

political, not a social, event. For Furet, “the legacy of the terror poisoned all subsequent revolutionary history.” For Schama, the terror *was* the revolution. It was the source of its energy, and all attempts to write about the revolution as though the terror was incidental to it have failed to understand what the revolution was about. More significant, he proposed that the terror was the first example of modern totalitarianism. Neither Furet nor Schama, then, believe that the legacy of the revolution is modern democracy and republicanism, as reiterated in countless republican histories and celebrated during the revolution’s 1889 centennial. Nor do they believe that its legacy lies in the revolution’s promise of an egalitarian society, heralded in the long-accepted but now rejected Marxist accounts produced by Georges Lefebvre, Albert Soboul, and Claude Mazauric.

As a consequence, labor history played almost no role in these discussions. As Donald Sutherland argued, the old orthodoxy based on class struggle seems to have declined with the collapse of communism. This may be a positive development if it forces us as historians of the working class to reexamine what we mean by democracy and to pay attention to its limitations in most of modern history. It would be a positive development if we heeded Patrice Higonnet’s advice and began to consider the work of feminist scholars of the French Revolution, including that published by Joan Landes, Dorinda Outram, and Lynn Hunt. As Higonnet explained, these historians have examined the process by which misogynist redefinitions of masculine and feminine identity denied women access to the “natural” rights extended to men. Unfortunately, Hunt and Higonnet were the only voices for women present in the many sessions on the revolution. And only the Australians, Peter McPhee and Alison Patrick, seemed to think it was necessary to reiterate the idea that the French Revolution had an important impact on the lives of common people.

## Eleventh Annual North American Labor History Conference

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The North American Labor History Conference began its annual meeting on the Wayne State University campus on Thursday, October 19, 1989. As usual, the conference sessions were intriguingly eclectic. They ranged from a look at the Cistercian monasteries of the twelfth century to a Soviet view of the American labor movement in the 1980s. They included papers by scholars from Canada, England, and Sweden; by museum curators, editors, unionists, archivists, and an architect. But of course the brunt of presentations was borne by academicians.

Thursday's program covered the most ground in time and space. A session on "Trends in Work in Modern America," chaired by Sidney Fine (University of Michigan) centered on the New Deal period. Udo Sautter (University of Windsor) detailed the inadequate efforts to compile reliable unemployment statistics before 1932, while Benjamin Kline Hunnicut (University of Iowa) focused on the shift from work reduction to work creation, especially the shortening of hours. John Owen (Wayne State University) was the critic in this well-attended session. A session on "Labor and the Press in the Nineteenth-Century United States," led by JoEllen Vinyard (Eastern Michigan University) offered papers by James Stanford Bradshaw (Central Michigan University) on George Henry Evans, and by David B. Driscoll (Detroit Historical Museum) on the Philadelphia general strike of 1835. Norman Pollack (Michigan State University) took particular issue with Driscoll's use of "hegemony and deference" to describe the Philadelphia workers' situation. A meeting devoted to "The Twentieth-Century British Worker" was followed by an investigation of "Labor in Medieval and Modern Europe," which was highlighted by slides illustrating the deskilling of English joiners between 1815 and 1915. H. J. Louw (University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne) was the presenter. Lisa M. Sullivan (SUNY-Fredonia) discussed the process of labor segmentation and worker stratification in twelfth-century Cistercian monasteries, focusing on the monks' attempts to ignore the impact of economic expansion on their religious organization. Electoral behavior was the subject of the two concluding sessions of the day. Kevin Boyle (University of Michigan) and Bruce Nelson (Dartmouth College) looked at American workers in politics, while David Frank (University of New Brunswick) analyzed the Canadian working class in a paper on "The Elections of J. B. McLachlan." Comment, led by the moderator, Stanley Solvick (Wayne State University), and John Smart (National Archives of Canada) focused on possible reasons for McLachlan's string of defeats.

The late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century period formed the core of the program on Friday, October 20. The session "Ideas and Politics Among Modern European Workers" included a paper by Eric D. Weitz (St. Olaf College) on the shaping of German communist politics, 1890–1933, and a paper on Swedish working-class culture by Bosse Sundin (Umeå Universitet). Sundin described a "temperance ideal" and a "conscientiousness ideal" that, he said, were elements integral to the Swedish workers' movement rather than borrowings from middle-class culture. Members of the audience inquired about the influence of the American temperance movement on Sweden. An even larger audience (some 45 people) attended "Cooperation, Consumerism, and Labor," chaired by John Barnard (Oakland University). Steve Leikin (University of California, Berkeley) addressed the failure of worker cooperation in Massachusetts and Minnesota in the nineteenth century, and Kathleen G. Donohue (Wilkes College) discussed the ideological confusions within the developing consumer movement of the 1920s and 1930s. Susan Porter-Benson (University of Missouri) provided a model of constructive criticism that prompted additional suggestions for further research from

an enthusiastic audience. Then the conference adjourned for a luncheon at which Owen Bieber (President of the UAW) spoke about “New Roles for Unions in Industrial Transformation.”

Four sessions comprised the rest of Friday’s schedule. One was on “Militancy in Ontario and Quebec” following World War I. A second session—“Workers and Bosses: Tales of Two Cities”—delved into the differing strategies of two companies in dealing with changing market conditions. Laurence F. Gross (Museum of American Textile History) talked about the failure of the Booth Cotton Mill to modernize and its eventual closing in 1954. David J. Goldberg (Cleveland State University) pointed to the Joseph and Feiss Company’s interesting combination of welfare capitalism and scientific management in the 1920s, which enabled it to remain the nation’s largest nonunion manufacturer of men’s clothing and to attract a supply of young, American-born daughters of immigrants throughout the decade. Carolyn Wedin (University of Wisconsin–Whitewater) was the chair, and Daniel Nelson (University of Akron) was the critic. A third afternoon meeting concerned “Demagogues and Police: Twentieth-Century Episodes.” Stephen Meyer (University of Wisconsin–Parkside) delineated the connections between UAW Local 248’s strike at the Allis-Chalmers plant and the internal politics of the Democratic party in the 1946 Milwaukee election—with an eye to the rise of Joseph McCarthy. Gerda W. Ray (University of California, Berkeley) focused on working-class opposition to the New York State Police, 1914–24. The commentator, Seth Wigderson (University of Maine, Augusta), called for more precise definitions of “anticommunism” from both speakers, and that call was echoed from the floor. Finally, two papers on “The Struggle for Industrial Democracy During World War I and After” dealt with the ambiguity of the foreman’s position in the U.S. shipbuilding industry (Peter D. Hoefler, George Meany Memorial Archives) and with the new forms of worker organization that emerged in the period (Joseph A. McCartin, SUNY-Binghamton). Raymond S. Boryczka (Northern Virginia Community College) commented that both young scholars had presented new, exciting, and not altogether digested material to the conferees.

The concluding day, Saturday, October 21, was devoted mostly to an exploration of contemporary affairs and issues. “Coal and Grapes: Women Activists in the West,” with Christina Simmons (University of Cincinnati) in the chair, was a session in which both Katharine Dawson (SUNY-Binghamton) and Margaret Rose (UCLA) aimed to revise the traditional passive image of Chicana women. In both the Gallup coal strike of 1933 and the Canadian grape boycott of 1968–70, the Chicanas turned out to be crusaders for home and union. Critic Jose Cuello (Wayne State University) suggested the importance of the papers for recovering the invisible history of women and for bringing together class, ethnicity, and gender issues in one analysis. A session devoted to “The Left and the Cold War” included presentations by Steven Rosswurm (Lake Forest College) and Ellen W. Schrecker (Yeshiva University) with a comment by Daniel J. Leab of *Labor History*.

Perhaps the most stimulating event at the conference was the last session, a

luncheon meeting, at which Mark Lapitsky, a senior lecturer in the Institute of International Labor Studies, Academy of Sciences of the USSR, spoke about "Soviet Historiography of the American Labor Movement in the 1980s." Lapitsky has written biographies of "Big Bill" Haywood and Daniel DeLeon and is now at work on a biography of Walter Reuther. In his speech, Lapitsky lamented the hidebound and doctrinaire treatment of the American labor movement by Russian scholars and looked forward now to a more sophisticated recognition of the complexity and diversity of the American scene by a freer and younger generation of Soviet historians. On that very hopeful note, the conference ended.

## Colloque "Techniques et figures du social d'une guerre à l'autre"

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The futuristic Cité des sciences et de l'industrie in Paris, a perfect example of "French modern," was the appropriate setting for this interdisciplinary colloquium on new forms of social intervention and social rationalization between the world wars. Held October 12–14, 1989, and organized by the Cité's Centre de recherche en histoire des sciences et des techniques, and by the Musée Social, the conference theme was chosen to emphasize an aspect of modernity frequently ignored by social and intellectual historians: the diverse social practices which became increasingly subject to professionalization and academic discipline and expertise in the interwar period. The organizing concept, *techniques sociales* spanned a wide spectrum of social practices and interventions: state social services, public welfare, social hygiene, industrial psychology, industrial management, pediatric and social medicine, leisure, youth services, scouting, public housing, and a number of other public and private (including religious) initiatives.

Such diversity naturally provoked concern that the conference was either burdened with too broad a theme, or, conversely, that its scope was too narrow to encompass other social techniques such as marketing or advertising, which also became prominent in that era. The difficulty of bringing coherence to *techniques sociales* was capably addressed by the conference organizer, Yves Cohen, a historian of French industrial engineering. In his opening paper on "Techniques, technologies, et ingeniures sociales," he pointed out that in France the interwar period "was one which privileged the formation of industrial and social techniques" and that marked out a domain of thought and action guided by a common set of values and ideals, which can be termed "technical" in the broadest sense. Its watchwords were regularity, efficiency, and professional qualification.