



Our Working History

Curriculum Unit 80.06.07

by Alice Mick and Karen Wolff

Introduction

Our high school students find themselves on the margins of the working world. A few have part-time jobs, but most have no direct work experience. Many of these students live in one-parent homes where the major source of support is state and city welfare, and some have never had a close personal relationship with an adult who has had a long working history.

For these students, as well as for the many others whose parents do hold jobs, the adult world of work often seems detached from their needs and interests. As adolescents they are preoccupied with social interaction, and their own emotional and sexual development. This, and the bombardment of mass media advertising, which suggests that material consumption is a primary value and an immediate possibility, make the everyday world of low-paying, scheduled jobs seem both boring and unreal.

The questions we hear from our students when they do think about the future are loaded with frustration: "Why are some people so rich while I'm poor? Why do white people have an easier time? Why are there no jobs? What is the use of learning to read and write, or going to college, when that doesn't get you a job?"

In this course we try to help students answer some of these questions. The course, a topical approach to United States History, will look at the history of work and working people in our country.

Our goals are to give students:

1. A sense of historical time and a chronology of U.S. working history.
2. A sense of change: a realization that things were different in the past, that the way things are now grew out of that history, and that ordinary people, working together, can shape our current history and our collective future.
3. An understanding of what work is and how it has been organized in different times and settings.
4. An understanding of how government, people, and the structure of work are interrelated.
5. An understanding of ethnicity and class in relationship to work.
6. A practical vocabulary for talking about the history of work in the United States.

The course is designed for students enrolled in a year-long class which focuses on improving the basic skills of reading, writing, and discussion. The class meets three hours a day and is team-taught. During the second marking period the students study U.S. History during the last hour of the class each day. Although the organization of the larger class is particular to the High School in the Community, we feel that the course we describe could also be included as part of a year long U.S. History course in a traditional setting.

We should emphasize that this curriculum is oriented toward students who generally have difficulty learning in school; in high schools most information is taught through reading assignments, and our students have great difficulty reading. We work with them on reading and writing during another part of the class and have chosen to teach the content of this course mainly through other kinds of activities: films, slides, discussions, oral presentations, and trips. When readings are included they will usually be read aloud in the class. Because non-reading, concrete experiences are so essential to the teaching of this course, we have included a partial list of activities as part of the narrative at the end of each unit. More detailed lesson plans for one unit are included at the end of the entire narrative.

In the seven weeks of this course we cover three aspects of work in United States history: the organization of work, working people, and the relationship between government and people through work legislation. We introduce the course by making an historical time line with the students. Using this device, we can explain the main topics in the course, the time of particular events, and how these events are related chronologically to events that the students may have heard of, such as the American Revolution, the Civil War, and the two world wars.

PART I: ORGANIZATION OF WORK

The first three units have the thematic focuses of the organization of work and the owners and organizers of work.

Unit 1 Rural and Pre-industrial Work

In the first unit we want to give students an understanding of work as shaped by the conditions of survival in a subsistence economy during the Colonial period of American history. Our students live in a setting that is urban and highly industrialized, where work is exchanged for money, and where money is then used to purchase items needed for survival and pleasure. The focus of this unit is on the ways that life and work in Colonial America differed radically from what we experience now.

First we want to emphasize the rural nature of Colonial society. Most people lived on farms because the most basic condition for survival in the wilderness was the production of food. Because we live in New England we will look primarily at small family farms and villages. We will also examine briefly the differences in the development of agricultural work in New England and the Southeastern seaboard due to their contrasting geographies and climates.

Second, we will look at the necessity of relative economic self-sufficiency for families in a society which had only the rudiments of group organization of work. After asking students to define the basic necessities of life we will show that those which were consumed, as in the case of food, clothing and shelter, and those that were used for production, such as tools, were usually produced by the consumer or made by hand. There were people who specialized in producing products used by other people, i.e., skilled craftsmen and artisans, and

these people traded their products for food and other necessities. One major emphasis will be that most people worked for themselves and owned the fruits of their labor. Thus they either provided most of their own necessities or could trade for them directly.

We will touch on the situation of people who came to this country as servants, the conditions of their work and what became of them. We will contrast the myth of land and freedom for all comers and the economic reality for this group, which represented the beginnings of a working, landless poor, with very few possibilities for economic and political well-being.

Activities

The main activity of this first unit will be a trip to Old Sturbridge Village, Massachusetts, an outdoor history museum. There students will have a chance to see an early New England village, a farm, and to participate in several work activities which were common to that period. Classwork relating to the trip will include an introduction to rural town life using a slide show produced by the museum, and the use of one or two teaching packets available through the museum to help students think about work within the home, work outside the home, and the social and economic status of different groups in Colonial society (property owners, artisans, farm helpers, indentured servants, and slaves). The museum also has available for rent a film, "Working in Rural New England." This is an ideal follow-up to the trip or even a possible substitute for the trip. The activities and materials available through Old Sturbridge Village will also serve as an introduction to Unit 2 of this course.

Unit 2 The Beginnings of the Factory System

Unit 2 is about the beginnings of the factory system and its impact on the organization of work in America. During the 19th century manufacturing came to be one of the dominant features of the U.S. economic systems, particularly in the Northeast. By 1920 the majority of Americans lived in towns or cities so they could work in factories. New Haven is one such city and many of our students will eventually seek work in its factories or serve those who work in factories. We would like them to understand how the factory system came about and how it functions.

Factories were an important economic innovation because by putting more than one producer in a building and by dividing work into limited and specialized tasks, they could produce goods much more quickly than small handcraft shops. Whereas in the past an individual had made one product from start to finish, now people were hired to work on a particular aspect of the final product.

Until the War of 1812 most American wealth was invested in trading. When this trading ceased during the war, wealthy merchants looked for other ways to invest their economic resources. Since the war had temporarily halted the importation of British manufactured goods into the U.S., it was logical for wealthy merchants and traders to begin to invest their capital in the domestic manufacture of goods for consumption within the country. The raw materials and water power to run machines were plentiful here; the information needed to construct machines, especially for the manufacture of textiles, had been available since Samuel Slater smuggled from England the plan for a power loom in 1789. And with the War of 1812, political circumstance produced the capital and incentive for investment in manufacturing.

Eli Whitney's concept of making and using interchangeable parts in the manufacturing of guns was one concrete and significant development in the beginnings of the system of mass production in the U.S. In 1812, because of the war, Whitney received a contract from the government for 10,000 muskets; these were produced in his factory here in New Haven. By inventing a way of using machines for cutting, grinding,

hammering, and polishing identical parts of guns, Whitney was able to reduce the need for skilled craftsmen. Workers were now needed to make the machines for making guns and to run the machines, but they were no longer needed to make each gun individually according to an individual pattern.

By working on only one machine or on one part of a gun, workers also became more removed from the final product of their labor. They did not design this product nor did they control the production process from start to finish.

At least as significant as interchangeable parts in the development of manufacturing and its effect on working history was the rise of the wage system of labor. Before the factory system became important in this country there had been workers—farm hands, servants, and some day laborers—who received wages for their work, but most white males who came to this country had owned some land and a shelter, grown their food, and directly owned or controlled most of the tasks and tools necessary for survival. Even the artisan who specialized in making one product usually owned the product he made and traded or bartered it directly for the other necessities of life.

The coming of the factory system ushered in a major departure from this way of life because for the first time large numbers of people came to work in one place, used tools, and produced a product which was owned by another person. They had only their skills and labor to sell, and in return for this labor, which took almost all of their waking hours, they received wages with which they had to purchase all the necessities of life. They were thus removed not only from the direct products of their labor but also from almost all other means of self-sufficiency.

We see striking early examples of the wage system of labor when we look at the young women who came in from New England farms to work in the first textile mills, one of which was owned by Samuel Slater. Not only did they work in a factory producing thread owned and sold by other people, they also lived in dormitories owned by the factory, where they received strict supervision in almost every aspect of life.

A different but parallel structure grew at the same time in other mills where whole families, including children, worked in the mill. These families often lived in tenements owned by the factory and were obliged to buy their food and clothing in a factory store.

In the early period of manufacturing, when there was a shortage of labor and when skilled workers were in demand, factory work provided relatively high wages and often seemed preferable to the difficult and lonely life of subsistence farming. New technology, changing economic conditions, and an influx of immigrants however would change the conditions of factory work and the wage system. It was in the early years of the 19th century that the stage for rapid industrialization was set.

Activities

In addition to using the materials and resources of Old Sturbridge Village as an introduction to this unit, we will study Winslow Homer's painting, *Morning Bell* which is at the Yale Art Gallery. We also expect to visit the Eli Whitney Museum, now in construction in New Haven on the original site of Whitney's factory. This is a living example of an early factory and will allow us to look at the first use of interchangeable parts in the manufacture of guns.

Unit 3 Mass industrialization

At the time of the Civil War, fifty years after Eli Whitney started his factory, most people in the United States

still lived on farms. Although manufacturing had steadily expanded, the period from about 1860 until 1920 saw an extraordinary growth in the extraction and refinement of raw materials to be used in industrial development, in transportation, especially railroads, and most importantly, in all types of manufacturing. In 1864 the U.S. was fourth in the world in its output of manufactured goods. By 1900 it had become the foremost manufacturing nation in the world.

Unit 3 is about this period of mass industrialization. We will acquaint students with two aspects of this period: first, the changes in the nature of industrial work, and second, the consolidation of economic power and wealth. We will also point out that just as the War of 1812 sparked the initial development of manufacturing in the U.S., so it was the Civil War that created the need for transportation, weaponry, and many other products which touched off the period of mass industrialization.

Leo Huberman aptly characterizes the major change in industrial work after Lincoln's time when he says in his book, *We The People*, "In his (Lincoln's) day the worker was all important, with the tool as an addition to him; today the machine is all important, with the worker as an addition to it." (p. 186) By 1860 the technology introduced by the invention of interchangeable parts and by machines such as the power loom (at the turn of the century) had been greatly refined. Steam power and the development of machine tools, tools that made other machines, had made possible the use of power-driven machinery and greatly increased automation. Electricity would also soon become a major source of power. Over time in many industries the nature of work and its organization were profoundly changed. Work which had been done by hand and organized by skilled workers within an industry was now done by machines more quickly, resulting in enormous increases in production. As this changed occurred, workers lost the control that they had previously exercised over the production process.

It was in the interest of the owners of factories to produce products as cheaply as possible and to sell them for as high a price as possible. The difference between the cost of production and the selling price constituted the manufacturer's profits, money which owners could then reinvest to increase their wealth. In addition to increasing production through the use of improved technology one other obvious way to increase profits was to lower the cost of production by keeping wages down. For the workers, however, this was clearly unsatisfactory, since they totally depended on their wages to buy the goods and services necessary for survival.

The developments led inevitably to a vast difference in the economic power and resources between the owning class and the working class and meant that the interests of these two classes moved further and further apart and became increasingly antagonistic.

In the steel industry, for example, until 1892 skilled workers as a group had contracted with owners to make steel on a sliding wage scale. The greater the market price of steel, the higher their wages. This meant that these workers shared in the profits and had a personal stake in the success of the business. Worker motivation was not a problem. Skilled workers often hired unskilled workers and paid them out of their own wages. After the Homestead Steel Strike of 1892 which broke the union that had bargained for these skilled workers, mechanization was introduced on a massive level in the industry; skilled and unskilled workers were replaced by a category of semi-skilled workers who ran the machines; the sliding wage scale was abolished so that workers no longer shared in profits, and most of the "mental skills" needed to organize the work and the workers were taken over by management, men who were hired and well-paid to represent the interests of the owners.

The period of mass industrialization saw the ascendancy to great economic power of a relatively small group

of capitalists, men who owned and controlled machines and money. These were men who realized that control of the production process and use of technology and automation were only two ways of lowering costs and increasing profits. Andrew Carnegie, who owned the Homestead Steel Mill, understood that if he could own or control every business involved in the production and marketing of his steel, from the mines where iron was brought out of the ground to the ships on which it was sent abroad, he would not have to absorb in his costs the profits made by those who supplied raw materials, transported them, or marketed the finished product. Furthermore, if his costs of production could be reduced through ownership of the total process, he could then sell for lower prices and buy out or bankrupt competing steel manufacturers. He did so with great success. Similar stories can be told about John D. Rockefeller in oil, J.P. Morgan, who bought Carnegie's steel company in 1900 for \$492,000,000, and others.

These men made vast fortunes not only because they were brilliant financiers and entrepreneurs, but because they saw the people who worked for them as no more than one part of the cost of production. In the second part of our course we will look more closely at this group of people, the workers, and how they organized to fight back.

Activities

The major activities of this unit will be: 1) a visit to a modern, automated factory, possibly Olin-Winchester, so that students can compare the early process of gun-making with the processes used today, 2) a short history, using slides and charts, of one of the great industrial capitalists, probably Andrew Carnegie, and 3) a movie on the period of mass industrialization.

PART II: WORKING PEOPLE

The second three units will look at the people who have done the work of building this country and how they have molded and been molded by the economic system in which they work.

Unit 4 Immigration

Unit 4, which begins the second part of the curriculum, is about immigration, the movement of people who came to the United States from the beginnings of the Industrial Revolution in 1800 through the period of development of mass production after the Civil War. This unit, will attempt to look at three aspects of immigration.

The first is the people who came—their national origins, their reasons for leaving and expectations in coming, and the skills and cultural traditions they brought with them. We would compare the Northern Europeans, who constituted the vast majority of early nineteenth century immigrants, with the Southern and Eastern Europeans who came during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

By looking mainly at three representative groups which settled in New England and locally, we can contrast the artisanal and political skills which were, respectively, part of the English and Irish heritage with the agricultural and industrially unskilled peasant traditions of most of the Italian immigrants.

A second aspect of immigration concerns the backgrounds of these groups and their entry into the changing course of industrialization in the U.S. Northern Europeans filled the need for skilled craftsmen in the early period when there was still much hand work involved in production. As industrial work became more

automated and specialized, and more tightly organized and controlled by management rather than by those doing the work, there developed a demand for cheap, unskilled, plentiful labor.

The third aspect of immigration is the initial experience of newcomers—how these groups were seen and treated by those who lived here and how they used ethnic solidarity for survival in an alien setting. We will also look at the assimilation process, the economic and social conditions which caused immigrants to move away from strong ties with their ethnic heritage. In this part of the unit we will touch on conditions of arrival, native prejudice, neighborhoods, social organizations, religion, and mass education as factors in the social experience of immigrant workers.

Because most of our students are Black we will consciously attempt to relate the experience of immigrant ethnic groups to that of Blacks, both as slave and wage labor in the South and as migrants in the North.

Activities

1) A study of a historical time line of entry of ethnic groups, a map study of New Haven, and a short bus tour of ethnic neighborhoods and major work places of immigrants when they came here, 2) a movie about the story of an immigrant boy in the early nineteen hundreds, 3) a slide show and discussion of the history of Jews and Italians in New Haven, and 4) a guest speaker, perhaps a Puerto Rican, who can talk about the personal and modern-day experience of being an immigrant. We also expect to use several short passages to illustrate the social conditions affecting immigrants and to stimulate a discussion comparing and contrasting their situation with that of Blacks.

Unit 5 Race

The focus of Unit 5 is upon racial discrimination and its influence on our working history. We will look at Blacks in the labor force, first as slaves and later as wage earners. The majority of our students are Black and poor. They often want to know why Blacks are so poor while Whites seem to have much more—even the poor ones. We want to show students how racial differences have been used by owners to separate workers so that they compete with each other for jobs rather than join together and force the owners to change their policies and raise wages. We will concentrate on this aspect of racism in America because it relates to our unit and is seldom explored.

Slavery was at its core an economic institution. Slaves were brought here to supplement an inadequate and unruly labor force. Due to their skin color they stood out from other workers and could therefore be more easily managed. The slave system allowed plantation owners to exercise a large degree of control over the work force and the cost of production labor. By the Civil War however, there were many questions about whether slavery was still a profitable system for the owners because of the high cost of maintaining slaves and their refusal or inability to work with machines. By contrast the wage system in the north allowed the owners to put into competition the different groups of workers and thus to maintain low wages. War resolved the issue of slavery, and it also resolved another major issue for the Northern industrialists. When the Southern states were forced to remain in the union, the South was forced to trade with Northern manufacturers. The English manufacturers were no longer major competitors within the country.

After the emancipation of the slaves, some Blacks moved into different jobs. A few moved into cities, but the majority, uneducated and unfamiliar with urban life, stayed to work the land in the South. There were attempts during Reconstruction to make political and educational changes which would allow Blacks to move into White society as equal competitors. However by the 1890's many of the gains that Black people had realized were taken away from them. The new Jim Crow laws restricted their movement and legalized social

and political segregation. The land they had been given after the War was expropriated and given back to the previous owners, and wherever possible, Whites were hired to replace those Blacks who had gained industrial employment.

Industrial jobs in large number were first made available to Black people during the First World War when White workers were drafted into the army. More jobs were opened again after World War Two. Problems arose when the returning GIs wanted their jobs back, but by that time Blacks had moved north into the industrial areas. Thus Blacks and Whites competed for the same jobs. This competition allowed owners to maintain low wages by threatening to hire other workers if those who were employed complained. The industrial union movement grew in this environment and will be discussed in the next section.

It is important for students to realize that Black people have always participated in the American economy in a variety of ways—as farmers, laborers, professionals and owners. Owners have hired them until White workers were willing to work for lower wages. Then the White workers were hired. As the White workers made demands on the owners, especially during strikes, they were replaced by cheaper labor—Black workers desperate to gain employment. This is easily seen in New Haven through a discussion of the Olin strike of 1979-80.

Activities

Racial issues have proven to be particularly sensitive for all of our students. The questions raised by this unit bring up explosive issues such as race and poverty, and race and work. We want to deal with these issues openly in the classroom through emphasis on open and respectful discussions.

After discussing the many ways in which Black people have worked in America, we will concentrate on relating the particular function of race within the wage system. There are sections of *Roots* which deal with plantation work and the slave system. Racial discrimination as reflected in industrial work will be included as part of a presentation and study of the Olin strike by a worker from the plant there. In *The Afro-American in United States History*, Chapter 13, there is a clear and simple presentation of the competition between immigrants and free Blacks.

Unit 6 Narrative : Unions

The sixth unit of this course will be about the labor movement, which we have chosen as the most ongoing and significant attempt of working people to influence or control their conditions of work, better their economic status, and at times, press for major social and political change. The unit will focus primarily on helping students to understand the purpose and functioning of a union as an expression of collective power. The history of unions will be used to give the concepts an emotional life and to ground them in reality.

We will explain the beginnings of unionism in early U.S. history as both organized and spontaneous expressions of worker discontent. We will relate the history of unionism to our previous studies of immigration by pointing to craft unionism as an outgrowth of the early influx of Northern European immigrants who brought with them a political and working class heritage which eventually resulted in the formation of the American Federation of Labor (AF of L) in 1886. By contrast, the growth of industrial unionism, resulting in the formation of the Congress of Industrial Organizations in 1938, lagged far behind. The reason for this lay at least partially in the fact that that large American industry developed gradually, using at first more skilled craftsmen and only later large numbers of unskilled workers. However the resistance of the early established labor unions to organizing workers in large-scale industry can also be seen as a reluctance to accept workers and jobs which were quickly making skilled labor obsolete, threatening its very existence. Thus, mass

production and the need that was created for low-paying, unskilled jobs benefited the owning class not only because it made profits rise, but because it divided labor.

In addition, the feudal, agricultural background of later immigrants made them initially more deferential toward managerial authority, even when the economic conditions were too disastrous to be borne quietly. At the time of the Great Depression these workers were more accepting of a form of unionism which granted management's ultimate authority but asked for rules and limits to the ways that it could be exercised.

In the class we will use the Lawrence Strike of 1912 as an example of blatant class antagonism, worker/community solidarity, and the type of unionism which had, at least in the minds of its leaders (the industrial Workers of the World), the goal of overturning the social and economic order. We will then look at attempts at unionization within the modern textile industry as an example of unionism which accepts the overall social and economic order and works within it for important, but more limited improvement of wages and working conditions.

Activities

In all the activities of this unit we are particularly concerned that students become familiar not only with the functioning, but also with the specific vocabulary of unionism.

In addition to working on this vocabulary, other activities will include: 1) a slide show and commentary taken from the pictures and text of William Cahn's book, *Milltown*, which describes the Lawrence strike, 2) a discussion of the current organizing drive by the Amalgamated Clothing Workers in their attempt to unionize J.P. Stevens plants throughout the South, and a showing of the film *Testimony*, which describes that drive, 3) a visit from a union organizer to describe his or her job, 4) an autobiographical account, probably the one by Jesse Reese, a Black steelworker, from the book *Rank and File* by Alice and Staughton Lynd, and 5) a video slide tape presentation about the Machinist Union at Prat & Whitney.

Unit 7 Government, People, and Work Legislation

In the last unit we will look at legislation relating to working people during the years of the Depression and the New Deal. We have chosen to study government at this particular moment in our history for two reasons: first because the legislation passed at that time will have an impact on our students as working people or people out of work, and second, because we feel the New Deal era provides an unusually clear example of the role of government in our economic system.

In order to create a context for examining New Deal legislation we will begin this unit by looking at the first years of the Depression and at some of the social, political, and labor unrest that shaped those times. In 1929 at the time of the stock market crash the seeming prosperity of the American economy crumbled. Banks and businesses closed, workers were laid off, and industrial production dropped dramatically. As the economic crisis worsened, its social ramifications became equally extreme. In cities poor people stood in long soup lines and families were evicted from apartments for non-payment of rent; in rural area farmers lost their land because crops did not sell and they could not pay mortgages. In Washington D.C. in 1932 the Bonus Army, World War I veterans and their families from all over the country, gathered and camped near the Capital to demand that the government pay off immediately on the bonuses due them in the future. The army and cavalry, under the leadership of General Douglas McArthur and Major Dwight Eisenhower, were called in to burn their shanties and drive them away.

The action of the war veterans was only one example of growing desperation and anger among ordinary

people. Even as President Roosevelt mobilized the government to take drastic steps to alleviate the general misery, people in all walks of life banded together to express their anger and to channel the power that anger could generate.

In industry, with one-fourth to one-third of all workers out of jobs, major strikes by long-shoremen, miners, and teamsters led to general strikes in cities such as Seattle, Minneapolis, and San Francisco. In hundreds of cases workers began to sit-down and occupy their work places during strikes, and some, such as the coal miners in Pennsylvania in 1934, actually managed production themselves and began to sell or trade their products directly. Meanwhile people in city neighborhoods organized to stop evictions, and Unemployed Councils sprang up to help people help themselves. Large numbers of citizens, through their actions, began to question whether our system of government could work.

It is probable that for most people, at this time of serious crisis, Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal policies must have seemed to presage the coming of a new age. In addition to providing immediate relief for the economy and individuals by creating government jobs, F.D.R.'s administration supported the passage of social legislation which has become an intrinsic part of our expectations of minimal security in life today. The country saw the beginnings of organized Welfare; there was the Social Security Act of 1935 which provided old-age and unemployment compensation, and the Wagner Labor Relations Act, which legitimized collective bargaining and made the government a monitor of labor relations.

In the class we will look at the Depression and at the New Deal legislation that was to deeply affect the lives of working people. In addition we will ask students to take note of several important facts: first, that the government's decision to take responsibility for its citizens' minimal security from want and starvation marked a radical departure from the past practice; second, that these laws still excluded large groups of people (domestics, farm workers, government employees, teachers); third, that minimal security meant no more than that—survival in a system which perpetuated the great inequalities of wealth that already existed in the society; fourth, that the New Deal policies while alleviating human suffering, also stabilized the economy and forestalled a growing threat of rebellion, immediately, making people feel less desperate and in the long run, by limiting the revolutionary potential of the labor movement through legitimizing and controlling it within our system of laws.

Activities

Although the class will have no opportunity to study the legislation in depth, we will attempt to give students a basic understanding of each law's intent, how it worked at its time of conception, and how it is currently applied in Connecticut.

The activities of this unit will be: 1) a discussion and a film about the Depression, 2) a speaker, possibly Thomas I. Emerson, who worked in the Roosevelt Administration and wrote much of the Wagner Act. He can talk about the spirit of these times in government, 3) several short readings from the book *America's Working Women* : one, in which a woman reacts to having been excluded from the Social Security Act and another, in which a woman explains what it means to her to be on welfare today; and 4) a second speaker, a state legislator or a lawyer who can talk about the current Connecticut applications of the laws we have studied.

Conclusion

As we describe the content and goals of this course it often appears impossibly broad and general. It is important to keep in mind that we do not propose to have students in the class read and assimilate large amounts of information about each of the topics we study. Rather, students will be introduced to a topic

through discussion and vocabulary study; then they will be given several experiences to make the subject come alive. In discussions we will give students a way to look at each experience; we will elicit their reactions, and we will attempt to make connections both within and between each unit.

We feel successful if our students finish the course with some understanding that history combines our past and present, that it is alive with people like ourselves, and that it can give us a perspective for looking at our personal experience. More specifically, we want students to see the development of work in our society and to understand their real position in the working world they will enter. We believe that with this understanding they can begin to take more control of their lives. We also hope to show them that one of the most powerful avenues for change in the U.S. has been people working together. We feel that this course is one starting point for that understanding.

Classroom Materials and Activities

UNIT 1

Trips:

1. *Old Sturbridge Village* , Sturbridge, Mass. 01566 (617) 347-3362. (Warren Leon).

Movies:

1. *Sturbridge Slide Show* (\$2.00 rental fee).
2. *Work at Sturbridge* (\$2.00 rental fee).

Printed Materials:

1. *Map of Sturbridge* (Order from Village).
2. *Map of Colonial New Haven* (Order from New Haven Colonial Historical Society 114 Whitney Ave., New Haven).

UNIT 2

Trips:

1. *Eli Whitney Museum* , 940 Whitney Ave., Hamden, Conn. Phone: 777-2900. (To be completed fall, 1980).
2. *Yale Art Gallery* , Chapel St., New Haven, Conn. Phone: 436-0574, Janet Dickson.

Movies:

1. *America Becomes an industrial Nation* (25 min.) ACES #1568
This film traces the economic development of the U.S. from an agricultural nation to a modern industrialized society.
2. *Unseen Dividend* (20 min.) N.H. Board of Education. This film discusses the historical importance of international trade in the U.S. up to 1955.

UNIT 3

Trips:

1. *Tour of Yale University* , Phone: 436-8330 to arrange for a guided tour.
2. Tour of Factory.

Movies:

1. *Growth of Big Business in America* (15 min.) ACES #1184. This film discusses the factors responsible for the changing economy in the United States between 1865 and 1900. As examples the film traces the growth of Carnegie Steel and Standard Oil.

Speakers:

1. New Haven Chamber of Commerce, 195 Church St., New Haven, Conn. 06511. Phone: 787-6735.

UNIT 4

Trip:

1. *Bus Tour of New Haven* : To get a New Haven Board of Education bus have the principal of the school call to reserve a bus at least 2 weeks in advance. Buses are available between 9:15 and 11:00 AM. No cost.

Movies:

1. *The Immigrant Experience* : The Long, Long Journey (31 min.) ACES #1677.
Who came to America and why? 34 million people immigrated between 1820 and 1920.
2. *Immigration in America* (11 min.) ACES #1190.
Dramatic reenactment of causes of immigration, occupation and settling patterns. Major contributions of different groups are presented.
3. *Jews in America* These movies can be rented from the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai Brith.
4. *Italians in America* .
5. *Island in America (Puerto Ricans)*.

Printed Materials:

1. *Map of New Haven* : can be gotten at the City Plan Department, Drafting Room, 157 Church St. (9th Floor). Phone: 787-6378.

UNIT 5

Movies:

1. *Roots : Plantation and the Slave System* (30 min.)
Lee High School Audio-Visual Department Video Tapes.
2. *I Have a Dream* (35 min.) ACES #1482.
This film portrays the life of Martin Luther King and has footage of his fight for integration.

Printed Materials:

1. *The Afro-American in U.S. History* , Chapter 13: “Northern Freedom Without Equality” pp. 136-147.
2. *Rank and File* (see Unit 6).

UNIT 6

Movies:

1. *Testimony* (30 min.) ACTWU, 15 Union Square, New York, New York 10003. To order films from ACTWU:

1. They need one month advance notice.
2. The request must be in writing. It must be on school stationary and it must explain the reasons for the request.

This film discusses the J.P. Stevens Boycott and the fight for the union that workers have been leading for the last four years.

2. *The Inheritance* (45 min.) ACTWU or Anti-Defamation League. This film presents the history of the labor movement with wonderful footage on lives of workers in the past. It traces the growth of the garment industry.

3. *Union Maids* (50 min.) ACTWU

Interview with four union women. A warm and exciting discussion about labor history as these women lived through it.

4. *Pratt Whitney Film* . Contact Wayne Gilbert or Jean Moran, Local Lodge 707, International Association of Machinists and Aero-Space Workers, 425 Washington Ave., North Haven. Phone: 239-5877.

This slide presentation was made by the workers in the union to explain their union to other workers.

Printed Materials:

1. "George Patterson, Jesse Reese, and John Sargent" in *Rank and File* (1973), pp. 89-110.
2. "Sylvia Woods" in *Rank and File* (1973), pp. 111-129.

UNIT 7

Movies:

1. *Okies : Uprooted Farmers* (25 min.) New Haven Board of Education Audio Visual Department. This film is an excerpt from Steinberg's "The Grapes of Wrath." It shows how dust storms and drought drove farmers from their homes in Oklahoma.
2. *Twenty-Nine Boom and Thirties Depression* (14 min.) New Haven Board of Education Audio Visual Department. By explaining the economics of prosperity, boom, recession and depression, this film tells the story of the Great Depression.

Printed Material:

1. *America's Working Women* , "Welfare in a Woman's Issue" pp. 355-358.

Speakers:

1. Legal Assistance can send a speaker on Welfare: 777-4811.

Sample Lesson Plans: Unit 4

Vocabulary

Goals

1. Teach students new words.
2. Allow students to work with dictionaries.
3. Introduce new concepts.

Procedure Have the students sit together in front of a blackboard. Explain the pronunciation and meaning of the words. Give examples of the uses of the words. Then give the students time to fill in the definition worksheet. Go over them together. Then give them the second sheet of sentences and ask them to work on them alone.

Materials

1. Blackboard.
2. Two dittoes.
3. Dictionaries.

Vocabulary Definition Worksheet

Match the word to the correct definition.

- ___ A section of a city in which members of a minority group live because of social, legal or economic pressure.
- ___ An opinion for or against something without adequate information.
- ___ The smaller of two groups. A part of a population differing from others due to race, religion, or ethnic origin.
- ___ Relating to a large group of people which is grouped together because each member has common traits through a common social background.
- ___ The beliefs and customs handed down from generation to generation, (Often by word of mouth or by example).
- ___ Cultural behavior and ideas based on people's ethnic backgrounds.
- ___ The movement of people out from one country to another.
- ___ The movement of people when they move around within one country.
- ___ The movement of people into a country after they move out of another country.
- ___ The ways that people work at becoming members of a society.
- ___ Membership in a common population within one nation.

assimilation prejudice
nationality minority
immigration ethnic
migration custom
emigration tradition
ghetto

Vocabulary Sentences

In my country there is a _____. When a man meets a woman he kisses her hand.

After the Second World War, there was a large _____ of Blacks from the south to the north.

The largest _____ of Italians to this country occurred between 1890 and 1920.

There are many _____ groups in this country: Puerto Ricans, Blacks, Jews, Italians, Irish, Cuban, etc.

I am not _____. I think that people should be friends with people of different races and ethnic backgrounds.

Each _____ group has different ways of living. They eat different kinds of food, talk different languages and listen to different kinds of music.

There was a large _____ of Irish from Ireland during the Potatoe famine of 1848.

I live in a _____ where every one is Black. I often wonder if I will want to stay in this area or move to a mixed neighborhood.

An Uncle Tom is a name some people call Black people who try to act White. Others feel that the only way to make it in America is to join the majority and accept this process of _____.

Most people in the United States celebrate their birthdays. This is a _____.

Everyone born in the U.S. has the same _____.

The Map of New Haven

Goals

1. Expose students to a Map of New Haven and the location of their neighborhoods.
2. Have students talk about the differences between the neighborhoods.
3. Show students how to take notes.
4. Prepare them for a Bus tour of New Haven.

Procedure First hang map of New Haven and mark the neighborhoods where the students live. Point out other significant areas. Then hand out ditto and answer the questions as a group. Try to draw the answers from the students before giving them the answers. Base a lecture on what the students know already and the kinds of questions they ask.

Materials

1. Map of New Haven.

2. Black magic marker.

3. Ditto of questions.

Questions What street do you live on?

Describe the street you live on. (Include the type of homes-houses or apartments, stores, ethnic origin of people, kinds of yards or parks, whether there are many kids. Do you like it? Why or why not?)

Name the major neighborhoods in New Haven.

What neighborhoods do most of these people live in?

Jews ___ Italians ___

Irish ___ West Indians ___

Blacks ___ Puerto Ricans ___

Why do you think people usually live with people of similar racial or ethnic backgrounds?

Where is Yale University?

Where is South Central Community College?

Where is Southern Connecticut College?

Where is the Olin Factory?

What is the differences in life style when you live in New Haven rather than a suburban town (like Bethany, Orange, Branford)?

Immigration: Why, Where, and When?

Goals

1. To have the students sit together and discuss the two movies they have just viewed.
2. To give students an understanding of where immigrants came from and why they came.
3. To give students an understanding of the kinds of work immigrants got when they first arrived and how that effected their assimilation into American culture and work.

Procedure The class sits in a circle. The questions below are the focal points of the discussion though the flow of the discussion should follow the interests and comments of the students.

1. What is an immigrant?
2. Did immigrants come to the U.S. voluntarily?
3. What is the difference between a slave and an immigrant?
4. Where did the immigrants come from? Why and when did they come?
Italians, Irish, Jews, WASPs, Puerto Ricans, Cubans, Blacks.
5. Where did they settle and why?
6. What was the American economy like at these periods? 1900, 1848, 1890, 1920, 1930, 1950, 1980.
7. What kinds of jobs did the immigrants get when they arrived? Why?

Materials

1. *The Immigrant Experience : The Long, Long Journey* (ACES)
2. *Immigration in America* (ACES)

The Immigrant in America

Goals

1. To have students discuss three movies about minority groups.
2. To give students a feel for the historical impact of ethnic differences on the lives of ethnic minorities.

Procedure The class sits in a circle. The questions below are the focal points of the discussion though the flow of the discussion should follow the interests and comments of the students.

1. What makes an immigrant different when he arrives?
2. What is the impact of not speaking a country's language?
3. Why would ethnic groups choose to live together?
4. What is the melting pot theory of American History?

5. How does the fact that ethnic groups stick together effect getting jobs in America?
6. What do you think people have to do if they want to assimilate into the main stream of American life?

Materials

1. *Jews in America* (Anti-defamation League)
2. *Italians in America* (Anti-defamation League)
3. *Island in America* (Anti-defamation League)

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Rubin, Lilian, *Worlds of Pain : Life in the Working Class Family* .

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Zinn, Howard, *A People's History of the United States* . Cambridge, Mass.: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1980.

Source Locations for Films

ACES Film Library (Area Cooperative Educational Services) 185 Damascus Road, Branford, Conn. 06405.
Phone: 488-5722.

ACTWU Public Relations Department (Amalgamated Clothing Workers Union) 15 Union Square, New York, N.Y. 10003. Phone: 1-800-221-8202.

Anti-Defamation League of B'nai Brith, 1162 Chapel Street, New Haven, Conn. 06511. Phone: 787-4281.

New Haven Board of Education, Department of Audio-Visual Education, Winchester School, 209 Dixwell Ave., New Haven, Conn. 06511.

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