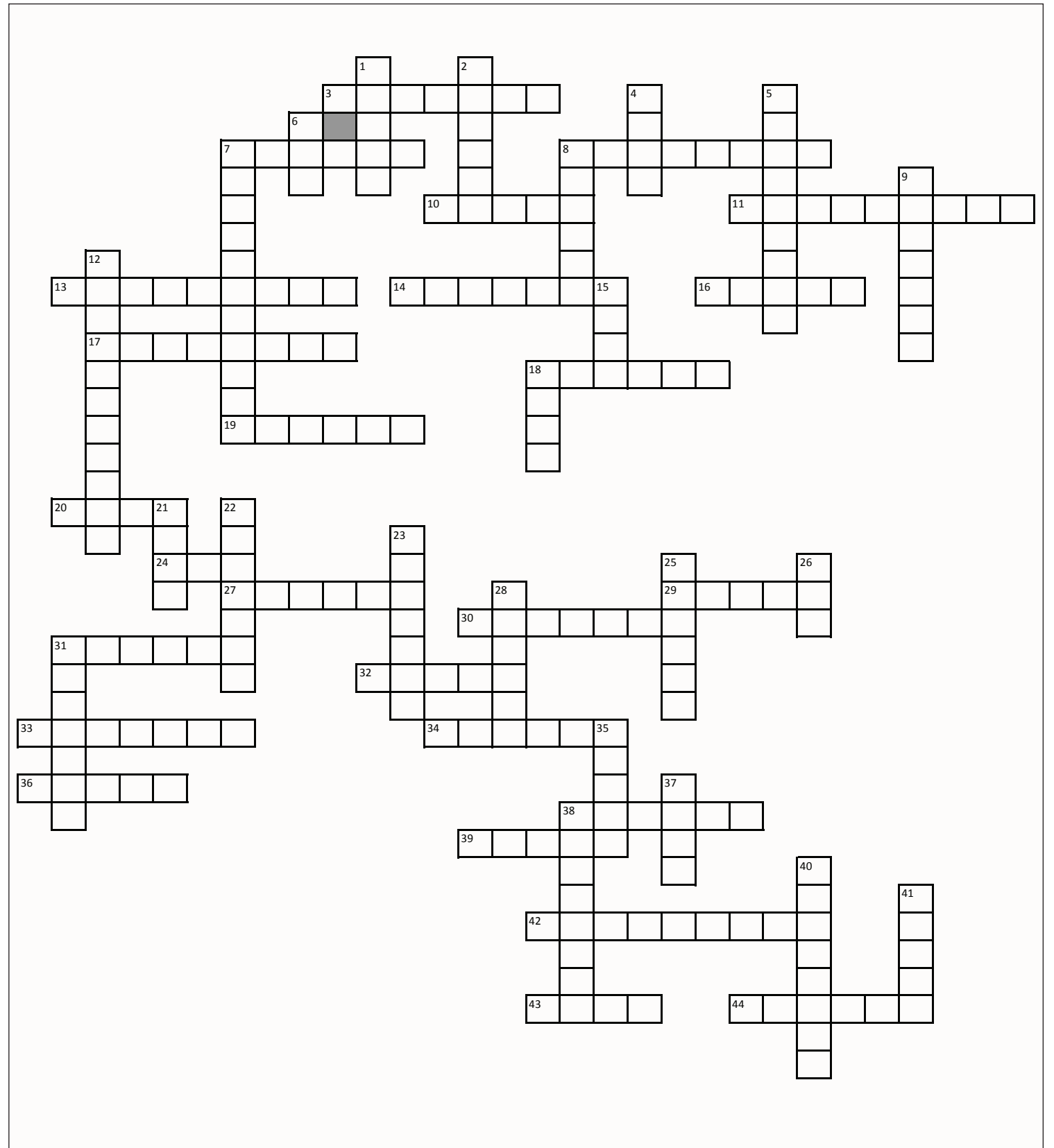
the life it takes away. These were non-union factories where workers didn't get lunch breaks and ate their lunch right on the machines, ingesting the microscopic cotton fibers that would eventually kill them. Though of course dying slowly towards the end of life was better than losing limbs to the machines and becoming disabled at an early age. Many of the children of the factory workers saw their parents suffering late in life from the job but nevertheless went into the factories to work themselves. For most of the twentieth century the textile owners denied all of the diseases the workers picked up. They wrongly blamed asbestosis, pneumonia and breathing problems on cigarette smoking.

A true villain

One of the most moving sections documenting the horror of working in these plants focuses on factory owner William Greenleaf, a true capitalist pig right out of central casting who paid the lowest wages in the industry, defied Franklin Roosevelt's minimum wage in the 1930's, ran a complete company town with rundown housing and called all regulation "socialism." His defying of federal minimum wage laws provoked an unsuccessful strike by workers who previously spent their whole life obediently bowing down to authority and extoling a rugged individualism. Luckily for the workers Mr. Greenleaf eventually burnt himself out and spent his golden years going crazy in a dilapidated mansion that he was too cheap to maintain in safe condition. Other sections talk about how the workers were told over and over again that rumors of their factory shutting down were untrue, until an abrupt meeting was called in 2001 and the factory was indeed shut down. Though overall the book is on the thin side, the portraits it paints of life in the textile industry are very moving and vivid. Before you finish reading this book you are guaranteed to reach up to your face and pluck cotton fibers off of it.

Labor Crossword Puzzle

By Kelsey Harrison



2015 Calendar of Events

February 21 – 35th Annual Marion Thompson Wright Lecture series, in memory of Dr. Clement Alexander Price. “Curating Black America” 9:30 - 7:00 PM, Rutgers University. Guest speaker Taylor Branch. Free and open to the public. For more information 973.353.3891.

MAY 1 TO MAY 21 – 4th Annual Workers Unite! Film Festival. A Celebration of Global Labor Solidarity.

MAY 13 – NYLHA's Workers Unite! Film Festival Program, Lithographers' Auditorium: “Eugene V. Debs and the American Movement,” produced by Cambridge Documentary Films. Speakers: Gail Malmgreen, NYLHA, moderator; Noel Beasley, President of the Eugene V. Debs Foundations (and President of Workers United) and Lisa Phillips, Indiana State University (and Debs Foundation).

MAY 28-31 – LAWCHA Conference, Georgetown University, Washington, DC “Fighting Inequality: Class, Race, and Power. The fees for the LAWCHA conference are: \$125 for full-time workers \$75 for part-time and retired workers. Conference registration will open early in 2015

LAWCHA conference in May at Georgetown – Fighting Injustice; Class, Race, and Power

May 28-31, 2015. Georgetown University, Washington, DC. Joint Conference of the Labor and Working-Class History Association and the Working-Class Studies Association.

Economic inequality, while long a challenge for working-class people, has grown and become increasingly central in public life. It has been a theme in struggles for justice for low-wage workers and has shaped policies related to education, housing, health care, and the right to organize.

Fifty years after the passage of the 1965 Voting Rights Act, even access to the most basic democratic right faces new threats. We see concern with inequality growing in religious institutions, and it has been a theme in the media and the arts, as well—in spoken-word poetry about the link between mass incarceration and slavery, in documentaries about individuals and communities struggling to “recover” from economic restructuring, and in a variety of commentaries and reflections.

19th C. Irish toilers

Continued from page 8

it's in that business, rubber shoe and boot production, that he makes his mark. He's hard working and more than willing to learn from others. Before long, Banigan, now the holder of four patents, is running the Woonsocket Rubber Company.

Proud of his Irish Catholic heritage, Banigan hires Irish workers and becomes a major philanthropist to the church and Catholic charities. By 1885, he controls one quarter of the rubber footwear market, but a national recession leads him to cut his costs. In chapter 5, the book's most dramatic section, hundreds of Banigan's skilled employees, members of the Knights of Labor, strike his Millville, Massachusetts plant

Fighting Inequality will bring together scholars, activists, and artists to explore some core questions about economic inequality and strategies for resistance, both historically and in the current moment:

What forces—social, political, economic, and cultural—have contributed to inequality and influence people's responses to it?

How do working-class people gain power within democracy when access and rights are limited by policy and ideology?

How have the complex relationships among class, race, and power sometimes enabled and sometimes constrained working-class resistance?

Because we will meet in the nation's capital in a period when past democratic achievements are under assault, we particularly encourage those that wrestle with issues of democracy and public policy. We invite proposals for varied formats, including roundtables, debates, working groups, workshops, teaching sessions, and performances.

when he cuts wages by 18 percent. Banigan refuses to negotiate and later, when the entire workforce walks out, he faces “the nation's first strike by a *union* of rubber workers.”

Banigan had enjoyed playing the role of the good father, but with his bottom line threatened, his class identity clearly trumped any sense of Irish solidarity. Now, a member of the overwhelmingly Protestant business elite, Banigan adds his industrial holdings to the U.S. Rubber Company, and in 1893 he becomes the cartel's president. He dies in 1898, still proudly Irish. As are the workers he hired and fought against, now part of a broader working class, one that has become “white,” but that's a different story.

Slavery and three women seeking their freedom

“There was a time in Africa the people could fly. Mauma told me this one night when I was ten years old.”

By Bette Craig

This is the intriguing beginning of Sue Monk Kidd's *The Invention of Wings*, an historical novel about the Grimké sisters, abolitionists and feminists from Charleston, South Carolina, but the words above belong to Hetty “Handful,” the slave who was gifted to Sarah Grimké on her 11th birthday.

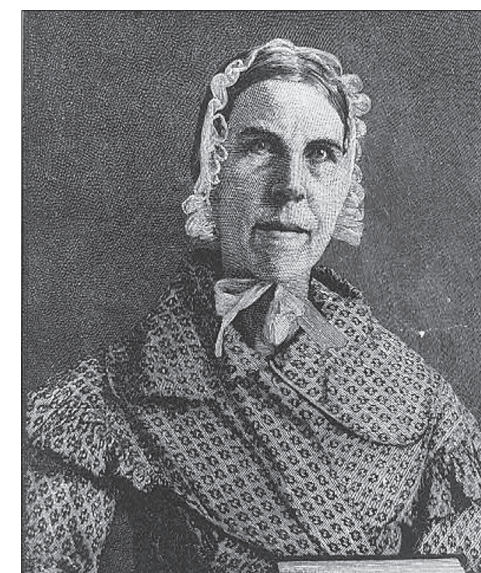
Weaving history with imagination

Sue Monk Kidd tells this fascinating story in alternating chapters, in Handful's words, and Sarah's words. She sticks fairly close to the facts of Sarah's life, but Handful is mostly a product of the author's rich imagination after she learned that Sarah did, indeed, receive a child slave as a birthday present and that they were both seriously punished after Sarah taught her to read.

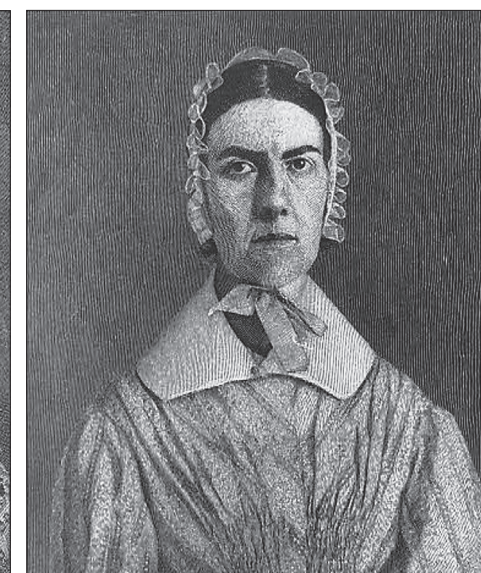
Sarah Grimké was born in 1792 to a prominent and wealthy Charleston family. Her father was a lawyer and a judge, as well as a plantation owner. Sarah longed for learning and very much wanted to study law like her father and favorite brother did, but that was denied her as a female. There were fourteen children in the family and Sarah was especially close to the youngest child, Angelina, born in 1805.

The novel tracks the sisters' awakening to the injustice and cruelty of slavery and how they start to see their own bondage as women without rights as akin to slavery.

The story-telling is taut with suspense and danger as Handful's strong-willed mother, Charlotte, a skilled seamstress who is allowed some freedom to walk about the city and earn some of her own money, becomes involved with Denmark Vesey, a free black man and leader of a foiled slave insurrection. An appliqué quilt that Charlotte has made to tell the story of her life is a touchstone for Handful and the spine of the book. Its black triangles of cloth represent the wings that can fly to freedom.



Sarah Grimké



Angelina Grimké Weld

Sarah Grimké's journey to Philadelphia to accompany her father for medical treatment in 1819 put her in touch with Quakers and she for a while aspires to be a Quaker minister, but finds that her views are too radical to be accepted by her Quaker group. Her sister, Angelina, follows in her footsteps and they both become important voices, as writers and speakers, in the abolition movement. Their pamphlet, written with Angelina's husband, Theodore Weld, *American Slavery As It Is: Testimony of a Thousand Witnesses*, sold more copies than any other anti-slavery publication up until *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, published more than ten years later.

Those are a few bare facts, but Kidd's *The Invention of Wings* is a passionate and moving story that will keep readers turning the

pages to find out if Handful will achieve her freedom and if the Grimké sisters will find their wings.

It's usually interesting to discover what inspires a writer to pursue a certain subject. Kidd, also the author of *The Secret Life of Bees*, was led to the Grimké sisters by a visit to Judy Chicago's Dinner Party exhibit at the Brooklyn Museum. She had never encountered the Grimké sisters before reading about them on the Heritage Panels there listing a long line of feminist heroines. What made it seem even more like fate was the fact that in 2007, when she started working on the book, she was living in their hometown.

The Invention of Wings, by Sue Monk Kidd, 359 pp. Viking, 2014, \$27.95 (cloth).

Honoring life-long activists

HELP US FIND the unsung heroines who have devoted their lives to the greater good, in the tradition of Clara Lemlich. Nominees for this honor need to be able to attend the ceremony in late March 2015 (thus most will live near NYC), and should have at least six decades of activism behind them. Nominate a woman you admire by contacting us at info@LaborArts.org. See photos and short bios of the honorees from 2011-2014 at LaborArts.org/lemlichawards.



ACROSS

3. Cigarmaker, the founding president of the American Federation of Labor.
7. “Grape” labor leader of the 1960’s.
8. Term used to describe the workers who dig tunnel and excavation projects (plural).
10. Garment worker’s union founded in N.Y.C. in 1900 (inits.).
11. Jock _____, reform candidate of the (U.M.W.) gunned down on orders of U.M.W. Head Tony Boyle.
13. 4 workers wrongly executed in Chicago in 1887 for an explosion in this square.
14. This largely defunct mode of transportation was the focus of one of Brooklyn’s most famous strikes in 1895.
16. Union President led the 1966 N.Y.C. Transit Strike and died soon afterwards.
17. _____ Shirtwaist Factory Fire.
18. Italian NY-based anti-fascist fighter a newspaper editor, a leader in the I.W.W. and a strong supporter of anarchists and immigrants.
19. _____ Sacco, famous anarchist and shoemaker executed in 1927.
20. Labor/Socialist Party Leader, ran for president of the U.S. in 1920 from jail (today most American politicians are jailed after the election).

24. Establishment of this rival organization in the 1960’s caused professional football salaries to skyrocket (inits.).
27. Women’s Trade Union _____ founded in Boston in 1903.
29. Teamster President missing to this day.
30. _____ Lineman, sung by Glen Campbell
31. Delores _____ co-founder of the UFW
32. “Give us bread, but give us _____ too (1912 Lawrence, Mass. Strike).
33. Frances _____, appointed first female federal cabinet member in U.S. history (only over 150 years after the country was founded).
34. Trotskyist James _____ led the Teamsters strike of 1934 in Minneapolis.
36. _____ the Riveter, an icon of WWII.
38. _____ La Follette, Sr., progressive senator from Wisconsin
39. Abraham _____, founder of the *Jewish Daily Forward*, whose headquarters was always available for striking workers.
42. Ethel _____, N.Y.C. labor union activist was executed as a Soviet spy in 1953.
43. State where the Akron rubber workers sit-in occurred against the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Co. in the 1930’s.

44. “Which Side Are You On?” Describes this 1930’s miner’s strike in _____ County, Kentucky.

DOWN

1. Maternal figure born in the 1830’s fought for the rights of miners, predominantly in Pennsylvania and W. Virginia.
2. Famous “Working” writer from Chicago.
4. Noted Civil Rights leader killed in 1968 supporting a sanitation men’s strike in Memphis.
5. Last mayor of N.Y.C. to have grown up in a tenement (hint: it’s not Michael Bloomberg).
6. Norma _____, Oscar-winning movie about the textile industry.
7. School Site where the strike was called that became the “Uprising of the 20,000” in N.Y.C. in 1909.
8. Union _____, the site of hundreds of years of great demonstrations in the heart of N.Y.C.
9. The _____ of Labor, founded in 1869 was subsequently led by Terence Powderly.
12. Anti-labor legislation that was passed over the veto of President Harry Truman.
15. Ivy League University and site of a noted clerical worker’s strike in 1984.
18. President of the U.S. who signed the first child labor laws early in the 20th century.

21. Term used to describe a strike-breaking, picketline-crossing sonuva*&\$%!.

22. Founder of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America.

23. Actor Jackie _____ sometimes wore his father’s TWU button on his 1950’s black and white sitcom.

25. Famous singer-songwriter of the 1970’s who wrote a classic song about a taxi driver.

26. Well-known union founded in Michigan in the 1930’s (inits.).

28. President of the U.S. who created the Federal Labor Department in 1913.

31. City where the American Labor Museum is located in New Jersey.

35. President of the U.S. who signed the Occupational Safety and Health Act of the 1970’s.

37. John _____, noted journalist and activist who co-organized the Paterson Pageant of 1913.

38. Labor Leader who founded the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters in 1925.

40. Molly _____, “explosive group” of 19th-century coal miners in Pennsylvania.

41. The “Rebel Girl” of the I.W.W.

Answers on page 11

Thinking globally about labor in decline

By Robert D. Parmet

Steve Early, *Save Our Unions: Dispatches from a Movement in Distress* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 2013).

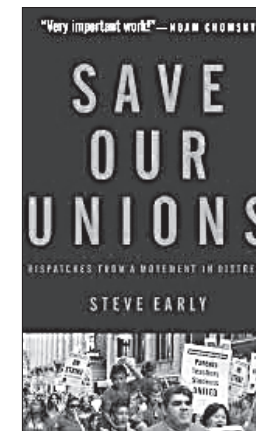
Immanuel Ness (ed.) *New Forms of Worker Organization* (Oakland, CA: PM Press, 2014).

The current condition of the American labor movement has prompted a

floodtide of commentary on how to explain, manage and overcome it. In his *Save Our Unions* veteran labor organizer and journalist describes the situation as “the road back to open shop conditions.” Seen

from an academic perspective, in *New Forms of Worker Organization* political scientist Immanuel Ness cites “the ongoing deterioration in workplace conditions and the systematic erosion of workers’ power.” That American workers are in deep trouble is not disputed. What is being asked is what can be done about it. Early and Ness offer differing solutions.

Early’s book is his second collection of essays that originally appeared in Monthly Review Press. *Embedded with Organized Labor* was the first. This volume offers broad insight into the prevailing labor scene while providing a strong sense of the historical scene. His idea is to start at ground level, in the form of “actual worker organizing and strike activity that defies recent labor-relations trends,” demonstrating “that another way is possible.” His “agents of change” are the “brave individuals who are joining the new retail, warehouse, and food service worker networks.” Furthermore, he has not forgotten “the tens of thousands of shop stewards who still form the backbone of the labor movement.”



As Early is a labor insider, with decades of service to the Communications Workers of America, his criticism of the labor movement has special authority. He does not ignore or minimize the corruption that plagued such organizations as the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT) and United Mine Workers of America (UMWA), or internecine conflict between the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) and Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees (UNITE HERE). On the other hand, he celebrates those who demonstrated for equal rights in the workplace and “a clear path to citizenship” for undocumented aliens in Oakland, California in 2013. Early notes that they yearned “for a new form of unionism that was more militant, democratic, and member-driven” than the kind that had led to disaster. Such people would bring about the revitalization of the labor movement.

Immanuel Ness expresses another kind of optimism. His faith in labor’s rebirth is likewise with the workers themselves, but at the expense of traditional union

organization. As stated in a forward by labor activist and historian Staughton Lynd, the time has come for “alternative unionism.” The “existing mainstream unionism” in the United States, according to Lynd, imposes few obligations on the employer, who collects dues for the union, and has a “management prerogative” of making decisions that could include “shutting down a particular plant or workplace.” On the other hand, union members are deprived of the right to challenge such unilateral employer decisions made during the course of a collective bargaining agreement. In

other words, a “vertical” arrangement exists in which the activity of ordinary union members is limited. What this book attempts to demonstrate, is that a “horizontal” system that “relies not on paid union staff but on the workers themselves” has already energized worker organizations and should therefore serve as a model for American labor. To demonstrate his point, editor Ness presents essays by various scholars on activity and organizations in several nations, including Italy, China, India, South Africa, Colombia, Sweden, Australia, and the United States.

The evidence presented of the vitality of worker movements is indeed impressive. For example, Piotr Bizukov and Irina Olimpijeva reveal protests by Russian railway, automobile and oil workers, as well as coal miners. Arup Kumar Sen profiles the oppression and protest of Maruti Suzuki autoworkers in India. Shawn Hattingh writes about “the extreme exploitation of Black workers” in South Africa’s mining industry, and notes that both unionized and non unionized workers have united to oppose it. In September 2010 Minnesota witnessed “the first public action of the largest unionization effort in the history of the sprawling U.S. fast food industry.” As Erik Forman writes, the radical Industrial Workers of the World, hardly visible for many years, was anything but dead, and its Jimmy John’s Workers Union (JJWU) was able to organize fast food workers in sandwich shops in Minnesota. The struggle for union recognition by management had not ended, but, as recent events demonstrate, thousands of fast food workers in the United States have passed the point where they will tolerate abominable conditions.

Whether studying the American labor scene, as Early does, or the international one, as Ness’s essays do, the ultimate message of the two books is similar: worker protest and organization lives on. More the pragmatist than Ness, Early is not ready to give up on American labor or traditional organizations. He writes that “workers of all kinds have

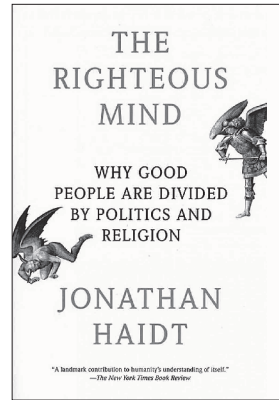
Continued on page 9

What makes people disagree and why

By Betty Craig

If we're lucky, we've had the experience of meeting people with diametrically opposed views of the world and its politics. Sometimes, they're members of our own family. We say to ourselves, "How can they possibly think that?" Sometimes we can't talk about politics or religion at those large family gatherings that take place on Thanksgiving and other special times.

At last, here's a book that takes on the issue with an attempt to broaden our understanding of world views opposite our own. Jonathan Haidt, who is a professor of psychology at the University of Virginia and a visiting professor of business ethics at New York University's Stern School of Business, is the author of *The Righteous Mind, Why Good People Are Divided by Politics and Religion*,



published in 2012 by Pantheon Books.

Haidt has studied how people make moral decisions and contends that we mostly act from our guts, and only bring our reason to bear on defending our decisions later. He goes so far as to propose that we are even born with certain hard wiring that makes us more likely to lean left or right.

Studies have been done to measure the brain's response to threat and fear, showing that conservatives react more strongly than liberals to signs of danger. This seems to translate into neurotransmitter functioning in response to glutamate and serotonin, whereas dopamine reception tied to sensation seeking and openness to experience seems to correlate to a higher degree of liberalism.

Haidt's Moral Foundation Theory rests on consideration of six categories of things we care about:

- Care/Harm
- Liberty/Oppression
- Fairness/Cheating
- Loyalty/Betrayal
- Authority/Subversion
- Sanctity/Degradation.

According to Haidt's studies over several years, conservatives have an equal degree of

care for all six categories and their messaging in elections and issues campaigns reflects that and gives them more points of possible engagement with their audience. Liberals care most about Care/Harm and Liberty/Oppression and are much more concerned for individuals' rights and express more empathy for victims of oppression.

Drawing on the work of anthropologists, other psychologists, Darwin, Durkheim, and Barbara Ehrenreich's *Dancing in the Streets: A History of Collective Joy*, Haidt proposes that "Groupishness was a key innovation that took us beyond selfishness and into civilization." Haidt talks about the "hive switch" that makes us feel part of the collective universe and the role of Nature and also hallucinogens and ecstatic dancing in producing that state.

The book's most important contribution may be its argument for the value of the binding moral foundations of loyalty, authority and sanctity that we liberals may be too quick to discount. The website, YourMorals.org is useful to consult.

The Righteous Mind: Why Good People Are Divided by Politics and Religion, by Jonathan Haidt, 419 pp. Pantheon Books, 2012, \$28.95 (cloth).

Awards ceremony

Continued from page 1

landmark, and has been a museum for over three decades."

The award to Arthur Cheliotos was presented by Gregory Mantsios, director of the Joseph S. Murphy Institute, CUNY. "Cheliotos has served as president of Local 1180 since 1979, as the Chair of the Murphy Institute's Advisory Board, and as Vice-Chairman of the New York City Municipal Labor Committee, among many other contributions. Thank you for all that you do for Local 1180, for the CWA, and for all working people," Mantsios said.

In accepting his award, Cheliotos pointed to the importance of preserving labor history, "lest we forget." He spoke about his father, "an undocumented immigrant from Greece when he arrived in this country,



Arthur Cheliotos (right) with well-wishers.

which speaks to the issues today. When I look in the faces of these workers, I see my father. They come here looking for a better life. That's what America has been able to offer—a better life." He noted that John Commerford was involved in the labor

struggles of his time—in the 1830s—before the Civil War—that led to where we are today. "Unfortunately, today is not a good place. The benefits of the 1950s and '60s that I grew up with in a progressive era, and coming out of the New Deal, are no longer available. We understood as a society that unless all of us do well, none of us do well. Far too many people and labor organizations are losing sight of that fact," he said.

Cheliotos concluded his remarks by pointing to the role that young activists can play in bringing about change. "Let's stand together and continue teaching labor education that John Commerford recognized as a source of power, with everyday heroes in the labor movement—past and present. Solidarity forever."

Photo credit: William Lehman



The Debra E. Bernhardt

Labor Journalism Prize

Call for entries – 2014-2015

THE NEW YORK LABOR HISTORY ASSOCIATION is pleased to announce this Call for Entries for the First Annual Debra E. Bernhardt Labor Journalism Prize. The deadline for entries is **TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 1, 2015**.

THE BERNHARDT PRIZE IS AN AWARD OF \$500 given to an article or series of articles that furthers the understanding of the history of working people. The work should be published – in print or online – in a union or workers' center publication or by an independent journalist.

By sponsoring this award we hope to inspire more great writing for a general audience about the history of work, workers, and their organizations.

The award is co-sponsored by LaborArts; Metro New York Labor Communications Council; the NYC Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO; and the Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives at NYU's Tamiment Library.

The winner will be announced at the Tamiment Library on **OCTOBER 7, 2015**, during a forum about the history of labor journalism.

We are guided by the vision of the late **DEBRA E. BERNHARDT**, who worked in so many different realms to share the hidden histories of working people. As head of the Wagner Labor Archives she reached out to an astonishing number of people and organizations, to document undocumented stories and unrecognized contributions, and to make links between past and present.



GUIDELINES

The prize will be given to insightful work that contributes to the understanding of labor history; shows creativity; demonstrates excellence in writing; and adheres to the highest journalistic standards of accuracy.

The work may be an article or a series of articles, published in a labor or a workers' center publication or by an independent journalist – in print or online – between January 2014 and August 30, 2015.

Entries should include a cover sheet with name of the author and the place and date of publication. Five copies of each article (with cover sheet) should be submitted, to:

New York Labor History Association, Tamiment Library, 10th Floor
 Bobst Library NYU
 70 Washington Square South
 New York NY 10012

Questions? Contact info@LaborArts.org or 212.998.2637

Crossword Answers

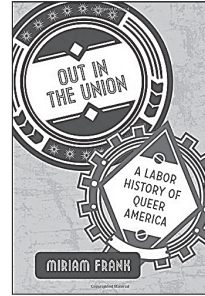
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|---------------|------------------|---------------|--------------|----------------|
| 26. U.A.W. | 6. Rae | 38. Robert | 19. Nicola | ACROSS |
| 28. Wilson | 7. Cooper Union | 39. Cahhan | 20. Debs | 3. Gompers |
| 31. Haldon | 8. Square | 42. Rosenberg | 24. A.F.L. | 7. Chavez |
| 35. Nixon | 9. Knights | 43. Ohio | 27. League | 8. Sandhogs |
| 37. Reed | 12. Taft-Hartley | 44. Harlan. | 29. Hoffa | 10. I.L.C.W.U. |
| 38. Randolph | 15. Yale | | 30. Wichtera | 11. Yablonski |
| 40. Maguitres | 18. Taft | DOWN | 31. Huerra | 13. Haymarket |
| 41. Flynn | 21. Scab | | 32. Roses | 14. Trolley |
| | 22. Hillman | | 33. Perkins | 16. Quill |
| | 23. Gleason | | 34. Cannon | 17. Triangle |
| | 25. Chapin | | 36. Rosie | 18. Tresca |
| | | | 5. LaGuardia | |
| | | | 4. King | |
| | | | 2. Terkel | |
| | | | 1. Jones | |

Out in the union: A labor history

By Anne Balay

Out in the Union: A Labor History of Queer America, by Miriam Frank, tells the important, often neglected story of the intersection between union folks and gay folks as it evolves through time. In the early 21st century, this seems like a surprising overlap, but Frank demonstrates, through densely researched political and labor history and through direct personal narrative, how these two threads have been braided, and need to remain so as we continue to fight for social justice.

Frank explains the history and the structure of the labor movement in the USA by putting compelling stories of local change within regional, national, and temporal frames. For example, Frank observes that locals “are the basic organizing units of the labor movement” (104) but, though they govern themselves, they do so within structures imposed by their parent unions, by the political and social climate, and by the government and its laws. She



then demonstrates how this web of structures functions by relating the experience of Ann Arbor bus drivers organizing efforts of the 1970s. Frank’s example restores faces and stories to this struggle, making clear and memorable the

process by which various forces interact to bring about change.

Building on the work of Allan Bérubé, Frank gives both a deep and broad analysis of “queer work” both as it shapes, and is shaped by, unions. In her analysis of women in trades and of men in service and fashion industries, Frank includes enough testimonies from a wide enough variety of workers to give the flavor of the struggles and satisfactions of this work. Detailed, personal narratives, such as that of a pole-climber for the phone company, substantiate Frank’s account of gradual change from isolation and fear to greater community and union protection.

Taken together, the book’s chapters demonstrate how alliances between queers and organized labor strategize from

a shared ground of fear towards a collective vision of strength. Frank argues that, as today’s unions expand by diversifying and organizing new workplaces in new ways, they can learn from this history. After devoting an entire chapter to the Coors boycott, an important labor victory enabled by the cooperation of gay bars in San Francisco’s Castro neighborhood and elsewhere, she concludes that “when protests were at peak potency, they were brilliant models of mutual defense” from which “Coalition partners got the picture: Coors was just the beginning because the ideological right was not just selling beer” (82).

Though moments like this one convey nostalgia for earlier days of radical protest, Frank also tells stories that illustrate the limits of identity-based struggle. One lesbian car-shop owner sounds like a dream-come-true until her mostly female mechanics attempt to organize, and she is as quick to retaliate and fire them as any straight manager would have been. Profit trumps politics. Frank also does a careful review of the movement to organize AIDS clinics, exploring how

intersectionality pulls people and groups apart as inevitably as it draws them together.

Taken together, Frank’s stories, and the analysis that ties them together, offer a vision for the future. As 1970s potential became 1980s disappointment for Coors delivery drivers, among so many others, Frank reflects that the GLBT “cultural scene of individual expression and sexual freedom was not so easily balanced with union processes... and the queer world’s spontaneous, community-oriented organizing style did not work smoothly into labor’s more formal modes” (72). By filling in the history of exactly how and why labor folks share a common enemy and a focus on universal human rights with queer folks, Frank reminds readers of how each can inspire the other, and keep it honest. Progress for queers doesn’t mean much unless it affects all queers, and any movement works better when it can dance.

Frank’s important book will continue to shape policy, organizing, and scholarship for years to come. It is now available in paperback.

Out at Tamiment

By Rachel Bernstein

Miriam Frank’s newly published book *Out in the Union: A Labor History of Queer America* was enthusiastically introduced by Timothy Naftali, head of Tamiment Library/Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives, who mentioned a new Archives initiative to document the history of queer activists. Proving the point, Frank’s presentation was able to include moving audio from key activists she interviewed for the book—from oral history recordings recently digitized and made available to researchers.

Frank, a Master Teacher of Humanities at New York University and NYLHA board member, tells the story of queer American workers from the mid-1960s through 2013, chronicling the convolutions of evolving labor politics with queer activism and identity formation, showing how unions began affirming the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender workers in the 1970s and 1980s.

The start

An enthusiastic audience of nearly 100 filled the Tamiment reading room in Bobst Library on September 17, 2014, as Frank recounted the long path of the project. Interviews done in the

late 1980s for a handbook for activists Frank created with her wife Desma Holcomb in 1990 – *Pride at Work: Organizing for Lesbian and Gay Rights in Unions* – could be considered the start. This proved a popular handbook, useful for organizers, and often copied. It was also a place where activists and others looked for a history of queer labor—bringing to light the need for more research on the subject.

Miriam stepped up—she went on for over a decade to interview more than one hundred queer and labor activists and allies in cities across the U.S. She gathered stories about rank and file unionists challenging entrenched leaders, about radicals and activists working for women’s rights and immigrant rights and many other community causes.

The narrative that Frank developed from these and many other sources has accomplished something neither a growing body of literature on queer history nor a robust tradition of labor history had provided—in her words—“a labor history of queer America... about the survival of unions and the survival of queer communities.” There has been much more overlap than is commonly understood, and bringing it to light is a large accomplishment of the book.



right: Miriam Frank reading from her book. photo credit: Jon Bloom
bottom: Not Your Grandfather’s Union: Melinda Hernandez (l.), IBEW Local 3 (ret.) and Veronica Session (r.), Carpenters’ Local 926 at book party. photo credit: Jane LaTour



Connie Kopelov—member emeritus of the NYLHA Executive Board and life long labor, women’s rights, and eventually queer activist—was first in line on the July day in 2011 when New York’s Marriage Equality Act made it legal for her to marry her longtime partner Phyllis Siegel. *Out in the Union’s* epilogue is titled “When Connie Married Phyllis”—and the book party audience was treated to an excerpt from

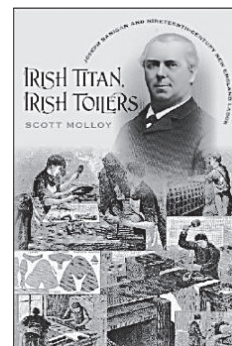
Miriam’s interview with Connie, a small part of Tamiment/Wagner’s Kopelov-Siegel collection.

Audience members young and forever young, who were and continue to be part of the story, contributed to a lively discussion following Frank’s presentation. Jane LaTour spoke on behalf of NYLHA, and then all adjourned to book buying and a reception featuring celebratory cakes and much good cheer.

19th C. Irish toilers in New England

By Maynard Seider

In *Irish Titan, Irish Toilers*, Scott Molloy has not only given us a biography of Joseph Banigan, a remarkable Irish immigrant who presided over a Gilded Age rubber



monopoly, but he has also provided us with a valuable labor history of Rhode Island workers. In an accomplished integration of “history from above” and “history from below,” Molloy weaves a tale that begins with the

Irish potato famine in the 1840s, continues with the struggles of Irish Catholic immigrants in working class cities, and ends with the ascendancy of one of those immigrants to the top echelon of American business at the end of the 19th century.

The Banigan family migrated to the U.S. around 1847, when Joseph was eight. Young

Joseph went to elementary school for one year but left at the age of nine for work, as did numerous other children. He learns the jewelry trade, and as a journeyman, he builds a machine that merged gold with coral and shells, a forerunner of numerous inventions he would accumulate in the rubber business. And

Continued on page 10

Thinking globally

Continued from page 5
organized, with varying degrees of success... to wage a more effective fight.” Ness favors breaking the organizational molds. Citing the wide variety of protests reflected in”new

forms of antibureaucratic and anticapitalist forms of syndicalist, council communist, and autonomist worker representation” around the world, he says that workers are increasingly

able “to advance their own economic, political, and social interests without external intermediaries.” Whether workers’ militancy utilizing conventional or innovative organizational

forms can ultimately blunt the impact of forces seemingly beyond their control is a question yet unanswered. Technological change, globalization, and conservative politics and

government policies have already taken a toll from which recovery is already difficult. Early and Ness tell us that workers have not given up on themselves. However, they do need help.