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Preface

The Phoenix is a journal created by students who have written papers on history or history-related topics. It is published under the sponsorship of the History Department and is devoted to the publication of historical studies written by students who are eager to share their discoveries of the past with you. For this reason, we are sure you will find the contents of Volume 4 to be fresh and exciting.

We are proud of the commitment to scholarship and writing that these student-authors have demonstrated. Each of the articles in this volume of the *Phoenix* was accepted for publication because it displayed facility with the subject matter and a provocative point of view. Because of this diversity, the viewpoints in these essays do not necessarily represent those of the faculty of the History Department.

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The Great Depression of the 1930s:

How Lives Changed

Judith Berger

The Depression following the stock market crash in the fall of 1929 revealed important weaknesses in the American economic system, weaknesses that had not been corrected by earlier reforms of the Populists and Progressives, weaknesses only suspected by a few during the 1920's.

The stock market crash heralded a business depression, at home and abroad, which was the most prolonged and withering in American or world experience. No other industrialized nation suffered so severe a setback. By the end of 1930 about six or seven million workers in the United States were jobless; two years later the figure had about doubled.

Hungry men and women fought over garbage dumped in the street. Farmers, forced to burn their corn for fuel, watched sullenly as their creditors came to evict them from their farms; some of them talked of revolution. A group of unemployed World War I army veterans marched on Washington, D.C. in the summer of 1932 to demand immediate payment of their promised bonuses, only to be driven out of town by troops and tanks and tear gas.

Over five thousand banks collapsed in the first three years of the Depression, carrying with them the lifesavings of tens-of-thousands of people. Countless thousands of hardworking people lost their homes and farms. Bread lines formed, soup kitchens dispensed food, and apple-sellers stood shivering on street corners trying to sell their wares.

The Depression had become a national calamity. Through no fault of their own, people had lost everything. They wanted to work, but there was no work. What little work could be found was usually gotten by women and children. Wages were lower for these people than they were for men. Many men lost their initiative and their self-respect because they could no longer support their families. Women and children were becoming the breadwinners in many families.

I interviewed five people concerning their lives during the Depression. Of the five people I interviewed, Faye and Sadie were between twelve and sixteen years old at the time, Anna and Sol were in their late teens, and Fred was in his early twenties. All of them, except Fred, came from similar backgrounds. They were poor; their parents were immigrants and they were all familiar with day-to-day struggle. Fred, on the other hand, was not rich, but his family was

comfortable.

When asked if there were pressures on the family due to the Depression, I was surprised at the answers. Fay, Sadie, Sol and Anna answered that there were no added pressures. All came from poor families that didn't have much to begin with. Life was a struggle and as Sadie put it: "She didn't know any better. The Depression was just four more hard years to live through." Fred's experience was somewhat different. Prior to 1932, Fred lived in the Bronx with his father and two brothers. His father was ill with diabetes, but he and his brothers all had jobs. Fred worked for a foreign bank in Manhattan. In 1932 Fred married and settled on Staten Island. He worked for a bank from 1926 through 1939 when he joined the fire department.

I would say that the experiences of Faye, Sadie, Sol and Anna were typical of most people during the Depression, whereas Fred was atypical or fortunate because I do not think too many men worked at one job throughout the entire period.

When I asked my interviewees if the pressures of the Depression effected them personally I got the same basic answers that I got to the previous question. Sol summed it up when he said, "Life was not changed, struggle was a way of life." Anna said, "I wasn't brought up in luxury so I wouldn't know the difference." Deprivation and struggle were a part of life. Faye, Sadie, Sol and Anna knew no other life. Although it seems strange to say this, they were happy and content with what they had. A little was more than they expected to have. As stated before, Fred worked steadily but he did say the pressures at his job were very hard. Always at the back of his mind was the fear of losing his job.

All of the interviewees said that as many members of their families worked when possible. Faye's father and two brothers worked in the garment industry and another brother sold newspapers on a train station. They all had to work in order to keep their house in Brooklyn. Sadie's father and brother worked also when they could find jobs. Everyone in Sol's family worked except his mother and elderly grandfather. His working family consisted of his father, two sisters, and one brother as well as himself. Anna's father was a waiter, but he made very little because obviously not too many people ate in restaurants. Anna said he wasn't even able to supplement his income by bringing home food from the restaurant because their home was kosher. In Fred's family all three brothers worked. Fred was the youngest and they all had jobs prior to the Depression. It seemed quite typical for many members of a family to work and help support the household. All interviewees agreed that wages were low and jobs scarce. Most positions were part-time or only lasted a short time, so it was necessary for more than one member of the family to work. This way there was always some money coming into the household.

All five interviewees worked. Faye left school to work behind the counter in a bakery. She said she left school by choice, not because she had to. She attended continuation school until she was seventeen years old. Sadie stayed in school at her father's insistence, but she did piece-work at home after school. She sewed men's collar for one dollar a gross. She said she was only allowed to do this sewing after completing all her school homework. Anna also worked part-time at home. She turned men's ties for sixty cents a gross and bow ties for ninety cents a gross. She got more for the bow ties because they required a double turn. Anna went to school as well. Sol had to quit school in 1930 to get a full-time job. He worked as a handy boy in a radio store on Canal Street. He earned six dollars a week for six days' work. After two years he got a one dollar raise. He worked there until 1935 when he got a job in a laundry. The pay was eighteen dollars a week and he stayed there for the next sixteen years. As we discussed before, Fred was steadily employed. He was able to finish high school. Three of the people I interviewed graduated from high school whereas two did not; all worked in one capacity or another.

All of the interviewees were able to remain in their original apartments or houses except for Sol. In the early part of 1930, Sol's father moved the family to Philadelphia in order to avoid a legal judgment. It seems that a business venture had failed and a judgment was filed against Sol's father. Sol said those were the worst times of his life. For eight months they lived in the slums of Philadelphia. After eight months the family was able to move back to New York and they resided in the East New York section of Brooklyn for many years after that. Fred moved in with his in-laws after he married in 1932, but two years later he and his wife rented their own apartment.

Only two of the interviewees remembered anyone moving in with them because of financial problems. Faye remembered that her brother Louis, his wife and two sons moved in with them. But she said it wasn't unusual, because for as long as she could remember one or more of her four married brothers and their families lived with them at one time or another. Louis did not stay long because his wife and his mother clashed on too many things. Faye did not remember exactly what they fought about, but she remembered the fights themselves. Sadie's parents had a paying boarder. He helped to pay the rent. He slept on a folding bed in the kitchen.

In answer to my eighth question I got varied answers. Anna was able to buy her own clothes, but her sister wore hand-me-downs. Her brothers attended public school and they usually wore dark pants, a white shirt and a tie. They did not have many changes of clothing, but Anna's mother was handy at mending and she washed quite often. Faye wore hand-me-downs from her older sister Rose, but she did get a new outfit for the Jewish holy days. It did not seem to bother Faye to wear hand-me-downs. She said as a youngster she never thought

much about clothes. Clothes were unimportant to her until later in life and by then she could buy herself new ones. Fred needed an appropriate wardrobe for his job at the bank. He was conservative and wore one of two jackets that he owned. For many years he did not buy anything new; he made-do with what he had. Sadie and Sol were the hardest-hit of all the interviewees. Sadie was the oldest girl so her clothes were bought, but more often than not at a second-hand store. She said she could not remember ever getting new clothes until she was in her early twenties. Her clothes were handed down to her sisters. The boy also got his clothes at the second-hand store, except for his Sabbath suit which was bought larger than needed so it could be let-out as he grew. Sol told me that he "wore clothes until they literally fell apart." He wore shoes with cardboard in the soles to cover the holes and when it was absolutely necessary to buy new shoes, he wore sneakers.

All of the interviewees agreed that the meals they ate were simple, filling and cheap. Fred used the word "modest". But all agreed that bread, noodles, potatoes and spaghetti were eaten quite often. Anna said that in her neighborhood on the lower East Side of Manhattan milk was plentiful and her brothers consumed quarts of it to fill themselves. Sol said they were able to exist because the neighborhood grocer would fill your order as long as you paid him on account every week.

When I asked the interviewees if they had to forego medical attention at times they unanimously answered, "No". Somehow, if a doctor was needed, they scraped together the money. In Fred's case his in-laws lent it to him. The other interviewees just said they managed. It seems that life went on and these families knew how to survive. Times were a little worse, but they knew all about bad times.

Then I asked if their futures had been shaped by living through the Depression all the interviewees except Faye said "Yes". Faye said she doesn't remember her life changing too much. Someone, usually more than one member of the family worked and contributed to the household. They did not have money in the bank to lose, and since there was always money coming in life stayed pretty much the same through the years.

Fred said he learned the importance of economy. Even though he had a steady job he was aware that money was not plentiful and that he had to be careful how he spent what he did have. He said, "You can't imagine the horror of the bread lines or people selling apples on the street — people begging for money, you couldn't walk a block in the city without being asked for a handout — it was dreadful." Seeing these things has to change a person. Anna said, of course her future was shaped by the Depression. She was afraid to spend money and enjoy the little extras. She married during the mid-thirties, but things got worse after that. Her husband did not work too often and when he

did he only earned a small amount. She said she was always compelled to save a few cents for a rainy day. The Depression lasted through the 1940's for Anna because by then she had two children and her husband still did not work on a steady basis.

Both Sol and Sadie were effected in a somewhat different way. Both had aspirations of continuing their education. Both hoped to attend college. Sol was never even able to complete high school, so his dream faded rather early. Sadie, on the other hand, wanted to be a teacher. She did graduate from high school but she had to go to work full-time to help out at home. She always planned to go to night college but she never did.

I think all their lives were effected one way or another. I think everyone who lives through a bad time is changed to some degree.

All the interviewees seem to have difficulties in the same areas. All seem to have a difficult time spending money. They find it hard to make a decision when that decision concerns money. Another common difficulty all the interviewees seem to have is the problem of throwing away old clothing. As Sadie put it even if she hadn't worn something for years, she had to be forced to clean closets and discard useless items. None of the interviewees had any trouble with banks, because all feel secure now with government guarantees.

It seems the Depression had left its mark on all the interviewees. Some had suffered more than others did, but all seem to have hidden scars. Fred seems to have fared the best. The fact that he had a steady job is probably the reason why. Faye and Anna took that time of their lives in stride. Both kept saying they never knew any better. Sol and Sadie were hurt the most. They spoke of dreams that were never to become reality. All five interviewees have had productive lives and all have done fairly well for themselves. But the term "Depression Mentality" seems to hover over them. All would like to shake these feelings of fear of spending or making a decision about money. All feel they should be able to spend more freely, but all are still bound by their Depression fears and frustrations.

I think that the experiences of my five interviewees realistically represents a good portion of the population. One was mildly effected, two were effected but not to extremes, and the last two were effected rather harshly.

Everyone has scars from the Depression, but the degree of the scarring is different in each case.

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Historical Thought on American Foreign Affairs in the Twentieth Century: A Brief Overview Mary Ann Langle

Like other fields of twentieth-century American historiography, the study of American foreign affairs is characteristically exciting and controversial, a classic example of the truism that a historical work is as much the story of the historian and his own time as it is about the subject matter he scrutinizes. Both political and historiographical in nature, the controversy in United States diplomatic historiography revolves primarily around the questions whether or not the United States ought to be actively involved in international affairs and whether or not the nation's involvement in global politics during the first half of the twentieth century was in the best interests of the country. Until 1962, the field had been dominated by historians whose interpretations depended largely on their focus, purpose, and political persuasion and who were influenced by the philosophies of history of either the nineteenth century English historian, Lord Acton, or the nineteenth century German historian, Leopold von Ranke. Renowned for putting historical research on a scientific basis, Ranke believed that historians should endeavor to free themselves from all personal and political biases and strive to tell "what actually happened" by utilizing only documentary sources. Lord Acton believed, in contrast, that a historian's moral responsibility was to judge harshly those historical actors whose deeds were in violation of the absolute moral laws to which all people were bound. Posterity has subsequently likened Acton's approach to that of a "hanging judge."¹

Accordingly, the historical work of Actonian historians is distinguished by the recriminations they directed at the individuals and forces they thought responsible for endangering the security of the United States. Isolationists and pacifists by persuasion, Actonian historians offered interpretations of United States diplomatic history that were based on the political belief that the "real interests of the United States lay in preserving its own peace and its non-involvement in international politics."² Biased by their political leanings and by the spirit of their times, they regarded America's assumption of a world leadership role disapprovingly. Taking into account evidence drawn only from the American domestic scene, Actonian historians believed that the imperialistic and militaristic policies of the McKinley and two Roosevelt Administrations and the American intervention in both

World Wars had been "tragic mistakes" which were the direct result of social and political "disorder, error, and mischief."³

In their studies of American foreign policy during the McKinley-Theodore Roosevelt years, the journalists Walter Millis and Henry F. Pringle, and the historians Charles A. Beard, Samuel Flagg Bemis, Tyler Dennett, and A. Whitney Griswold variously ascribed blame to Roosevelt and other influential figures, to the publishing industry, and to the forces of "Social Darwinism and missionary zeal." They were especially critical of Roosevelt whose "jingoism" and "opportunism" they claimed had been counter to the national interests of the United States. Similar findings characterized the studies of C. Hartley Gratten, Charles Callan Tansil, and Walter Millis which focused on America's intervention in the first World War. They regarded it as an avoidable mistake attributable to Wilson's misguided moralism and the manipulation by economic opportunists and propagandists of Wilson and the general public. Beard and Tansil similarly accused Franklin Delano Roosevelt of conspiracy and deceit with regard to the American entrance to World War II.

Identifiable as political realists, Rankean historians, in contrast, proceeded from the premise that in politics, particularly in the anarchic conditions of world politics, governments must frequently choose "among the unsatisfactory alternatives available to it at given moments of time."⁴ They believed, moreover, that American power to influence the outcome of events was exceedingly limited. Consequently, they revised the interpretations of the Actonian historians. Unlike the judgemental, parochial approach taken by their colleagues, Rankean historians viewed the issues from a broader perspective, taking into account events in the United States and in foreign nations as well. Their primary objective was to relate what had actually happened, and their opinions were based on the results of their investigations.

Based on their examination of both old and new documents and influenced also by Hitler's aggression and the development of new ideas, Rankean scholars concluded that all three Presidents had been "prudently concerned with America's safety" and had made their decisions "carefully and conscientiously." According to the scholars Hans Morgenthau, Robert E. Osgood, and Howard K. Beale, Theodore Roosevelt "understood power politics" as others, including Wilson, had not. Similarly, Charles Seymour, Arthur S. Link, and Ernest R. May argued that Wilson had rationally responded to domestic pressures, including the threat of an economic depression and public opinion as well as to the conciliatory behavior of the British and belligerency of Germany toward the United States. Similar arguments regarding the foreign policy of Franklin Delano Roosevelt were made by Herbert Feis, William L. Langer, and S. Everett Gleason. Although they concurred with Actonian historians that Roosevelt should never have

instituted the oil embargo against Japan, they firmly believed, in contrast, that he had pursued these policies in good faith.

United States diplomatic historians since 1962 continue to study the history of American foreign affairs utilizing either the Actonian or Rankean approaches. Actonian historians fall, generally, into the so-called New Left Revisionist School or Radical historians, and are, by far, the most prolific of the two schools to date. Politically affiliated to the democratic-socialist movement and generally pacific, though not always necessarily isolationists in outlook, New Left historians had been "alienated by the smugness and alleged failure of an affluent middle class society [and] disillusioned by the dangers of thermonuclear destruction." Their studies were an "attack on American foreign policy [and a] call for reducing or eliminating commitments abroad in order to concentrate on reform at home"⁶⁵ Influenced by the materialist theory of historical causation offered by Karl Marx in the nineteenth century and by the interpretation of American diplomatic history of Charles A. Beard, they bear also a close affinity with the Consensus School which dominated American historical thought throughout the 1950's**⁶⁶ New Left historians have argued that throughout all of the nation's history as a world power, economic concerns were at the root of American foreign policy.

The basic ideas from which all New Left interpretations flowed were first outlined by the school's leader, William Appleman Williams. Like the revisionists of the period preceding 1962, Williams' studies of American foreign policy read more like political tracts than as historical works. His interpretation of American diplomatic history was predicated on the idea that American political power in global affairs was waning and that the study of the history of American foreign affairs would reveal the reasons why. Drawing on Frederick Jackson Turner's frontier thesis Williams argued in *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy* that Americans have always identified their well-being with access to the western lands which had supplied them with an abundance of property and goods. With the closing of the frontier and the transition from an agrarian to an industrial economy, however, Americans came to associate their continuing prosperity and freedom with ever-expanding foreign markets. America's economic system, according to Williams, was the prime shaper of American attitudes and beliefs. In addition, Americans came to believe that the American experience should be imitated by other nations as well.

**Though the connection between New Left and Consensus historians may seem unusual at first, Ernest R. May makes the strong argument that New Left historians view the history of American diplomatic affairs more in terms of a broad consensus among Americans than as a conflict between economic classes which was the dominant theme of the older school of economic interpretation. (See end-note 6 for full bibliographical information).

These ideas provided the foundation of an imperialistic foreign policy that throughout the twentieth century promoted the ideals of a liberal political system and free-trade in order to keep an "Open Door" in international markets for American commercial interests.⁷ "The history of the Open Door Notes became the history of American foreign relations and worked brilliantly for a half-century."⁸ But its triumph became, paradoxically, the source of its failure as America came to be seen "as an alien power to most of the rest of the world."⁹ For Williams, the tragedy of American diplomacy lay in the attempted "subordination of...the cultural, political, and economic life"¹⁰ of other nations to its own. He argued that the best interests of the country lay, instead, in abandoning "Open Door expansionism" for a policy more consistent with the spirit of American humanitarian ideals.

Variations on Williams' theme of "Open Door expansionism" were forthcoming from many of his students.

N. Gordon Levin, Jr., for example, in his study *Woodrow Wilson and World Politics: American Response to War and Revolution*, argued that Wilson's ultimate goal was the "attainment of a peaceful liberal capitalist world order under international law, safe both from traditional imperialism and revolutionary socialism, within whose stable confines a missionary America could find moral and economic pre-eminence."¹¹ Similarly, Emily S. Rosenberg, in *Spreading the American Dream: American Economic and Cultural Expansion, 1890-1945*, argued that between 1898 and 1914 a "promotional state" was constructed to further the goal of "Americanizing the world in the name of modernization."¹² According to Rosenberg, American policy makers, only narrowly looking at their success story, were inspired by an ideology of "liberal developmentalism." Looking at the perceived benefits of the free enterprise system and liberal democratic political system, they concluded that America's success story should be replicated around the world.¹³ Hence, in Rosenberg's view, Wilson, making a connection between economic expansion and the security interests of the United States, pursued policies and intervened in the first World War in order to "Secure a stable, open international [economic] environment..." and "globalize liberal values and American influences."¹⁴

New Left views were countered by "Traditionalist" or "Orthodox"^{***} historians who after 1962 usually, though by no means

^{***}Robert J. Maddox used these terms to distinguish this school of historical thought from the New Left school. In contrast to New Left thinking on the Cold War which held United States' policymakers entirely to blame for the rise of the Cold War, Traditionalist historians believed that the Cold War was "the brave and essential response of free men to communist aggression." (Maddox here quotes Arthur M. Schlesinger. There was no citation. See the bibliography for full information).

always, took a Rankean approach to interpreting American diplomatic history. Historians from the so-called "Traditionalist" school responded both critically and favorably to the interpretations of the New Left School. Their principal objections lay in the monocausalist approach taken by New Left historians, by the latter's tendency to "read the present, especially the problem of Vietnam, into the past,"¹⁵ and to focus excessively on perceived mistakes. On the other hand, Traditionalist historian Ernest R. May noted that in spite of these shortcomings, New Left historians have contributed "the idea...that it is possible to create other models in which other sets of ideas - other sets of values than those of a business civilization - might have prevailed and produced a different course of conduct."¹⁶

In a somewhat less than conventional strain, James A. Field disagreed entirely with the imperialistic-expansionist model that had been offered by revisionist historians. He argued first, that their "approach was too rational" and second, that their "picture was too unitary."¹⁷ Neither the New Left economic interpretation of America's emergence to world power nor the old Actonian views that imperialist expansion was influenced by Social Darwinism, missionaries, or self-seeking parties could be substantiated by a closer examination of the historical evidence in Field's view. He argued, instead, that American expansion had been a direct result of the revolution in technology and communications that occurred in the latter half of the nineteenth century. In his view, the acquisition of America's colonial possessions and Theodore Roosevelt's Central American policies were formulated with domestic defense alone in mind. By and large, Field argued, Americans, including many of those to whom the revisionists have ascribed blame, were repelled by the outbreak of war with Spain and were sympathetic to the desires of others for freedom. Empire had been thrust upon them as a result of the nation's security needs.¹⁸

Taking a more conventional stance, Sidney Warren, in *The President as World Leader*, disputed the views of New Left historians with regard to the policies of Woodrow Wilson. Warren's book examined the evolution of Presidential power since America's increased activity in world affairs. He argued that Wilson had been "impaled upon the horns of a dilemma...[and was] motivated by what was best for his country."¹⁹ Warren saw Wilson as a missionary whose focus was on the national security interests. According to Warren, Wilson's intervention in World War I was the result of a lack of realistic alternatives. Wilson's response had been to avoid the possibility of an economic depression and social unrest and as a result of Germany's submarine policy.

Still newer interpretations and interesting approaches have been forthcoming from both New Left and Traditionalist historians alike. Cutting cross-discipline, for example, intellectual historian and

research associate at the Southern California Psychoanalytic Institute Robert Dallek wrote a psychohistory of America's style in foreign affairs. Influenced by Richard Hofstadter and Bernard Bailyn, Dallek argued in *The American Style of Foreign Policy: Cultural Politics and Foreign Affairs* that foreign policy since 1890 to the present has been the product of "emotional displacement...expressing unresolved internal tension." "American foreign policy was the concrete expression of undercurrents of mood, tone, or milieu, of [an almost imperceptible climate] of feeling."²⁰ Hence, Dallek looked at the Spanish-American War as a product of an internal struggle between industrial society and earlier rural culture and the desire of American political leaders to escape a seemingly insoluble domestic problem with a foreign escapade.²¹ Similarly, he viewed Theodore Roosevelt's Caribbean policies as an attempt to impose an honest, orderly democratic system on other nations because he was unable to bring these "latent" desires to fruition here in the United States.²²

Yet another new approach was taken by New Left historian Ronald Radosh who holds the distinction of being one of the few diplomatic historians to have combined the study of American foreign affairs with the perspective of a social historian.** His *American Labor and United States Foreign Policy* focused on the cooperative relationship that developed between American labor and the federal government in foreign affairs: "The support of American foreign policy has been the chosen path of union leaders desiring to gain acceptance for their unions by corporate capitalists."²³ According to Radosh, labor leaders began to support the government's foreign policy objectives about the time of the Spanish-American War when they perceived the benefits to the rank and file which could be derived from an expansion of the foreign export trade. Throughout the twentieth century, Radosh asserted, the liaison between labor leaders and the federal government continued and bore a chief responsibility for the ultimate creation of a permanent war economy in the United States.²⁴

Another new development in the twentieth century historiography of American foreign affairs has been the reassessment of Franklin Delano Roosevelt's conduct during the years that preceded the entry of the United States into the Second World War. Looking again at the historical evidence, Traditionalist historians Robert A. Divine and Mark W. Lowenthal have drawn conclusions that differ markedly from the two traditional views of Roosevelt as either a "plotter" or as a "sagacious national leader who saw valid United States interests at stake in the conflict and moved along a recognized path as quickly as

**Radosh, however, has been criticized by Stephen J. Scheinberg in his review of Radosh's book for focusing exclusively on the labor leaders Samuel Gompers and Jay Lovestone and hardly at all on the role of labor itself. (See the bibliography for a full citation of Scheinberg's review).

domestic opinion would allow."²⁵ Both Lowenthal in his essay, "Roosevelt and the Coming of the War: Search for United States Policy 1937-1942", and Divine in his book *The Reluctant Belligerent: American Entry into World War II* have agreed that Roosevelt's policies were a "series of fits and starts."²⁶ Divine, moreover, taking an Actonian approach, argued that Roosevelt, plagued by indecisiveness, had "imperiled [the nation's] security and very nearly permitted the Axis powers to win the war."²⁷

It is perhaps reflective of the ongoing swings between isolationist and internationalist thought that has characterized a good part of American history overall that no other field of American history has produced the large numbers of historians who have opted for an Actonian style like the study of twentieth century American foreign affairs. The preference for Actonism, however, raises many serious theoretical problems not the least of which is the proper method of examining and interpreting historical evidence. Actonism runs the danger that historians, beginning with a predetermined conclusion, will disregard or hold in error evidence contrary to their starting premise. Good scholarship, in contrast, entails allowing the evidence to alter one's thought. Moreover, it seems highly questionable whether historians ought to be offering alternative courses of future political action within the body of a historical study. This seems more within the realm and function of a political scientist than a historian.

Leaving these reservations aside, however, twentieth century historians of American international affairs have imparted many insights and increased substantially our knowledge of America's diplomatic life. Since 1962, the field of vision has widened considerably and the variety of interpretations has increased.

FOOTNOTES

1. Ernest R. May, "Emergence to World Power," *The Reconstruction of American History*, ed. John Higham, (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press Publishers, 1962), p. 181.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 186.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 188.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 192.
5. Daniel M. Smith, "The New Left and the Cold War," as quoted by Joseph Siracusa, *New Left Diplomatic History and Historians, The American Revisionists*, (Port Washington, New York and London: Kennikat Press, Inc., 1973), p. 4.
6. May, "American Intervention: 1917," *Myth and the American Experience*, V.2, eds. Nicholas Cords and Patrick Gerster, (Encino, California: Glencoe Publishing Co., Inc., 1973), p. 220.
7. William Appleman Williams, *The Tragedy of American Diplomacy*. (Cleveland and New York: The World Publishing Company, 1959, 1962), Intro., pp. 11-20; Chap. 2, p. 45.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 11.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 200.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 209.
11. N. Gordon Levin, Jr., *Woodrow Wilson and World Politics: American Response to War and Revolution*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968), p. vii.
12. Emily S. Rosenberg, *Spreading the American Dream: American Economic and Cultural Expansion, 1890-1945*, American Century Series, (New York: Hill and Wang, 1982), p. 20.
13. *Ibid.*, pp. 7-10.
14. *Ibid.*, pp. 65-66.
15. Taped Interview with Robert H. Ferrell by John A. Garraty, *Interpreting American History*, II, Quoted in Siracusa, p. 107.
16. Taped Interview with Ernest R. May, *Ibid.*, p. 107.
17. James A. Field, Jr., "American Imperialism: The Worst Chapter in Almost Any Book," *American Historical Review*, 83-3 (June, 1978).
18. *Ibid.*, pp. 450-451.
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Diocletian and the Fall of Rome

Edward Barry

Depending on which account of history you read, you will be asked to believe that the decline and fall of the Roman Empire was a long vague process not attributable to anyone or to any era. No quarter is given to the idea that at any point the situation was still reversible. There was no "point of no return" theory. I will present here for your consideration that the fall of the Empire had a definite point in time in which blame can be fixed; and I contend that up to that time, the Empire would have continued on for an undetermined age if this focal point of blame had not been allowed to take place. Since that did not happen, I will not list remedies that could have been undertaken, but rather stay within the factual history and define the cause of what did topple the Roman world.

Administratively, the Empire had a long series of rulers; men who, more times than not, rose through military power and position. The military had a background rife with conspiracy and murderous ambition. These men would naturally place their close friends in associated high offices within the Empire and become heirs or assassins to the crown. This was the state of the Empire when Diocletian, a Roman general, was elevated to the title of Caesar by his troops after the deaths, assassinations and defeats of the previous Emperor and his heirs.¹ The year was 285 A.D. and Rome was returning to peace after another in the endless series of wars with the Persian Empire lying to the east and southeast of the Romans. Diocletian's rise was only typical of the intrigues and pretenders to the throne in the Empire, but his coming to power was to alter forever the history of the western world.

Diocletian was a native of Illyria, which is now the Dalmatian Coast of Yugoslavia. Illyria, like Greece to her southeast and neighboring Macedonia, had a long and proud historical heritage, and its inhabitants were of Greek stock. There was the old vision of the Hellenistic world and the conquest of Alexander The Great, and the Illyrians were militarily-minded. To come under the banner of the Roman army was only natural, but they were never entirely Romanized. Rather, the Roman became Hellenized by them. Thus with Diocletian's placement, he brought many of his Illyrian cohorts with him to the head of the Roman legions. It is natural for one to draw to him homogeneous peoples and things, and Diocletian was no different. He, however, had more than one reason for surrounding himself with more Illyrians. Treachery was the common rule of the

day and Diocletian was wise enough to have understood that. So accordingly, he took steps to reduce threat. The major threat would come from other military officers attempting to seek power, so he started from within and worked outward. The Praetorian Guard, long the personal bodyguard of the emperor, was replaced. Diocletian brought in two legions from Illyria to protect him. These were the Jovians and the Herculians, totalling some 12,000 men.

Thus, the Illyrians had come to power and would remain there long after Diocletian's reign, passing rule down to sons, relatives and friends, in a seemingly endless chain. Because of its easternness, this dynasty gravitated in that direction and eventually established the seat of power in Byzantium and forced the city of Rome onto a back burner.

It has been theorized that the rule of the Illyrians would have ended with Diocletian if it had not been for the idea to elevate three other men to rule the Empire with him, and thus divide it into four separate districts. Naturally the other three men were of Illyrian background. The sub-division of the Empire was made to be merely military in areas of administration to better secure the Empire, but before I get into why it was divided, let us look at who the dividers were.

Diocletian's insecurity in his position caused him to hesitate giving command of a large number of troops to another general in order to meet Rome's military challenges. In solution to the problem, he thought to circumvent a power play by removing all ambition, and by elevating this general to the rank of Caesar, thereby giving him equal rule and making him an heir to the Empire. Of course, due to his own seniority, the ultimate say was retained by Diocletian. This was the case with his general, Maximian. Subsequently, Diocletian found the need to repeat this process and add two more Caesars. This was the rise of the ruling quartet that forever removed the unchallenged authority of a central Rome. It is interesting to note that in the years following Diocletian, this multi-emperor idea led at one point to six emperors, all ruling the Roman Empire at the same time. Diocletian changed the autocracy not to a tetrarchy as it is often referred to, but to a quadrarchy and so divided the land of the empire as well.²

Historians Arthur Boak and William Sinnigen content themselves with the idea that there was no administrative division of the Empire. I disagree with this point of view because in allowing this quadrarchy to exist and to allow each of the members to establish his residence in a different city within his own area of supervision, the concept of a central government located in one capital was dissolved. In an Empire with such diverse tongues and customs, this centralization was needed to convince and maintain many reluctant peoples in the idea of an all-powerful Rome. Diocletian, being the authoritative figure in the group, moved his headquarters to Nicomedia in Asia Minor; Galerius

set up his headquarters in Sirmium along the Danube; Maximian established himself in Milan; Constantine began his operation in Treves in northern Gaul. While again, these separations were designed to be merely military and not administrative, in actuality, Rome ceased to be the administrative capital of the Empire. A corresponding decline in the importance of the Senate, however ineffectual already, was thus reflected. Diocletian eventually abdicated power and forced Maximian to step down with him in 305 A.D., but the concepts of a divided Empire and an eastern seat were compelling to the subsequent rulers from Illyria.

Diocletian increased the number of Roman troops fighting for Rome and the division of military control had a beneficial immediate impact. But ultimately, in the long run, these two factors attributable to him cost the army dearly. Diocletian's military reform was like a good steady tide against a sand castle.

The paper strength of the legions varies depending on whose history you read. The renowned historian, Edward Gibbon had pegged Rome's strength at its height in excess of 500,000 men including the auxiliary legions. Let us, for argument's sake, assume that that figure is correct. It would seem that with this flood of troops behind it, regardless of any administrative division or actual empirical separation, the forces opposite Rome would never have been able to bridge the Roman river of legions.

In order to better understand this army's composition let us trace it back to its origin. The beginning of the Empire was undertaken with the multitude of native Romans conquering the adjoining lands. Once occupied, these lands gave-off provincial conscripts to the legions bolstering its overall strength. Often these lands held tribes that either fought as auxiliaries, fought as allies, or were paid-off to remain at peace. The auxiliary legions were, as a norm, less capable than the regular legions in the areas of physical size and strength, equipment, and training. Nevertheless, the auxiliary legions formed a large mass of the power of Rome. As the boundaries of the Empire grew, more people were given Roman citizenship and were incorporated into regular provincial legions or local auxiliary units. This wave-after-wave of troop additions reduced the total percentage of native Romans in the armed forces. As the percentage of native Romans grew smaller, a corresponding feeling of roots and attachment for Rome was vastly reduced as well. The provincial capitals became the focus of loyalty for the men assigned to them to a large extent, and Rome became secondary. A picture of the Roman army at the time of Diocletian emerges - a few native Romans and an overwhelming mass of "foreign" troops. Only the officer corps remained mostly Roman in origin, and now that the Illyrian effect on power was trickling down, the non-Roman influence was being felt there also. It is important to note that the tradition of the Roman officer, armed with an all-encompassing

knowledge of military tactics and history necessary for an army to be properly led, was being phased-out unavoidably in the outer legions and auxiliary units. This lessened even more the fixation of Rome as the nucleus of the legionaire's purpose. As the traditional Roman military tactics that had won an Empire were less understood by these new officers and men, the army that marched was less disciplined, less educated, and decidedly less Roman.

In contrast to increasing the total troop strength, Diocletian reduced the number of men in each unit. This was done again due to the reluctance of Diocletian to give a large command to any one man. With more legions of a smaller size, it is questionable whether any increase took place at all. As time progressed, many of the reorganized legions were disbanded or destroyed in battle. This created a serious gap in the legion's outermost lines along the frontiers. Manpower, which had lone been the greatest mainstay of the Roman Legion in fighting the northern barbarians, was falling. To fail to consider this as the Romans' ultimate advantage in the European forests is a grave mistake. Knowledge that you have a superiority in numbers gives you a psychological push and is an impact as a factor that drives an army toward its enemy. Gibbon states it quite often in his account of the Roman soldier in battle. The sheer size of their formations gave them the impetus to attack a much more savage enemy. The barbarians were physically larger in size, and they were armed with a fierceness the Romans did not have. Once this advantage of numbers was removed from the Roman camp, the barbarians had gained the edge. The psyche was gone and the legions grew less and less inclined to enter the forbidding Germanic forests and engage a tribe encroaching on the frontiers. Losses in manpower were irreplaceable as the Empire could not reinforce the frontier garrisons in the numbers needed. The auxiliaries of these legions and the citizens of the areas in danger were forced to look inward for protection, aware that Rome was a crumbling Empire. Forced to fend for themselves against the barbarian invasion, they were in no way concerned for the Empire any longer. These fragmented provinces began regrouping into local self-defense forces, gathering the remains of the legions, the auxiliaries, the frontier tribes not at war with Rome, and several territorial tribes who were previously beaten by Rome and had sworn allegiance to the Empire.

The backbone of the northern legions were the hardy troops from Gaul. These men were of equal size and strength with the German tribes. The Gallic soldier supplemented the legions and stood fast in the face of attack. It was unfortunate for Rome, however, that there were not enough of them to stem the tide of the barbarians' encroachment. In contrast to the Gallic troops on the front lines, were the provincial legions. These men were usually far-removed from the actual fighting and hardships of the border units and grew fat and lazy as they enjoyed the soft life of the city. They lived off their past glories

and relied on that fame to intimidate their enemies. Their leadership was of the same Gallo-Roman composition. The valor and determination of their well-intentioned officers was greatly weakened, along with their resolve to command in an endless frontier war.

With the pool of available native Romans dwindling, a greater barbarization of the army was made necessary, and the army even included great numbers of the German tribesman. In turn, an even greater and quicker decline in standard discipline and loyalty was brought about. These changing conditions led to changing tactics on the frontiers. Diocletian made no move to increase the territorial holdings of the Empire, save for a few small sections of these northern forests and rivers. These moves cost the legions a valuable advantage. In advancing, they left the security of the natural boundaries of the frontier and were forced into a more exposed artificial barrier in the face of the barbarians and proved even more costly in losses.

As good as some units of the legion were, they needed morale. The Roman legions were badly lacking in morale due to their leadership. In those days one of the major aims of a soldier was booty. The sustenance of the Roman soldier was poor pay and booty shares from the occasional victory during conquest. When expansion of the Empire came to an end and the policy of frontier defense was adopted, there was no longer any booty to be gotten. This presented a serious blow to the morale of the foot soldier. In addition to the loss of booty, a class distinction among soldiers was being made. The legionnaire thought most deserving of reward was given a transfer from frontier duty to a garrison post in some city and the increase in pay that accompanied it. The friction and resentment this policy created compounded with already weak morale, and did little to encourage the troops to try harder.

The class breakdown of the legions was as follows. The Palatini ranked first and were used primarily as the palace guard and the emperor's own unit. The next class was the Comitatus which served as the provincial garrison and escorted the emperor when he visited the region. Lastly was the Limitanei or border troops. These were mostly auxiliary units, but they did include some regular legions to bolster defense.³

It is significant to gather the full picture of the empire at this point. It was not limited in its fighting with only the northern tribesmen, but was fully engaged in combat around the entire fringe of the empire. To the north in the English Channel and surrounding area of the Atlantic coast, Frankish pirates were raiding the port cities; at the north and northeast frontiers were the Germans; to the east and southeast was the Persian Empire; and to the South, in Egypt, were other hostile peoples coming up from the Nile. From the standpoint of the secure and expandable Empire, Persia had to be removed as it was

the greatest threat. Historically and realistically, the Persian Empire was the natural enemy of the Roman Empire. Lying to the east in the fertile crescent, the age-old dream of the Persians was to push their empire west to the sea, back to their old lands when Persia was great. Rome now occupied those lands and so the sides were set. The failure of Diocletian to engage the Persians and crush them once and for all was a serious breakdown in his military order of things. His failure is compounded when it is noted that in 296 A.D. he elected to settle with a compromise and a promise from the Persian, Narsus, rather than destroying him and ending the power base there. Within four decades, Rome was to suffer an irreversible defeat at the hands of the Persians. The interesting note here is with Gibbon's account of this Galerius-Narsus encounter. In the historian's record of the battle and peace settlement is the record of Galerius stating that the Romans had never trampled on a prostrate enemy as the reason Narsus was not killed and his armies slaughtered. To take that as the actual noble nature of the Roman is well indeed unless one cares to remember the last Punic War and the treatment a defeated Carthage received at the hands of these "noble" Roman victors. Stranger again, when you consider that Diocletian was not usually a man to take chances with a potential enemy.

Military shortcomings were not his only faults as his attempts at economic stability met with disaster as well. In response to the debasement of the Empire's coinage, Diocletian ordered copper coins, which were very popular with the people at that time, pulled from circulation. The effect on the economy was quite different than what Diocletian had expected. People began to perceive that future trouble was brewing, and this gave rise to serious inflation. It seemed as if the fragile Roman system was about to collapse as production shortages led to treasury cutbacks. The treasury curtailments, in turn, led to irregular payments to the military. The soldier's hardships increased again as many were forced to buy their necessities with their own money. This disruption in wages led many in the legions to plunder civilian property and acts of cruelty inflicted upon the civilian populace were numerous. The soldiers did not realize that these people were having just as difficult a time as they were.

In 301, Diocletian enacted his "Edict of Prices" which made profit illegal. Of course the definition of profit gave no thought to supply and demand, or good versus poor workmanship, or even to the basic wholesale and retail aspects of the economic foundation. The edict gave birth to a vast increase in poverty throughout the Empire, with its already teeming millions of poor. Diocletian never gave thought to providing for a system that gave reward equal to the extent of taxation as was imposed on the people. This eroded their sense of industry. For the Roman Empire, the continual cycle of war, taxation, hunger, disease, inflation and invasion all compounded the manpower and

moral decay that embraced Rome as it was gripped by an army of foreign leaders.

This was also a time of a growing revolution within the Empire - a subtle, humble sort of revolt named Christianity. Each succeeding generation, even within the city of Rome itself, embraced the idea of Christianity in ever increasing numbers. Unshakeable in their faith and steadfast in their refusal to acknowledge any other object of worship even at the price of death, the Christians left the Roman government without a realistic, workable plan of dealing with them. The concept of allowing different peoples within the Empire to worship freely as long as some devotion and worship was given to the state religion, which was clearly not a religion at all but rather the idea of the emperor as a deity, was refused by the Christians.⁴ In death they became martyrs, and this only reinforced the strength of others in the Christian belief that by dying for the faith, they would sit forever at the hand of their god.

In response, in order to maintain respect for the state, punishment had to be meted-out to these Christian believers. They were advised to pay homage to the Roman gods as well as their own, or die. Death was the accepted choice by the vast majority of those actually caught. Rome was really forced into carrying out the threat of death or Roman word would no longer be taken seriously. Should that have happened, the door would have been left open for even greater unrest and disobedience. Death was no deterrent to Christianity and Christian numbers grew relentlessly.

According to various accounts the population of Christians in the Roman Empire was quite near to one-sixth the entire population.⁵ This gave Diocletian the solutionless problem: his growing preoccupation with making Christianity the scapegoat for the Empire's ailments; his administration's enragement at their refusal to buckle under, but the lack of a workable counteraction to stop the sect; lagging support from a population witnessing the Christians preach and practice humility all the while the government warned they were a threat; and the ever-harder job of rooting them out as they fled underground or were hid by sympathetic Romans to escape death.

Diocletian was the last of the Roman Emperors to subject the Christians to a great persecution. Shortly after the beginning of the fourth century he began a series of edicts aimed at destroying Christianity. In 303 A.D., an edict was proclaimed that allowed the destruction of all Christian churches and books. A second was made that allowed the imprisonment of all clergy. Mandatory sacrifices to the state gods was the third. In 304, a follow-up edict made such sacrifice the alternative to death. The mounting evidence that Diocletian was the focal point in the decline of Rome is again brought forth. Religiously speaking, he stands so glaring a figure in Rome's fall, not because of himself, but because of his chosen successor, the

Christian Emperor Constantine. Constantine, in fairness, was not an avowed Christian at the time of his elevation to Caesar, but he was destined to become a Christian long before his vision in 312 A.D. It was, indeed, a fact that the women of his family were seemingly predisposed to Christianity many years before this event.

At this point in the history of the Empire we are confronted by two successive emperors - one persecuting Christians to the death and the other a Christian. The people of Rome (the city, in particular, with its aristocratic stoicism, neo-platonic beliefs and Oriental and Orphic cults) were faced with a chasm too deep and wide for them to understand. It tore the cohesive structure of the empire's upper class families, the group that produced the civil, business and military leaders of the land and forever divided them in religion. Religion was the basis of a family's social bond to the land and the community and once this was altered, so were the bonds. Regardless of word or belief in doctrine, the persecutors and the persecuted could never live side by side without feelings of lasting enmity or fear of reprisal in an age of Christian reckoning. This was not a baseless fear because in 379 A.D., when Christianity became the state religion, the tables were turned on the pagans under the reign of Theodosius I, whereby pagan persecution came into vogue.

In summary, the presentation of this paper for your consideration is by no means authoritative. I am sure there are a good many errors herein, but the premise is nonetheless valid. A non-Roman becomes the emperor of Rome; he changes the existing structure of the position of emperor, gives birth to a long line of other non-Roman emperors and, therefore, he must be held responsible for many of the future civil wars in the Empire. Diocletian was a man who moved the centralized Roman idea of the capital, the city of Rome, which had stood for 900 years before him, into an Empire divided and ultimately, turned Byzantine. Diocletian was a man who restructured the army with some cosmetic changes, but gave it mortal flaws. Diocletian was a man who crippled an already weak economy and drove millions into poverty just when their productivity was needed most. And finally, he was a man who chose to attack religion to use it as a scapegoat, and not just any religion, but the most popular and prolific religion that the world had yet known. It seems that when one searches the records of this past power all the roads to ruin crossed in Diocletian's reign. Alone, or in combination, perhaps the Empire may have survived, but under the pressure of all these things together, the end came in sight for the Roman Empire.

Footnotes for Reference

1. See history regarding Carus, Roman Emperor, and Carinus and Numerianus, relatives and succeeding emperors, from 282-283 A.D.
2. See Arthur Boak & William Sinnigen's *History of Rome to 565*.
3. I'm not sure of the particulars regarding this escort factor, as for example, whether the Palatini accompanied the Emperor or if this was left entirely to the Comitatus legions. Secondly, I'm not sure if the field forces of the Empire were comprised of Comitatus legions alone or if they acted with the Limitani as a mobile force.
4. In Judea, the Jews were allowed to worship as they wished and were not required to worship the emperor as well. Of course this came after many long and bloody revolts. This was not the way of the Christians.
5. Again I quote from Boak & Sinnigen. Although no population figures were available to support this information, as a rough estimate of the time frame the total population of the Empire according to their book was approximately fifty to sixty million. Assuming this figure is correct, there should have been some ten million Christians.

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Immigrant and Working Class Women in America

Pat Ammendola

In the period between 1865 and 1920, all of American society felt the impact of industrialization, immigration, and class polarization. Among American women, class differences were very apparent with the middle class women living a life of affluence while the working class women, many of whom were immigrants, endured long hours of labor in order to elevate the family wage to a subsistence level.

The American economy felt the effect of immigrant women in several ways. In the first place, each group of immigrants that arrived in America provided a new supply of workers for the factories. Immigrant women were utilized in the work force as a source of cheap, docile, and available labor in the event men organized to protest their working conditions. Edith Abbott referred to these roles with regard to the immigrant Bohemian women in her survey of the cigar-making industry. She stated: "In 1877, women were employed in large numbers to break the strike that year. Several hundred girls were taught the trade, and employers went so far as to call the strike "a blessing in disguise," since it "offered a new employment for women and secured workers whose services may be depended on at low wages...The president of the New York local in 1886 complained that Bohemian women were doing work that men were formerly employed to do. They have driven American workmen from our trade altogether. They work for a price that an American could not work for."

Louis Levine, an historian of the Ladies Garment Workers Union, stated that "sweating is primarily an industrial problem, a phase of the general problem of cheap and exploited labor. The Jewish, and later also the Italian, garment workers labored in sweat shops because they had no other entry into American industry." He explained that the three characteristics of a sweat-shop were unsanitary conditions, very long hours and unusually low pay. "The shops were generally located in tenement houses. As a rule, one of the rooms of the flat in which the contractor lived, was used as a working place. Sometimes work would be carried on all over the place, in the bedroom as well as in the kitchen." With regard to low pay, he stated that: "The New York Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that the 'very best' workers were getting \$10 a week, while the women employed in the industry were earning from \$3 to \$6 a week." According to the report "some even with the aid of their families and working 14 hours a day could earn only \$12 - \$15 a week. Others could only make \$4 by working ten hours a

day.”

Another method to earn money used by immigrant women was that of taking in boarders. Hymowitz quoted the authors of *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America*, by stating “His wife keeps eight persons boarding in his home, and he earns \$2.50 a day.” The wife, however, has the responsibility of “washing, ironing, cleaning, sewing and cooking for the boarders...” is stated by Margaret F. Byington in “The Mill Town Wives” article in Baxandall. Ms. Byington also stated that a priest told her he believed that the high infant mortality rate in his parish was due to the “taking in of lodgers.” She mentioned that “Not only is the mother too busy to give much time to her babies, but she also suffers from overwork during pregnancy and from lack of proper care afterward. Housework must be done, boarders must be fed, and most women work until the day of confinement.” Although the money was earned from this type of women’s labor, it “was often ignored in the census figures since it was considered unpaid housework” according to Baxandall.

In addition, the immigrant effected the American economy by replenishing the labor force and organizing the family consumption which once again was looked upon as unpaid labor. Hymowitz stated that “To keep order in a room filled with eight people took skill and endless work. With regard to caring for the health needs of neighbors, Hymowitz quoted Mollie Linker who recalled her mother “kept an apron in every home and was on call day and night during the epidemic of 1918.”

Finally, immigrant women in the labor force were perceived to be the rivals of men and this in turn polarized the sexes. In her reports for the Knights of Labor, Leonora Barry commented that “wage-earners are made instruments of injury to one another.” According to Barry, women were asked to work overtime even though a state law prohibited them from doing so. “The foreman went to the men weavers asking them to work overtime, saying that it would be money in their pockets, a favor to their employer, and would make women jealous of their larger months wages.” The A.F. of L. Unions made the point that men and women were rivals in labor also. The Secretary of the Boston Central Labor Union stated: “The growing demand for female labor is not founded on philanthropy...it does not spring from human kindness. It is an insidious assault on the home...It debars the man through financial embarrassment from family responsibility, and physically, mentally, and socially excludes the women equally from nature’s dearest impulse.” Thus, in addition to perceiving working women as a threat, he also implies that it appeared to be a plot to destroy both the family and the man’s role in the family. Even during the Depression of the 1930’s, women’s role in labor not only divided men and women, but even husbands and wives. In the Raparka family, for example, Mrs. Raparka became the provider of the family and distributed the

resources, a role Mr. Raparka had done prior to losing his job. Mr. Raparka deserted the family in 1938, according to the Wight Blake excerpt entitled "Family Life", and "His departure caused little change in the routine structure of family life. He long since had ceased to be an integral part of the major business of the family."

Immigrant women also influenced feminism during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, since feminists embraced the reform movement and attempted to improve the lot of the poor. The reform movement flourished because of many factors. First, there was the ideology of the moral superiority of women which persisted from Victorian times. Secondly, Social Darwinist beliefs that society could be improved and elevated to a higher state of perfection became popular at this time among the middle class. Next, was the fact that there was a group of middle-class women who had to create new careers for themselves since they had been college-educated but didn't want to teach. Finally, there were the numerous urban poor who needed help in improving their conditions. This was aimed at immigrant women in particular. Jane Addams exemplifies the many middle-class feminists who dedicated themselves to helping those unfortunates who suffered because of poverty in the slums of the cities. At Hull House, a settlement house which she established, there were programs such as "kindergarten, English classes, union meetings and athletics for young people" as mentioned in Hymowitz. Like other feminists involved in reform, Addams came into contact with many immigrants who had been exposed to socialism in their Eastern European homelands. At Hull House, Addams met Florence Kelly, a socialist, who influenced Addams by convincing her that political work and social investigation were more important in helping the poor than trying to educate them culturally. According to Allen F. Davis, "Kelly made Hull House a center for social reform rather than...a place to hear lectures on Emerson...More than anyone she turned Jane Addams from a philanthropist into a reformer." Addams believed that "immigrant colonies might yield something very valuable to our American life, if their resources were intelligently studied and developed." Hence, she opposed the Darwinist ideology and thought that environment was a stronger factor than heredity in making immigrants poor. Her ideas led her to fight for legislation which would improve the immediate problems of the poor.

In the reform movement, "two major middle-class thrusts were the public health movement and the birth control movement, directed against the twin threats of contagion and "outbreeding," respectively, declared Barbara Ehrenreich and Deirdre English in the book entitled *Complaints and Disorders*. The leading feminist advocates of birth control were Emma Goldman and Margaret Sanger. Emma Goldman, an anarchist who emigrated from Russia, believed that "True emancipation begins neither at the polls nor in the courts. "It begins

in women's souls." She lectured about contraceptive methods that could be used as alternatives to abortion. It wasn't until after the war, however, that the birth control movement really became organized under the direction of Margaret Sanger. Although Sanger learned about contraception through Emma Goldman and shared the opinion that birth control would permit women to have control over their bodies, Sanger also saw birth control as a way of reducing poverty and overpopulation. Sheila Rothman stated in *Women's Proper Place*, that Margaret Sanger said, "Labor is oppressed because it is too plentiful; wages go up and conditions improve when labor is scarce."

In the 1890's after feminists had decided to seek suffrage by state referendum rather than amendment, the movement began to show signs of being racist and anti-immigrant. Both Carrie Chapman Catt and Anna Howard Shaw, leaders of the NASWA, believed that native-born women should be enfranchised to counteract the foreign vote. Carrie Chapman Catt stated, "There is but one way to avert danger — cut off the vote of the slums and give it to women," while Anna Howard Shaw declared, "There is no race, there is no color, there's no nationality of men who are not sovereign rulers of American women." Suffragists also attempted to disenfranchise immigrant men by suggesting that there should be educational qualifications for voting. Harriet Stanton Blatch and Jane Addams were spokeswomen for the right of suffrage to include immigrant women and believed that education should not be used as a qualification. Thus the suffrage movement became split owing to the immigrant question. Blatch began her own group which attempted to enlist the working class women by allying themselves with the Women's Trade Union. Harriet Stanton Blatch was familiar with activist strategy from her work with British suffragettes and utilized it in the United States in the form of outdoor demonstrations.

Politics were also affected by immigrant women. During the period from 1890 to 1920, there were several third party movements on the political scene in which immigrant women played a role in the formation of these third parties. The Progressive Party platform of 1912, which was supported by Jane Addams (who was made its leader in 1911) was perhaps the most significant example of the influence of immigrant women. According to Hymowitz, the Progressive Party platform embodied many reforms aimed at helping poor immigrant women by advocating "an eight hour day and six-day work week, abolition of tenement manufacture; improvement of housing; prohibition of child labor under 16; careful regulation of employment for women; a federal system of accident, old age and unemployment insurance and women's suffrage."

Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, an immigrant, was best known for her role in the labor movement. She was a member of the Industrial Workers of the World (the "Wobblies") and helped in organizing all

members of the working classes, including women, on an industry-wide basis. This radical organization, which called for worker's control of industry, often employed militant tactics, such as strikes, in order to obtain their demands. Hence, the formation of the Socialist Party in 1901 by Eugene Debs was, to a large extent, the result of the unrest which permeated the working class.

The militant tactics adopted by Alice Paul in order to win suffrage may also have had their origins in the activist methods employed by the working class women. Alice Paul, founder of the National Women's Party, was arrested for picketing the White House and, together with other members of the party, went on a hunger strike. Sympathy for the suffrage movement was engendered through their actions and, although Congress denounced their tactics, Congress was forced to debate the issue.

Just as immigrant women had an effect on American society, they, too, were influenced by being in America. The reform movement, together with the popularity of women's clubs and voluntary service of middle-class women, probably led to the self-help groups established by immigrants and were formed along ethnic or religious ties. Hymowitz quoted Mollie Linker from the Kramer and Masur book, *Jewish Grandmothers*, as saying, "when they [Jewish neighbors] saw a woman in the butcher shop not buying enough and they knew how many children she had, my mother would go to a few neighbors, collect money, bring food and put it under the door and walk away." Crystal Eastman also mentioned in her study "The Effect of Industrial Fatalities Upon the Home", that Mrs. Joseph Gikovitch, whose husband was killed in a mining accident "received no money from the Carnegie Coal Mining Company but received \$1000 from a Slavic benefit society to which he belonged."

Immigrant women also found it easier to assert themselves outside their home. This, however, varied among the ethnic groups. For example, Mary Van Kleek pointed out that "the Italian girl is more willing than the Jewish girl to accept conditions as she finds them." This is further supported by the fact that Kosher Butchers appealed to the police to "protect them against any attacks that may be made by women rioters...when a boycott was on against prevailing high prices...It is conservatively estimated that 50,000 Jewish families have been abstaining from the use of meat for over two weeks," as had been reported by the New York Times in the article, "Butchers Appeal to Police for Protection" in its May 26, 1902 issue. A Jewish working-class immigrant woman wrote a protest letter to the Women's Trade Union and stated, "We want stories that tell of people who want justice — passionately. You see, with the people in your pleasant stories we have no fellowship. They do not seem real."

The daughters of immigrants rebelled against the ways of their parents and the traditions of the old country. They adopted the

fashions that were popular at the time, wanted the right of making their own choice of a husband, and many girls fought for the right to pursue an education. Elizabeth Stern stated, "My father did not approve of my continuing high school...I wanted something new...I didn't mean to go to work at fourteen, marry at sixteen, be a mother at eighteen, and an old woman at thirty. I wanted a new thing — happiness."

Feminists and Socialists were caught in a controversy of whether gender or class should be employed in order to improve the conditions under which women had to work. The Labor Movement proved to be the battleground for the disagreement. Many examples of the conflict can be found to support each side of the controversy. One such example involved Susan B. Anthony and her expulsion from the National Labor Union's convention. The reasons for her expulsion were twofold; first, "she did not represent a bona-fide labor organization: and, secondly, "she had striven to procure situations for girls from which the men had been discharged, at lower wages than they had received." In concluding her position before the union, she stated that women workers must demand their rights from men, thereby supporting the feminist view that gender supercedes class. "All women in this country are in the power of men. We ask for a change, and we demand a change. There is no solution to this problem of prostitution but to give them a chance to earn an honest living with men; not merely a pittance, enough to keep body and soul together, buy homes of their own, and make them just as independent as anybody in this country."

The Knights of Labor had become a large federation of labor by 1881 when women were organized into their ranks for the first time. Leonora Barry was made a leader in the department of women's work in 1886. She expressed her ideas about the class position in the following way: "My work has not been confined solely to women and children, but to all of earth's toilers, as I am of the opinion that the time when we could separate the interests of the toiling masses on sex lines is past."

Between 1890-1920, the controversy continued. Alice Henry discussed the problems that women had in trade unions and actively participated in training women as organizers for the Women's Trade Union League . She stated that "the girls, as a rule are not only happier in their own woman's local, but they have the interest of running the meetings themselves. They choose their own hall and fix their own time of meeting. Their officers are of their own selecting and taken from among themselves...The rank and file, too, get splendid training that is not conferred when persons actually, not merely nominally, work together for a common end." Lillian Mathews also commented on the fact that women preferred to organize according to gender in "Women in Trade Unions". She declared: "hostile attitudes

broke out into open contention between men and women in several instances notably among the garment workers and the laundry workers...The men cutters, discovering that women would hold out for their own points, were not satisfied to remain in the same union with them and were allowed to withdraw."

The Shirtwaist strike of 1909-1910 is another example of men leaving women strikers to fight on their own and how the women of the WTUL helped their sisters. "The male strikers were intimidated and lost heart, but the women carried on the picketing, "suffering arrest and abuse from the police and guards employed by the manufacturers." "The American girls who struck came out in sympathy for the "foreigners" who struck for a principle; they did not want a union; they imagined that conditions in the factories where Russian and Italian girls worked were worse than their own."

The Socialist Party made a major contribution to women in that they brought up the idea that household work was unpaid labor. In the "Lowest Paid Worker" Theresa Makiel, said that "The greatest injustice [toward the housewife] lies in the fact that not only is she not compensated for her work, but, on the contrary, is considered a burden on the shoulder of the poor man who has to support her."

On the side of class organization, the Troy Laundry workers' strike illustrates how men and women united and fought for their rights side by side. According to an excerpt from *History of Women in Trade Unions* by John Andrews and W.D.P. Bliss "The Laundry Worker's Union was regarded by many men as "the only bona-fide female union in the country" at that time, and the trade unions of Troy took up their cause with a will. The molders, who remembered how loyally and liberally the women unionists had stood by them three years before, now voted \$500 a week to support the women in their strike."

Elizabeth Gurley Flynn mentioned in her autobiography, *The Rebel Girl*, that during the Lawrence Textile strike, "we talked to the strikers about "One Big Union" regardless of skill or lack of it, foreign-born or native-born, color, religion or sex. We showed how all the differences are used by the bosses to keep workers divided and pitted against each other...This was more than a union. It was a crusade for a united people for "bread and roses." Rose Scheiderman also advocated for the working class to unite to improve their conditions. Her statement is particularly interesting since she was a WTU organizer, and was concerned primarily with organizing according to gender. Her sentiments were spoken at a meeting held after the Triangle Fire. She said, "I know from my experience it is up to the working class to save themselves. The only way they can save themselves is by a strong working class movement."

After World War I, the streetcar conductors' strikes not only highlighted the gender vs. class dispute once again but also illustrated

the contradictory positions taken by different streetcar unions. Women were hired in Cleveland as streetcar conductors after the company said that they couldn't find men for the job. The men threatened a strike and brought the dispute before the War Department of Labor. It decided in favor of the women since military service made it difficult for the company to hire men, thereby forming an issue in which women were fighting men for their rights. In contrast, a Kansas City union of streetcar conductors also opposed the company policy of employing women, but the men in this union fought for their fellow workers by demanding that "women employees shall receive equal pay with men for the same work, and the guaranteed minimum for women shall be increased from \$60 to \$75 per month, as now obtains, in the case of men."

In the 1930's and the 1940's the labor movement won gains for women in working conditions and wages, but they never achieved equality with men. Women continued to be employed, but many entered into "female" jobs such as clerical work and service industries. Once again gender became an important issue as Margery Davies reported in "Women's Place Is At the Typewriter." She stated, "The image of the secretary as a competent mother-wife who sees to her employers every need and desire was a description which most fitted a personal secretary. Here certain "feminine" characteristics ascribed to the job of personal secretary - sympathy, adaptability, courtesy - made women a natural candidate for the job." During the Depression, the popular opinion was that married women should not work; however, the reality of the situation was that they were being employed in greater numbers than men since consumer and service industries made jobs available and women could fill them. In "Shall Married Women Work?", Ruth Shallcross said "The government's recovery measures, based on artificially increasing purchasing power, chiefly stimulated the consumer and service industries, thus opening up relatively more opportunities for women than for men. As a result, women have fared better than men in getting new jobs."

During World War II, women were once again told that they were necessary in the job market and that it was their patriotic duty to work in the war effort. Baxandall noted: "Unions fought for equal pay when women took jobs left by men; usually out of concern for preserving a high wage for returning veterans; but they rarely fought the separate seniority lists of distinctly female job classifications and granted union membership and seniority only for the duration of the war."

Women in the labor movement often responded negatively to feminism. Women such as Mother Jones, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn and Kate Richards O'Hare found that they were committed to socialism. Thus, they felt class was above gender. Mother Jones expressed her view by saying, "The women of Colorado have had the vote for two generations and the working men and women are still in slavery."

According to Hymowitz, Flynn believed that capitalism would always deprive women of equal opportunity. She stated, "The barter and sale that go under the name of love are highly obnoxious." Kate Richards O'Hare proclaimed, "I am a Socialist [who] most emphatically states that I demand Equal Suffrage not merely as a Sex Right but also as a Class Right."

In contrast, Stella Nowicki, a woman CIO organizer, stated a different view even though she was a member of the Communist Party. Her opinion was that "Some of the brothers who believed in equality and that women should have rights didn't crank the mimeograph, didn't type...when unions gave out jobs with pay, guys got them...Men who worked in plants got paid for their time loss, women didn't."

Finally, the Equal Rights Amendment is an example of the gender vs. class dispute which illustrates how the dispute still has not been resolved and continues to be a source of dispute among many, even in the present. When the ERA was first introduced in 1923 it caused a split in the feminist movement. Its advocates did not want women to be set apart from men on the basis of gender and they, therefore, felt that an amendment was needed to state that "Men and Women shall have equal rights throughout the United States and every place subject to its jurisdiction." Those women who opposed the amendment felt that women would lose the protective legislation they had fought for in a long, arduous struggle. "The amendment is altogether unnecessary...(things) can all be done in any case by Acts of Congress and the states, which already have the power the amendment would confer...they are actually being done...since woman suffrage passed," argued Elizabeth Christman, Secretary for the International Glove Workers Union and Secretary-Treasurer for the National Women's Trade Union League of America. The ERA did not become a law then, and it still remains unratified for many of the same reasons, women in the working classes feel they may lose, rather than gain, from its passage.

In the January 1981 issue of *Ms. Magazine*, an article, "Life on the Global Assembly Line," by Barbara Ehrenreich and Annette Tuentes examined the exploitation of women in the Third World labor force. They, too, are seen as cheap, docile, and temporary workers. Saralee Hamilton, an AFSC organizer was quoted as saying "The multinational corporations have deliberately targeted women for exploitation. If feminism is going to mean anything to women all over the world, it's going to have to find new ways to resist corporate power internationally." And the problems of women continue!

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The Experience of Women in American Labor

Robin Garber

Any discussion about women in the labor force must begin with immigrant women, for it is they who formed the vast pool of labor which allowed for the rapid industrial expansion of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. They had come by the millions - fleeing the poverty, famine, political upheaval and religious persecution of their homelands - to America, the land of opportunity, the "Golden Medina!" They came hoping to buy land for small farms, but those hopes were soon dashed - land was no longer available. Instead, they were forced to remain in the cities, turning to industry for their livelihood.¹ Their arrival was a blessing for American industry. Forming the lowest caste of paid labor, immigrant women enabled businesses to establish a slave-like system of employment which promoted industrial growth at the expense of human dignity. Reasons for the low status of immigrant women abounded. First, they were unskilled. Second, they were foreigners; language, dress and customs set them apart, making them easy targets for nativist disdain. Third, they were women. Women's domestic labor had had a history of being unpaid; low wages merely carried on a tradition!

Nativist fear that the influx of poor, unskilled workers would depress wages and lower the American standard of living² prompted the formation of trade unions whose only concern was the protection of the rights of skilled workers. Unskilled workers were left to their own devices. Their unprotected status permitted the use of convenient rationale for the inhumane treatment of workers; for example, Russian Jews endured the deplorable conditions of the sweatshops, not because they had no other option but because "they evidently preferred filth to cleanliness."³

Nativist hostility also was responsible largely for the relegation of immigrants to ghetto slums where ethnic clustering slowed down the process of assimilation and reinforced alien status. The ramshackle tenements that housed the immigrants were as oppressive as the conditions under which they worked. Rows upon rows of narrow buildings were separated by tiny alleyways. They were crowded, filthy, dark, and unventilated. Streets reeked from open sewage and uncollected garbage; disease ran rampant.⁴

It was difficult to hold a family together under such circumstances. Immigrants were painfully aware of what they perceived as the breakdown of family life, but were not always able to locate the source of the problem. Some placed the blame on the

crowded conditions of tenement living,⁵ but there were other factors, beyond their control, which had even greater impact. In their intense efforts to Americanize immigrant children, schools created major changes in the family. In doing "something about educating the masses in habits of cleanliness, health, morality and thrift,"⁶ the Americanization process called for the use of a toothbrush, a balanced diet, industriousness, and proper dress. It often required the abandonment of old customs and values and created distance between family members. "The sad process of disintegration of home life may be observed in almost every immigrant family," wrote Russian immigrant Mary Antin.⁷ It is part of the process of Americanization; an upheaval preceding the state of repose. It is the cross that the first and second generations must bear, an involuntary sacrifice for the sake of future generations. These are the pains of adjustment, as racking as the pains of birth. And as the mother forgets her agonies in the bliss of clasping her babe to her breast, so the bent and heart-sore immigrant forgets exile and homesickness and ridicule and loss and estrangement, when he beholds his sons and daughters moving as Americans among Americans.⁷

Work had an effect on the family also. Immigrant identity was based on family position; American identity was derived from occupation. The workplace created a perfect atmosphere for the exchange of concepts, philosophies, and ideologies, but it often caused alienation between those who had access to the outside world and those who remained at home. These were the married women, restricted to the home by cultural dictates. While at home, many did piecemeal work. But the phasing-out of this "homework" in the early 1900's drew married women out of their homes and into the factories.

Immigrant women had always subscribed to a sort of "feminism," a "mutual bond of universal womanhood."⁸ In the ghettos they could not have survived without their support of one another. They nursed each other's children through sickness, delivered each other's babies, and fed each other's families when cupboards were bare.⁹ They took this mutual concern with them into the factories.

Industry's willing acceptance of women was opposed by male workers. The very reasons which made hiring women favorable for business, threatened men's jobs. Women worked for lower wages than men, so men were afraid this would reduce male wages. As working conditions deteriorated, strikes became more frequent. Because women were perceived as more docile than men, employers hoped female presence would prevent strikes. If they did not prevent strikes, women could be used to break them by scabbing.¹⁰

America was caught in a dilemma; a dilemma it remains in to this very day; on one hand, it recognized the need for women to work; on the other hand, it remained steeped in the ideology of female domesticity. The AF of L declared women's employment an "evolutionary backslide,

a menace to prosperity, and a foe to civilized pretensions."¹¹ Some feminists replied that "...the old idea that all men support all women is an absurd fiction...Women want work for all the reasons men want it."¹²

In some ways, feminism provided a link to Socialism. The sense of unity they had as women translated into worker unity as well. An interesting connection between working women and educated, middle class women developed which provided the impetus for the successful organization of women workers. Since few unions would accept women, it had become apparent by the late nineteenth century, that women needed organizations of their own. Changes had occurred in affluent families also. As a result, educated young women emerged as surplus individuals with little meaning to their lives. Out of the Victorian conviction of their own moral superiority and a genuine concern for social welfare, these more affluent women transformed social reform from a leisured pastime into a variety of full-time careers. They allied themselves with working class women, providing essential community services such as child care, lunch programs, and English lessons. They slowly began to convince immigrant women that their only protection lay in organized labor activity. It was in the drawing room of Hull House, America's first Settlement House (founded in 1889 by Jane Addams), that Chicago's shirt and cloak makers were first organized.¹³

As management increased its resistance to organized labor, Feminists and Socialists alike stepped up efforts to organize working women. A major victory came with New York's Shirtwaist Strike of 1909. Known as The Great Uprising, it was a culmination of the efforts of the Labor Movement, the Socialist Party, and the Feminist Movement in the form of the Women's Trade Union League (a group of women dedicated to organizing and supporting working women).

In her account of the strike, Helen Marot points out that although the response of 30,000 unorganized workers was indeed significant, the unyielding and uncompromising temper of the strikers was even more noteworthy - for they were almost all women! "Working women have been less ready than men to make the initial sacrifice that trade union membership calls for, but when they reach the point of striking, they give themselves as fully and as instinctively to the cause as they give themselves in their personal relationships."¹⁴

Over the grueling thirteen week duration of that strike, the WTUL supported strikers with soup kitchens, funds for bail and legal counsel, and even joined the picket lines! The Great Uprising was an inspiration. It proved that large numbers of workers could organize, and became the model for labor organization in cities across the nation.

Years later, the childhood recollections of a woman of Russian Jewish background were recorded and printed:

It was in 1909, the first strike. There were sweatshops in these days and working conditions were terrible. We had a big poster telling about the strike. It was pink with black letters - all those years ago, and I still remember! Later, when I went to school, and I could read, I learned what it was about.

Grandma, I interrupted, the strike was in 1909. You were born in 1908. You were only a year old when it happened. Do you mean that the poster was still hanging when you learned to read?

Yes. My father kept it there, on the wall in the kitchen, as a reminder. He was a Russian Jew... from Minsk. He was a presser. He made good money, but the work was seasonal. Oh, he came home at all hours! When it was the season, he slept at the shop.¹⁵ Sometimes we didn't see him for days! You know, we each had a place at the dinner table, and if my father didn't come home, nobody sat in his place. But he was always home for the Sabbath.

We lived well. When it was off-season, my father went back to house painting. He learned that trade from his father, but he had to quit. In those days, they mixed the paint by hand, and he got lead poisoning from the paint. He used to have attacks, like drunk attacks.¹⁶

He believed in the union (ILGWU) and he supported it. Maybe because he was educated. He learned to read and write Russian in the orphanage where his father left him when he came to America.¹⁷ (Leaving small children behind, until the father found a job and home in America, was not an uncommon practice.) He could read English too. He couldn't speak English very well, but he was very well-spoken in Russian and Yiddish. He never took a high position but the union bosses remembered his name even after he died!

I interviewed my own grandmother, Lillian Garber, about her perceptions of these early unions in America. She recounted: "The bosses had their goons - even later, when your grandfather and the other milkmen tried to start a union they had goons. But my father, he was a big, strong man - he was a goon for the union! The unions were not as rich as they are today. So when he got arrested, they couldn't always afford to bail him out right away - he had to stay. But they always managed to get him out for Shabbos! He believed, like all

the others, that America was the land of opportunity. That's why he did what he did, fought for the union, I mean. 'We should kiss the ground here', he used to say. And he believed every word of it."¹⁸

The Shirtwaist Strike demonstrated worker's ability to organize, but it was really a very limited victory. It did not win recognition for the union and only minimally improved working conditions. The truth of how empty a victory they had won was shown to workers in the tragic Triangle Fire two years later, in which 146 young women, locked in by their employers to prevent theft or strike, perished in a raging inferno.¹⁹

Union power remained minimal, rolled back by the tremendous power of industry. Economic fear of immigrants grew (resulting in restrictive immigration laws in the 1920's) and a resurgence of nativism (evidenced by the rise of the white supremacist Ku Klux Klan) forced social reform into dormancy. Although women won the vote, it brought no great political change. Women remained, for the most part, unskilled, underpaid, and unorganized.

The drastic economic changes of the Depression brought social changes as well. Leonora Barry, an organizer for the Knights of Labor, had spoken for most of America when she said, "I believe it was intended that man should be the breadwinner."²⁰ Layoffs affected men more so than women during the Depression, because the government's recovery measures, based on boosting consumption, actually protected the consumer and service industries which mainly hired women. Men, whose dominant positions had been determined by their earning power, found adjustment difficult. Destruction of their occupational status challenged their authority in the home.²¹ (A parallel can be drawn between this and the change in women's status that resulted from the onset of industrialization.) A significant effect of the Depression was government support of unions. As the nation slowly recovered, workers began to organize once again. Once again, women, who by now were present in the work force in greater numbers than ever before, met with male resistance. "Women had an awfully tough time in the union because the men brought their prejudices there...The union didn't encourage women to come to meetings. They didn't actually want to take up the problems that the women had. I did what I could to get the women to come to the meetings but very few came,"²² wrote Stella Nowicki, a CIO organizer. Describing the problems of women in unions in 1934, Nowicki was repeating complaints voiced by Alice Henry twenty years before.²³ Nothing had changed! Women were still bound by their domestic responsibilities first; men still viewed them condescendingly as temporary workers, inept at organizational skills, fit only for what Nowicki unceremoniously refers to as the "shit work".

Through the thirties, workers continued to organize, and women struggled to be included. More and more women entered the work

force and professions. World War II opened a vast array of job opportunities to women. They had access to higher paying skilled jobs and could receive the previously unattainable industrial training. Wages rose, the number of working wives rose, and the ranks of women union members quadrupled.²⁴ The U.S. Department of Labor reported, interestingly, that, "it can hardly be said that any occupation is absolutely unsuitable for the employment of women."²⁵

But none of these changes were permanent. At the close of the war, the women who had learned that there were no limits to what they could accomplish were sent home to make room in the job market for the returning heroes. "Rosie the Riveter" had served her purpose; it was time for her to go back to her "real" work. In 1898 Charlotte Perkins Gilman had said, "In spite of her supposed segregation to maternal duties, the human female, the world over, works at extra-maternal duties for hours enough to provide her with an independent living and then is denied independence on the grounds that motherhood prevents her working."²⁶

Fifty years later, in the midst of World War II, when thousands of mothers were employed in jobs they had been told it was their civic duty to undertake, the head of the War Manpower Commission told America, "The first responsibility of women with young children, in war as in peace, is to give suitable care in their own home to their own children."²⁷ Gilman's explanation of this contradiction would be that "we invariably object to changed conditions in those departments of life where we have established ethical values."²⁸ This accounts for the continued perception of domesticity and childcare as women's "real work", despite the growing numbers of women working outside the home and the decreasing birthrate. The fact is that family responsibilities are but one aspect, not the whole of women's lives. Yet we cling tenaciously to the ideologies of male dominance and female domesticity, relics of a bygone era. In *Daughters of the Promised Land*, Page Smith tells us that we owe a debt of gratitude to the early reformers who "freed man from the curse of his domination over women", which had, in effect denied her humanity.²⁹ But Smith is too hasty. All men have not been freed from that curse (just as all women have not been granted their "humanity"). In fact, some men fail to see male dominance as a curse at all!

Freedom has always been America's promise, if not its reality. Women have been struggling to win their share of that promise since the founding of the first colonies. Over the centuries they have secured many rights, but they have never gained the one right that would guarantee equality. The essence of equality is the right of choice - the one right consistently denied women by social values.

Changes in the family structure require changes in society as a whole. It has been suggested that if society (government and business combined) were to provide adequate child care for the children of

mothers who choose to work, and, in turn, provide for the continuing education of women who wish to have careers, but delay them to raise children, women might reach a true state of equality.³⁰ They would have won the right to choose their work, rather than have it dictated by conformity to social authority.

Achievement of such a goal requires dedication and hard work, skill and patience. Few are willing to undertake the task. Until we do, women will continue to battle with social and political inequity, remaining far distant from Charlotte Perkins Gilman's vision of the climax of social evolution - the end of male dominance and true equality for all.

Footnotes

1. Carol Hymowitz and Michaela Weissman, *A History of American Women*. (New York: Bantam Books, 1978), p. 193.
2. Leonard Dinnerstein and David Reimers, *Ethnic Americans: A History of Immigration and Assimilation*. (New York: Harper & Row, 1975), p. 31.
3. Louis Levine. *The Women Garment Workers*. (New York: B.W. Huebsch, Inc., 1924, reprinted in Rosalyn Baxandall, Linda Gordon, and Susan Reverby. *America's Working Women: A Documentary History*. (New York: Random House, 1976), p. 103.
4. Hymowitz, *op. cit.*, pp. 195-6.
5. Baxandall, *op. cit.*, pp. 142-144.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 140.
7. Mary Antin, *The Promised Land* reprinted in *Turning Points in American Educational History*. (Blaisdell Publishing Co., 1967.
8. Baxandall, *op. cit.*, p. 43.
9. Hymowitz, *op. cit.*, p. 198.
10. Baxandall, *op. cit.*, p. 89.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 168.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 79.
13. Jane Addams, *Twenty Years at Hull House*. (New York: Macmillan Co., 1924. Paperback ed. New York: New American Library, Signet Classics, 1961), p. 157.
14. Baxandall, *op. cit.*, p. 190.
15. Baxandall, *op. cit.*, p. 102.
16. Another occupational disease of painters was "wrist drop", an inability to hold the hand up straight. This too was caused by lead poisoning.
17. Leaving small children behind was not uncommon for immigrants. See Baxandall, *op. cit.*, p. 134.
18. Interview with Lillian Garber (my grandmother), May 10, 1986.
19. Hymowitz, *op. cit.*, pp. 253-4.
20. Baxandall, *op. cit.*, p. 124.
21. *Ibid.*, p. 241.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 275-6.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 170.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 281.
25. Caroline Bird. *Born Female*. (New York: Pocket Books, 1971), p. 32.
26. Charlotte Perkins Gilman. *Women and Economics*. Carl Degler, editor. (New York: Harper & Row, 1966), pp. 20-21.
27. Baxandall, *op. cit.*, p. 291.
28. Gilman, *op. cit.*, p. 153.
29. Page Smith. *Daughters of the Promised Land: Women in American History*. (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1970), p. 346.

30. *Ibid.*, p. 342.

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“Disunion and Reunion” - Civil War Historiography Shelly Newman

In “Disunion and Reunion”, Don E. Fehrenbacher deems that “...the conflict that raged between 1861 and 1865 was unquestionably one of awesome magnitude and momentous consequence”¹ and accordingly remains a hotbed of controversy that persists to this day. Fehrenbacher’s overview of the war provides us with the necessary generalizations needed to understand this extremely complex issue. The Civil War was indeed a hard-fought war, one in which substantial numbers on both sides believed desperately in the causes for which they were fighting. Although the union had been preserved, it had been done so at the expense of the agricultural South to the benefit of the newly industrialized North. On the surface, one can surely say that righteousness triumphed - the concepts of democracy prevailed, the so-called “peculiar institution” of the South had been dismantled, and the thrust toward heavy industrialization, or “progress”, received its impetus during this period. However, in reality, the issue is far more elaborate and has had such far reaching consequences that “...today’s American finds some of his own experiences reflected in the plight of the Civil War generation.”² Fehrenbacher contends that a general consensus among historians had been arrived at regarding the justifications for the South’s ultimate defeat in the war itself. These reasons include the North’s overpowering dominance in nearly all areas of importance - the overwhelming availability of manpower and material resources, effective leadership, cohesiveness, superior military strategy, to name just a few.³ The more controversial issues, however, still focus on the arguments relating to the causes leading up to the war and the ensuing Reconstruction period that occurred in its aftermath. It is in these areas that considerable diversity exists.

Various emphases on the causes and the origins of the Civil War have prevailed throughout the years. Some attribute it to the unique divergencies that characterize the North and the South to their respective principles of federal vs. states rights and with it the right to secession; the differences that were created based upon an industrial and an agrarian economy; the effects of newly emerging political parties that catered to sectionalism; “the very character of the American people, with their Revolutionary tradition of appealing from law to moral justice, and their frontier heritage of restless individualism, resistance to authority, and physical violence.”⁴ Nevertheless, the issue of slavery has always been the dominant

impulse.

Fehrenbacher believed that the secession that occurred soon after Lincoln's election appeared to pose no immediate threat to Southern institutions. Based upon this premise, historians must then necessarily determine whether the Civil War was in fact fought for superfluous reasons, or was it the "smoking gun" to a "...larger and more fundamental conflict."⁶ He concludes that "the accumulation of reasoned purpose and unreasoning fears" prompted secession, yet it was the North that ultimately was responsible for armed conflict.⁶

Fehrenbacher further suggests that the fundamental principles of Reconstruction were essentially sensible - that is, to bind up the wounds of the war-ravaged nation and to lend the South a helping hand on the road to recovery. The end of the war did not mean an end to hard times. Under the guidance of weak presidents and the scandalous nature of the "Radical Reconstruction" policy itself, the South grew even more bitter and resentful. By the 1870s, Republican rule in the South began to break down and the Northerner's interest in the plight of the freed black collapsed as well. In fact, the worst aspects of the Confederacy remained to gain a bitter-sweet revenge and "instead, the era was essentially anticlimactic, descending from the sharp tragedy of Lincoln's assassination to a blurred ending in weary abandonment."⁷ Indeed, as Fehrenbacher proposes, numerous questions are worth re-examining because of the relevance that these consequences still hold on our modern society.

Fehrenbacher begins his analysis of Civil War historiography with those who were writing even while Reconstruction was transpiring. Present in their literature were the bitter overtones of resentment and enmity "with responsibility for the war debacle resting upon single "villains".⁸ At the close of the nineteenth century, the new wave of "scientific" historians became the dominant theorists on Civil War historiography and they, in turn, reflected the resurgence of a nationalistic spirit that engulfed America at the time.

John Ford Rhodes is representative of that particular era. In his *History of the United States from the Compromise of 1850*, Rhodes attributed slavery as being the "sole cause of the war" and that "if the negro had not been brought to America, our Civil War could not have occurred."⁹ With a semblance of objectivity, Rhodes evinced a sympathy for the South and credited secession "...primarily to broad, impersonal forces, rather [than] to the sinister purposes of a few men."¹⁰

Similarly, John W. Burgess, an associate of Rhodes, reduced the causes of the war to the principles of state sovereignty and slavery, seeing them both as evil influences and impinging on the "march of progress." Both Rhodes and Burgess favored the North up to 1865, yet were favorable in their treatment of the South in the later period. Both were racists who viewed Reconstruction as a total disaster and

“found the basis of true sectional reconciliation in Northern acceptance of Southern racial attitudes.”¹¹ Although these views were widely held for many years, numerous contradictions appeared throughout the interpretation regarding the causes of the war. Questions arose such as how a “just and necessary war” could bring about such “an odious aftermath” and, therefore, new revisions and interpretations emerged to bridge the inconsistencies.¹²

Between the years 1890 and 1930, a series of Southern monographs were published which were also thoroughly steeped in racial bias. Foremost was William A. Dunning’s *Reconstruction, Political and Economic: 1865-1877*, in which he saw Reconstruction as “the struggle through which the Southern whites, subjugated by adversaries of their own race, thwarted the scheme which threatened permanent subjection to another race.”¹³ Dunning, along with a group of his graduate students at Columbia University such as James W. Garner, Walter L. Fleming and Charles W. Ramsdell, served to support the Rhodes-Burgess Reconstruction interpretation. Other pro-Southern works written at the time were by Claude Bowers (*The Tragic Era*) and George Fort Milton. These writers acknowledged the complexity of this era and tended to shift away from racism to other important components of Reconstruction, such as the political and economic factors that were involved. Still, it was Dunning’s influence that prevailed at the time.

During the period between 1890 and 1930, the issues surrounding the causes of the conflict became highly diversified. Edward Channing enlarged the possibilities of causes and found that conflict originated due to the “...development of two distinct national cultures, so different in economic organization and social outlook - as well as in their labor systems...”¹⁴ that prevented peaceful co-existence. Moreover, Frederick Jackson Turner’s pervasive frontier thesis had attributed the importance of the West in the emerging conflict.

The Great Depression of the 1930’s led to a general feeling of hostility to the business class. Charles A. Beard utilized a strict deterministic approach and pointed to economic factors to explain the roots of disparity. In fact, slavery was merely a disguise for a far deeper conflict that represented “the struggle for dominion between an older agricultural order and an emerging industrial one.”¹⁵ Repelled by the degenerative consequences of the war and capitalism, and by minimizing the impact of slavery, Beard was able to garner support from pro-Southern factions. As with the earlier period of historiography, Beard, too, attributed the causes to “impersonal forces which swept men and events along toward an irrepressible conflict.”¹⁶ However, due to his narrow interpretation, especially with regard to the causes of the war, acceptance of his analysis soon abated, and a new group of historians came to the fore. These historians were known as “revisionists.”

Fehrenbacher states that although the threads of revisionist interpretation has been around throughout Civil War historiography, it emerged as a recognized school of thought during the years between WW I and WW II, "when the American people, significantly, were experiencing a great revulsion against their participation in the First World War."¹⁷ This new group of historians focused more upon the necessity of war, rather than on its causes and the impersonal events that precipitated it. The general consensus of opinion among the revisionists was that it was indeed a "needless war", one that brought about more evil than good. It was concluded therefore that conflict was avoidable. Another important characteristic of the revisionists was their idea that slavery would eventually dissipate peacefully in its own time. Again, this view differs considerably from that previously held.

Leading revisionist historians such as Avery O. Craven and James G. Randall reflected the prevailing repugnance for war. Both argued that emotionalism and hysteria led to the ultimate break and that sectional differences were exaggerated by past historians in order to prove that conflict was irrepressible. Their intent was to stress unity and to minimize any source of conflict. "The Civil War was thus an irrational act, fomented rather than compelled, and fought for 'unreal' or 'artificial causes'."¹⁸

The revisionist interpretation greatly widened the field of Civil War historiography. It was similarly pro-Southern in sentiment, yet more subjective in orientation. Because of this, although it was influential, it became vulnerable to criticism.

After WW II, new interpretations were emerging that necessarily had to mirror public sentiment toward the black community. The Southern historian, Francis B. Simkins, called for a re-examination of Reconstruction and an end to racial bias. In addition, "The time had come to stop treating the era as a reign of terror."¹⁹ In *The Critical Year*, Howard K. Beale also moved to set aside prejudices but he, like Beard, saw Reconstruction in terms of economics and the undaunted and scandalous drive for profit. Fehrenbacher states that since Beard, Reconstruction history had in fact continued to place heavy emphasis on economic determinants.

Although the Reconstruction period had been treated with great diversity and complexity at the time, Fehrenbacher wrote, a completely revised interpretation apart from the old Dunning school had yet to arrive. Fehrenbacher prophesied, however, that "...the day is fast disappearing when historians will treat the restoration of white supremacy as the happy ending of Reconstruction. For they know now that it was neither happy nor the ending."²⁰

The post WW II treatment of the causes of the Civil War was characterized by a reaction against the revisionists. Bernard DeVoto, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., and Peter Geyl are among those who once again reaffirmed the unavoidable conflict of the Civil War and have

reasserted slavery as being the critical link in the drama. Echoing the "nationalist tradition of Rhodes", these historians have further broadened the scope of study. Allan Nevins' *Ordeal of the Union* and *The Emergence of Lincoln* characterize this shift in emphasis and actually provides a synthesis of both the traditional and revisionist tradition. "Nevins echoed Rhodes in the assertion that the war was primarily over slavery, and he followed Channing in portraying the North and South as two steadily diverging cultures". His sympathies were clearly with the anti-slavery forces, yet the bottom line was that war should and could have been avoided.²¹

Upon reading *Disunion and Reunion* it became quite apparent just how complex the issues surrounding the Civil War were and remain. Moreover, they are still emotionally highly charged and the various historiographical interpretations greatly reflect the personal and cultural biases of each age. Fehrenbacher duly noted that the trend in the 1960's was toward an anti-sympathy for the Southern cause, which of course has been a result of the inroads achieved by the civil rights movement.

An analysis of the scope of Civil War historiography over the last two decades shows that the field is indeed in a healthy state and continues to attract attention from the best scholarly minds. With regard to the numerous theories that outline the events that precipitated the war, one finds that the new interpretations are really not new at all. Thus, an important question is not where historians today get their ideas, but why ideas which are not entirely original become popular again. The answer lies in part with the civil rights movement of the 1960's, (or the "Second Reconstruction" as it has been called), and with the new methodologies, source materials and the inter-disciplinary influences that have become available to modern historians.

Historians of the causes of the Civil War have been quieter than those concerned with Reconstruction. With respect to its causation, any of the newer views seem to modify or augment the basic tenets proposed by the earlier nationalistic and revisionist schools of thought. Present writings, however, do reflect the integration of the economic, sociological, psychological and ideological factors involved.

Few historians today would argue that slavery was at the core of the controversy. In *The Impending Crisis* (1976), David M. Potter undertakes to explore and examine through first hand evidence the multifarious sources of dispute that led to the demise of the Union in 1861. Although it is a work that addresses itself to many topics, Potter commands admiration for his thoroughness and comprehensiveness. One of his strengths is the sympathetic detachment that he brings to this scholarship. Aware that history is the record of past experiences applied to the issues and concerns of the present age, Potter asserts that although slavery was indeed the overshadowing problem of the

decade, it did not monopolize antebellum politics as it now tends to monopolize its history. Nevertheless, as an ethical question, a vast economic interest, or as the basis for distinct patterns of culture, slavery was at the root of sectionalism and secession.²²

Furthermore, Potter believed that war could and should have been avoided through compromise considering the fact that most people in the South did not wish to dissolve the Union nor were most Northerners willing to press the issue of slavery in the territories. Moreover, the "South did not want a separate destiny so much as it wanted recognition of the merits of Southern society and security for the slave system."²³ Borne out of an exaggerated sense of hysteria and imagination on both sides, Potter places the blame of secession on ineffective leadership and the ambiguity of governmental policy that he says was characteristic of Lincoln and the Republican administration. Clearly then, *The Impending Crisis* reflects those views posited by Allan Nevins and the neo-revisionist school of thought.

While agreeing that slavery was central, many other recent historians adhere to the notion that war was indeed irrepressible. Kenneth M. Stampp's, *The Imperiled Union* (1980), was a major contribution by a key historian that attempted to rebutt the earlier revisionist interpretation. "The fundamental mistake of the revisionist," according to Stampp, "was in viewing the anti-slavery movement, rather than the persistence of slavery itself, as the great social abnormality that eventually disrupted the Union".²⁴ In this humane and optimistic approach to the causation of the Civil War, Stampp also ascribes to the inevitability of conflict, (although this does not mean that he views conflict to be unavoidable). Stampp's subtle, novel, and sophisticated conceptualizations have been a source of great influence to other historians.

Likewise, in *Ordeal by Fire: The Civil War and Reconstruction* (1982), James M. McPherson believes that rapid growth in the antebellum period produced great strains on the republic which manifested itself in sectional and ideological disputes and that "the principle issues of the war, sovereignty and freedom, proved to be uncompromisable."²⁵ However, these strains, from the beginning, were attributed mainly to the question of slavery.

Perhaps Phillip S. Pauludan is the most descriptive when he eloquently states in *The American Civil War: Triumph Through Tragedy* (1974) that

As a result of the Civil War, a "new birth of freedom" did occur. Like most births, it was painful, and surely this one was more painful than most. The naive may have been disappointed that the infant was not full grown and perfect. But it would grow and, if it would never be perfect, without this particular bloody birth there would

have been no child at all.²⁶

By way of contrast is Eric Foner's *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party Before the Civil War* (1970). Looking beyond racial conflict, Foner emphasizes the role that ideology played in the ensuing conflict, thus blaming the war on impersonal forces. "At the center of Republican ideology," argued Foner, "was the notion of 'free labor'. This concept involved not merely an attitude toward work but a justification of antebellum northern society, and it led Northern Republicans to an extensive critique of Southern society, which appeared both different from and inferior to their own."²⁷ The final consequence resulted in the fierce competition for control of the political and economic systems and the separation of American society. The author shows that "free labor" was at the heart of a progressive society and that "the goals of the Union and Free Soil were intertwined, and neither could be sacrificed without endangering the other."²⁸ War was inevitable. Based upon this attitude, Northern ideology "provided the moral consensus which allowed the North, for the first time in history, to mobilize an entire society in modern warfare."²⁹ Although these views are complex and often appear to contradict one another, all claims may in fact be equally valid.

Perhaps no other field in history has experienced as drastic a revision in recent years as the subject of Reconstruction. The civil rights movement of the 1960's is responsible largely for encouraging the shift of attention away from the racist attitudes subscribed to by the traditional Dunning school of thought in every way. Instead, it has forced the present generation of historians to face realities that have been avoided previously. The result, in the end, is that historiography and racial policy have become mutually influential in effecting change.

No longer viewed as "the tragic era", the new history of Reconstruction has produced a highly positive attitude toward blacks and is overwhelmingly anti-Southern in sentiment. The field is wide-open; white historians have discovered the positive side of Negro history and at the same time, the re-examination of "white history" has also been uncovered. Despite the fact that "they saw grave problems to be confronted - the paucity of traditional sources, the danger of mythologizing, and the distortions that could result from the tendency to interpret history in ways to serve the present "...historians have enthusiastically tackled the problems for they were viewed as challenges..., not obstacles."³⁰ In the midst of debate, several scholars, both black and white, "were about the task of setting a new vision, drawn from the black experience, upon the blandness and blindness of the consensus school of American historiography."³¹ What these historians have been able to accomplish is the effective destruction of widely held myths concerning racial inequality and inferiority and a presentation of a more affirmative view of black Americans.

This radical reversal of thought is evidenced in a multitudinal array of published material on Reconstruction. One such aspect of change is the trend which places emphasis on the social and economic scope of the transition from slavery to freedom. Writing in response to Daniel P. Moynihan's "The Negro Family in America: The Case for National Action" (1965) in which he deemed that "Three centuries of 'injustice' had caused deep seated structural distortions in the life of the Negro American, 'a tangle of pathology' resulted, and the disorganized black family was at its center",³² Herbert G. Gutman splendidly refutes this common view in *The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom: 1750-1925* (1976). Gutman succinctly argues that family ties were indeed maintained and in fact, served to cultivate a unique Afro-American culture. Using plantation records, birth and death records, census reports and manuscript sources, Gutman focuses his attention on ordinary men, women and children. His findings reveal that "slavery should be viewed as an oppressive circumstance that tested the adaptive capacities of several generations of men and women."³³ These adaptive capacities have included the establishment of large kinship networks, elastic household boundaries, and the institution of other norms of behavior that were often enforced by group pressure.

In *Been in the Storm So Long: The Aftermath of Slavery* (1980), Leon Litwack, like Gutman, focuses his attention on the adaptive nature of the slave and offers admiration for this characteristic. Indeed, not only did most of the slaves learn to endure, but they managed to "create a reservoir of spiritual and moral power and kinship ties that enabled them under the most oppressive of conditions to maintain their essential humanity and dignity."³⁴ Quite interesting is Litwack's remarkable ability to use old evidence in the formulation of a new version that very definitely depicts victory for the underdog. Moreover, Litwack maintains that survival and acceptance were paramount to blacks. In the discussion of blacks joining the ranks of the Union army, he states that "black men managed to win the respect of white America only by fighting and killing white men was an ironic commentary on the ways in which American culture...measured success, manliness, and fitness for citizenship."³⁵ Litwack seems to suggest here that blacks were in fact morally superior to whites.

The political aspects of Reconstruction have been reevaluated as well. Many historians now believe that Reconstruction was not radical enough since conditions remained extremely difficult for blacks after Emancipation. The active role that blacks have played in their own lives has been under scrutiny in recent years. No longer is it implied that blacks were intellectually inferior and therefore incapable of self-government. Peter Kolchin's *First Freedom: The Response of Alabama's Blacks to Emancipation and Reconstruction* (1972) investigates the structure and behavior of the black community itself:

migration patterns, labor, the family, education, churches and the awakening of political consciousness. Using census reports, newspapers, public and private records, Kolchin contends that blacks became militant soon after their relative importance to the Republican party was perceived, yet were only mildly represented in meaningful positions of government. Thus, contrary to previous thought, blacks wielded relatively little political clout and therefore could not be blamed for the blatant corruption that was widespread. Moreover, it is now widely believed that the corruption of Republican Reconstruction was minor relative to that in the North and the "Redeemer" governments of the South. Consequently, the Radicals, especially leaders like Charles Sumner and Thaddeus Stevens, are now viewed as the champions of civil liberty.

Thomas Holt, winner of the Charles S. Sydnor Prize for outstanding published Southern history offers an alternative political perspective of Reconstruction. In *Black Over White* (1977) he lends support to the argument that challenges the traditional view of blacks as the illiterate, passive tools of "greedy white Republicans". Rather, he found the majority of black politicians to be both literate and property holders. The demise of the Republican Party, Holt argues, was due to the intra-racial conflict stemming from the failure of effective leadership among the black "elite"; that is, the lighter skinned mulattos over the darker skinned peasants, with the former looking after their own self-interests.

In recent years, interest in the economic and class aspects of Reconstruction have gained considerable attention by Marxists and non-Marxists alike. Eric Foner's works, *Free Labor, Free Soil, Free Men* (1970), *Politics and Ideology in the Age of the Civil War* (1980), and *Nothing But Freedom: Emancipation and its Legacy* (1983) essentially point to conflict within the framework of class struggle and ideology - it being a "three way struggle between planters, freedmen and Northern conquerors over how labor would be organized in the post-Emancipation South."³⁶ Other notable works of this nature include Michael Perman's *The Road to Redemption: Southern Politics 1869-1879* (1984), Terry L. Seip's *The South Returns to Congress* (1984), Mark W. Summer's *Railroads, Reconstruction, and the Gospel of Prosperity* (1984), and the works of Michael P. Johnson, Paul Goodman, and Eugene Genovese.³⁷

In light of the recent trend of thought, the question remains as to whether or not Reconstruction achieved anything positive or was it in fact, a total failure. Kenneth M. Stampp, (and many others), believe that "if it was worth four years of Civil War to save the Union, it was worth a few years of radical Reconstruction to give the American Negro the ultimate promise of equal and civil political rights."³⁸ For although Reconstruction was a failure, it was, in the words of W.E.B. DuBois, "a splendid failure".³⁹

It was evident then that the drama of Reconstruction has witnessed a complete role reversal among its principal players. The heroes are now the villains and vice versa; the Radicals have been vindicated, the Redeemers are now the target of scorn, and the blacks have gained a tremendous sense of pride both as a group and as individuals. The importance can never be overstated. In "The New View of Reconstruction" (1983), Eric Foner calls for a synthesis of the various viewpoints of Reconstruction history.⁴⁰ This, in my opinion, would be impossible in light of the fact that this area of study is still in its maturing stages and continues to broaden at a rapid pace. It is exciting and innovative and the momentum does not appear to be slowing down. It took a long time in coming, but it was well worth the wait.

Footnotes

1. Don E. Rehrenbacher, "Disunion and Reunion" in *The Reconstruction of American History*, John Higham, ed., (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press Publishers, 1962), p. 98.
2. *Ibid*, p. 99.
3. *Ibid*, p. 98.
4. *Ibid*, p. 100.
5. *Ibid*, p. 102.
6. *Ibid*, p. 102.
7. *Ibid*, p. 104.
8. *Ibid*, p. 106.
9. *Ibid*, p. 106.
10. *Ibid*, p. 106.
11. *Ibid*, p. 107.
12. *Ibid*, p. 107.
13. *Ibid*, p. 108.
14. *Ibid*, p. 109.
15. *Ibid*, p. 109.
16. *Ibid*, p. 111.
17. *Ibid*, p. 112.
18. *Ibid*, p. 113.
19. *Ibid*, p. 114.
20. *Ibid*, p. 116.
21. *Ibid*, p. 118.
22. David M. Potter, *The Impending Crisis: 1848-1861*, (N.Y.: Harper & Row Publishers, 1976), p. xiv.
23. *Ibid*, p. 469.
24. Kenneth M. Stampp, *The Imperiled Union: Essays on the Background of the Civil War*. (N.Y.: Oxford University Press, 1980), p. 3.
25. James M. McPherson, *Ordeal by Fire: The Civil War and Reconstruction*. (N.Y.: Princeton University Press, 1982), p. 1.
26. Phillip S. Paludan, "The American Civil War: Triumph Through Tragedy", *Civil War History*, (Kent, Ohio) Vol. 20 (1974) p. 250.
27. Eric Foner, *Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Men: The Ideology of the Republican Party Before the Civil War*. (N.Y.: Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 9.
28. *Ibid*, p. 225.
29. *Ibid*, p. 10.
30. Arvarh E. Strickland, "An American Epic," *Reviews in American History*. 8-4 (December, 1980), p. 516.
31. *Ibid*, p. 516-517.
32. Herbert G. Gutman, *The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom: 1750-1925*, (N.Y.: Pantheon Books, 1976), p. xvii, citing Daniel P. Moynihan.

33. *Ibid*, p. xxi.
34. Strickland, p. 517, citing Leon Litwack.
35. *Ibid*, p. 518.
36. Michael Les Benedict, "The Politics of Prosperity in the Reconstruction South," *Reviews in American History*. 12-4 (December, 1984), p. 508.
37. *Ibid*, p. 508-509.
38. Eric Foner, "The New View of Reconstruction," *American Heritage*, October/November, 1983, p. 12, citing Kenneth M. Stampp.
39. *Ibid*, p. 15, citing W.E.B. DuBois.
40. *Ibid*, p. 13.

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