



GLOSSARY

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A -- B

Academic - Wims appears to use this word in the sense of being a neutral party, acting on behalf of others and with no personal stake in the events she describes, and perhaps to indicate that she is not African American herself. [8.5]

AFL -- The American Federation of Labor was a federation of unions that largely represented skilled, craft workers who were white and male. There were a few industrial unions within the AFL, such as the United Mine Workers, but as a general rule, the AFL resisted organizing immigrants, African Americans, and women who worked in industrial settings. [8.4]; **American Federation of Labor (AFL)** -- a national association of labor unions first organized in 1886 and operating as the largest union federation during the period that the White Rats existed. [7.5] A federation of unions that organized skilled labor (craft unions), initially under the leadership of Samuel Gompers beginning in 1886. The AFL merged with the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) in 1955. [8.6]

American Federation of Teachers -- One of two major teacher unions in the United States; the other was the National Education Association, or NEA. Unlike the NEA, which styled itself a professional association and did not organize workers or bargain for contracts until the 1970s, the AFT was founded, in Chicago in 1916, as a union for teachers. The union struggled to win contracts until the post-WWII era, when many cities changed their laws to allow teacher unions to bargain collectively. Today, the AFT is primarily a union of urban teachers, totaling nearly 1.7 million members. [9.1]

Bituminous coal – This coal is softer than anthracite coal, and more abundant in the United States and more commonly used. It is used to fire power plants for industrial uses, including making coke for iron and steel production. It is highly combustible and dangerous to mine. [7.1]

Blacklist – Employer generated list of union activists shared among employers to prevent the employment of unionists. [7.1]

C -- D

Cadillac Square -- Named after the French founder of the city of Detroit, Cadillac Square was an enormous intersection at the heart of downtown Detroit. In the early 19th century it was the site of the city hall and city market. In the 1930s and 1940s it was the key site for large public gatherings, and especially for labor rallies and protests. In recognition of its importance as the site of many workers' rights struggles, Democratic presidents and presidential candidates from Harry Truman to Lyndon Johnson chose Cadillac Square to deliver Labor Day speeches and/or to launch their presidential campaigns. [8.1]

Career Ladder -- A program of on-the-job training that allows entry-level workers with limited formal educational experience to get their educations and move up to “professional” status (in this case, becoming teachers) while continuing to work. Particularly valuable for “nontraditional” students who cannot afford to take time off to go to school. [9.1]

- Car fares** – Money for electric streetcars or trolleys, new forms of urban mass transit that overtook horse-drawn wagons and omni-buses in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. [7.4]
- Charles Hamilton Houston** – (1895–1950) Civil Rights attorney who focused on race, labor, and the law using a three pronged strategy, involving the workplace, courts, and politics, to end inequality in the United States. Beginning in the 1930s, Houston worked as the first legal counsel for the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). [8.6]
- Chicago Teachers Federation (CTF)**—Organized in 1897, the CTF was the nation’s first teacher union. It became a charter member of the nation’s longest-lasting teacher union, the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), in 1916. [7.2]
- Child labor** – Survival for working-class families often required children to begin work in mines, fields, and factories at a young age. Young boys often delivered the purchases made by consumers, while girls worked at the counters, stockrooms, and cafeterias of department stores. [7.4]
- CIO** --The Committee for Industrial Organizations was a newly formed labor federation in 1936 that sponsored the organization of unions in mass production industries among diverse groups of low paid, unskilled workers. In 1938 it changed its name to the Congress of Industrial Organizations. In 1955 it merged with the AFL to form the AFL-CIO. [8.4] Also see Congress of Industrial Organizations, below.
- Citizens’ Committee** -- The Citizens’ Committee on Public Expenditures, which was one of the organizations made up of business leaders that focused on decreasing spending on public education. [8.3]
- Collective bargaining** – The process of creating a legally binding contract between employers and their employees that governs the terms and conditions of employment. [7.1]; **Collective Bargaining** -- Collective bargaining refers to the formal process between employers and union representatives of negotiating the terms and conditions of employment and agreeing to them in the form of a contract. [8.4]; **Collective Bargaining** -- The government-regulated process by which employers and unions sit down together to shape a union contract. [9.1]
- Commissary** - A store on the plantation where workers could purchase goods. Many plantation owners operated these as lucrative businesses that provided additional ways to cheat workers out of their earnings. Prices were often higher than were charged elsewhere, as were interest rates that were added to the cost of goods purchased on credit.
- Commission** -- a percentage-based fee withheld from each performer’s paycheck and paid to vaudeville managers. [7.5]
- Communism** -- In this case, it refers to the dictatorship of the Soviet Union in which the government controlled the society and owned its resources. The teachers’ opponents accused the protesting teachers of being communists. [8.3]
- Communist Party (USA)** -- The Communist Party (USA) was a branch of the international Communist Party. The party in the United States formed in 1919, in the aftermath of the Bolshevik Revolution in the Soviet Union. In the 1930s its members focused on organizing against unemployment, for labor unions, and to end racial discrimination. [8.4]
- Company houses** – This refers to housing provided by companies to their employees for a rent deducted from their pay. [7.1]
- Company Union** -- a workplace union controlled by the employer rather than existing as an independent organization controlled by the workers. [7.5]
- Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO)** - A labor organization formed in the 1930s when a group of industrial unions broke away from the American Federation of Labor and began encouraging previously neglected constituencies of unskilled workers (frequently African Americans, women, and immigrants) to

join the labor movement. [8.5] Organized workers engaged in mass production and industrial work, initially founded by John L. Lewis in 1935 as a rival to the AFL. The CIO merged with the AFL in 1955. [8.6]

Craftsmen and Tradesmen -- those who earn their livelihood directly through production of commodities (craftsmen) or through transporting, buying or selling of commodities (tradesmen). [3.1]

The dole -- government money paid to people in need, often to unemployed people and/or people with disabilities. [8.2]

E -- F

Economize -- use money carefully and sparingly. [8.3]

Enfranchisement – Gaining the right to vote. [7.3]

Esq. -- esquire. At the time, this was an honorific, indicating the status of a gentleman, particularly an educated professional man (eg. a lawyer, judge, physician, wealthy merchant). [3.1]

Extra-judicial – Occurring outside the legal boundaries of the law. [8.6]

Fat back – a cut of pork that is particularly fatty and inexpensive. [7.1]

Foremen—Supervisors who directly oversaw workers in the factory. [7.3]

Fringe Benefits -- Benefits that are not wages; in this case, health and dental care and access to the “Career Ladder” program. [9.1]

G -- H

Garment industry – Collection of enterprises (businesses) that manufacture clothing. [7.3]

Gate Four -- one of the main entrance gates to the Ford Motor Company’s factory in Dearborn, Michigan. During the UAW’s organizing efforts in 1937, two well-known labor leaders who were standing outside Gate 4 were severely beaten by Ford “goons” (Ford Service Department employees). The beating attracted national headlines. [8.1]

Gilded Age—A term coined by the writer Mark Twain, the “Gilded Age” refers to the era between the Civil War and the end of the nineteenth century when a handful of wealthy Americans accrued massive fortunes and increased their power in both politics and in the economy. [7.2]; **Gilded Age (1870s-1900)** – a period of rapid industrial and business growth characterized by extreme economic inequality and political corruption. [7.4]

Guild -- association of workmen skilled in the same craft or trade. American guilds in the late 18th century were descendants of the medieval guilds. At the time of this procession, the republican spirit and commercial opportunities were breaking down the ability of guilds to monopolize entry into their crafts and to dictate the contractual relations of apprentices, journeymen and masters. [3.1]

Henry Ford -- founder and chief executive of the Ford Motor Company (1903-1945). [8.1]

Houston, Charles Hamilton – See Charles Hamilton Houston, above

Hull House -- Jane Addams and Ellen Gates Starr founded Hull House in Chicago’s near west side immigrant neighborhood in 1889. It was the first settlement house in the United States, offering social, educational, health and art programs to the low-income and immigrant people living in the neighborhood. [8.4]

I -- J

Incorrigible --can’t be corrected or changed. [8.2]

International Labor Defense - the legal arm of the Communist Party in the United States. [8.6]

Joan of Arc --a young peasant woman who, believing she was on a mission from God, led French soldiers against the invading English armies in 14th century Europe. [8.3]

Journeyman -- a laborer who had completed his apprenticeship, practicing his craft under the supervision of a master as he further developed his skills and saved money to open his own shop as a master. Journeymen received cash wages for their work. At this time, many journeymen also traveled, plying their craft in various places to improve their skills and experience. [3.1]

***The Jungle* (1906)**—A novel written by Upton Sinclair, *The Jungle* sought to tell the story of the immiseration of working class people such the fictional Lithuanian immigrant family that serves as the book's protagonists. [7.2]

K -- L

Kid mules – Kidskin (kid) is a type of soft, thin leather. Mules are a style of shoe without a back. [7.4]

“labor question”—The “labor question” – who will do the work and under what political and economic conditions – was the source of growing conflict between labor and capital during the Gilded Age and Progressive Era. The era was defined by violent and existential conflict between labor unions and employers—such as Andrew Carnegie and John D. Rockefeller—willing to use violent methods to prevent workers from organizing for better wages, safer conditions, and more job security. [7.2]

LaFollette Committee -- The LaFollette Civil Liberties Committee was formally constituted as the US Senate Committee on Education and Labor's subcommittee on violations of free speech and rights of labor. The subcommittee held hearings and published reports between 1936 and 1941 documenting industrial espionage, private police agencies, and other employer methods to break strikes and disrupt union activities. The committee was led by Robert M. LaFollette, Jr., a Senator from Wisconsin. [8.4]

Learners—Unskilled workers yet to be taught how to use the machines and other work processes in a garment factory. [7.3]

Legislature at Albany—Albany, New York was where the New York state legislature met. [7.3]

Little Steel -- The group of small steel companies that refused to recognize their workers' rights to unionize despite the 1937 Supreme Court ruling that found the Wagner Act constitutional. Little Steel companies included Republic Steel, Bethlehem Steel, Inland, Youngstown Sheet and Tube, National, and American Rolling Mill. [8.4]

Lower East Side—Densely populated immigrant neighborhood in New York City. [7.3]

M -- N

Managerial Control -- the practice of management setting work and performance standards, measuring performance, and making changes to working conditions to increase productivity and profit without input from workers and often without regard for workers' well-being. [7.5]

Master -- independent artisan, also known at the time as “mechanics.” Masters were not only highly skilled at their craft or trade, but also teachers to the apprentices and journeymen in their employ, and businessmen engaged in buying and selling raw materials and finished goods. [3.1]

Memoir -- a nonfiction account from the author's own knowledge and memories. [7.5]

Messrs. -- plural form of Mister or Mr. At the time, this was an honorific, indicating that the man was independent (not a slave or servant) and was respected in the community. [3.1]

Monologist – a performance artist who gives staged readings of written works. [7.5]

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) – Founded in 1909, the NAACP is the largest and longest established organization to advocate for civil rights in many areas including the law, education, economics and society writ large. It was, and is, involved in many of the historic moments in modern US history. [8.6]

National Consumers' League – a group of primarily middle-class women formed the organization in the late 1800s to organize female shoppers to improve conditions for workers. [7.4]

National Education Association (NEA)—Originally formed in 1857 (as the National Teachers Association) the NEA was an organization made up of educators at all levels for much of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Pushed by its members and by the successes of the more militant AFT in the 1960s, the NEA became a union and is now the single largest union in the United States. [7.2]

National Labor Relations Act (aka Wagner Act) -- This federal Law, passed in 1935 and ruled constitutional by the Supreme Court in 1937, recognized private sector workers' right to collective bargaining. It established a presidentially appointed National Labor Relations Board with the authority to certify union elections and outlaw anti-union employer activity as unfair labor practices. [8.4]

New River Coal Field – Sprawling Raleigh and Lafayette Counties in West Virginia, the New River Coal Field was home to over sixty coal mining towns in the early twentieth century. [7.1]

O -- P

Octopus owners – nickname given to elite industrialists, who devoured and controlled everything in their path. These businessmen were also regularly called “robber barons” as a critique of the unscrupulous measures they took to increase their wealth. [7.4]

One dollar a hundred - One dollar per one hundred pounds of cotton picked. Workers could generally pick between one hundred and two hundred pounds of cotton per day. For a week's work, Tom Alexander owed the men far more than the two dollars each that he paid them. [8.5]

Packers -- bosses and owners of meat-packing plants. [8.3]

Paddy Wagons -- The term “paddy wagons” refer to police vans and likely got their names from the prejudices about the Irish (derogatively referred to as “paddies”) who dominated police departments in New York and Chicago in the late nineteenth century. There is also the possibility that their name came from the fact that many of those arrested at the time were Irish. [8.4]

Paramount newsreel -- Beginning in 1927, Paramount News distributed two reels of news to theaters across the country each week. The distribution lasted until 1957 when television made it obsolete. [8.4]

Paraprofessional --Also known as teacher aides, auxiliary teachers, education support professionals (ESPs) or “paras,” these educators were hired locally - primarily from among the mothers of schoolchildren - in the 1960s. They were originally tasked with improving instruction in classrooms by working alongside the teacher and working with parents and teachers to bridge gaps between schools and communities. Today, “paras” perform a wide range of functions in schools, including individual support for students in special and bilingual programs, classroom assistance, and parent outreach. [9.1]

Parquet – a type of wooden flooring typically arranged in a geometric pattern, like a square. [7.4]

Patronage --a system in which politicians distribute money and/or jobs to loyal political supporters. [8.2] [8.3]

Peace officer - A law enforcement official (e.g., sheriff, police officer).[8.5]

Philanthropy – Donating large sums of money to a cause considered important and worthy by the donor, such as libraries, hospitals, and museums. Rather than paying workers well or paying taxes toward public services, the wealthy often gave money to charity to improve their image. [7.4]

Picket Line -- A union strategy to stand outside a place of employment to protest some anti-worker action of the employer. During the 1930s, mass picketing brought large numbers of strikers to factory gates to keep strike breakers from entering the factory. [8.4]

Plessy v. Ferguson – The 1896 Supreme Court case that ruled that “separate but equal” was the law of the land. The Court declared that segregation, what the Court termed “separate but equal,” did not violate the “equal protection” clause of the Fourteenth Amendment. [8.6]

President’s Coal Conference – On July 1, President Harding called a meeting in Washington, D.C. for representatives of the United Mine Workers and the coal operators to discuss conditions that would end the ongoing strike. The conference ended without results. Harding proposed a plan for production to continue immediately and that a government commission investigate conditions and decide how the conflict should be resolved. Coal operators agreed, but the UMWA refused. The strike ended in August of 1922. In September of 1922 Congress passed a bill creating a Coal Commission to investigate the coal industry. The President appointed seven men to the commission and gave them eleven months to complete their investigation. [7.1]

Procession -- parade. It was very common in 18th and 19th century parades for crafts and trades to march in their artisanal groups dressed in the regalia of their craft with banners, as described in this document. [3.1]

Pogroms – Organized massacres of particular ethnic groups. In this case, the terms refers to Tsarist Russian government sanctioned, community-wide attacks against Russian Jews. Between 1880-1924 millions of Jews fleeing pogroms and repression in Russia and Eastern European immigrated to the United States. [7.3]

Progressive Era—There is a lack of scholarly consensus on what defines the Progressive Era, but generally speaking the Progressive Era refers to the era in US History from around 1890-1917, in which middle-class and some working-class reformers sought to use government action to solve mounting social problems brought on by the Gilded Age, including wealth inequality, poor labor conditions, and urban slums. [7.2]; **Progressive Era (1890s-1920)** – period of social reform concerned with issues such as poor working and living conditions, political corruption, women’s rights, and child labor. [7.4]

Progressive reform—a political movement that aimed to use public policy at the local, state, and federal level as a counterbalance to the power of corporations on behalf of workers and consumers. [7.3]

Q -- R

raison d’être -- the reason something or someone exists. In this case, the author is saying that the main reason Chicago’s Board of Education exists is to grant “fat contracts.” [8.3]

Rations - A term that, in this context, was carried over from slavery, referring to food and other necessities that plantation owners provided to their workers. [8.5]

Remunerative -- well-paying. [9.1]

Rescue – a charitable space meant to provide temporary aid to the poor, including temporary housing for unwed pregnant women, women escaping prostitution, and others with perceived moral failings. [7.4]

Republic Steel -- Republic Steel was one of the country’s leading producers of steel coil and bar and one of the companies that made up Little Steel. At the time of the Memorial Day massacre, Thomas Girdler led Republic Steel and was chosen as Little Steel’s spokesperson, giving Republic Steel a large profile in the 1937 conflict. [8.4]

Restraint of Trade -- Restraint of trade is an activity that prevents a business from engaging in economic activity. Employers historically used the argument that union activity prevented free competition in business and therefore represented a restraint of trade. Even though the 1914 Clayton Act stated that labor unions

were not “illegal combinations or conspiracies in restraint of trade,” anti-union employers continued to make the claim that they were. [8.4]

S -- T

Sam’s Place -- Sam’s Place was a diner used by SWOC as an informal union meeting space. It was where the Memorial Day march began and where injured workers were given first aid and triaged in the aftermath of the violence. [8.4]

Scab (aka strikebreaker) -- A person who works for an employer during a labor strike. [8.4]

Scientific Management -- a management style that emerged in the late nineteenth century that uses heavy managerial control to create more productive and profitable workforces and workflows. [7.5]

Scottsboro Boys – Nine young black men who were falsely arrested, charged, and convicted of rape in the town of Scottsboro, Alabama in 1931. Their personal tragedy lingered into the 1970’s, impacting the legal, cultural, and political, history of the United States, including two Supreme Court Cases, *Powell v. Alabama* (1932), and *Norris v. Alabama* (1935). [8.6]

Shirtwaist—Version of a men’s shirt tailored for women; a popular fashion worn by middle- and upper-class women in the early 20th century. [7.3]

Single-Circuit Bookings -- a dominant practice in Vaudeville, where individually-owned theaters acted as a chain for the purpose of booking acts and shows for tours, rather than theaters in different locations booking shows individually. [7.5]

Standard -- flag. A standard is a particular type of flag, decorated with emblems, colors, and/or words that symbolize and identify a specific group, such as the crafts and trades in this document. [3.1]

The Survey Journal – Edited by progressive reformer, Paul Kellogg, from 1912 to 1952, the magazine was the most important publication of the social work profession and for social reform workers. [7.1]

Sweated – those who work in sweatshops [7.4]

Sweatshops – workplaces (often factories, but sometimes home workshops) with poor wages, long hours, dangerous and unsanitary conditions, and no union representation. [7.4]

SWOC -- The Steel Workers’ Organizing Committee was the organization created by the CIO, and bankrolled by the United Mine Workers, to lead the effort to unionize workers in the country’s steel mills. [8.4]

Syndicate -- individuals who work together for a common purpose. [7.5]

Tax-anticipation warrants --basically a voucher or an “IOU,” also known as scrip. Because the Board of Education had little actual money, it sometimes paid teachers in these “tax-anticipation warrants” (or simply “warrants”), since they represented the money the Board of Education anticipated it would receive after Chicago citizens could once again afford to pay their taxes. [8.2]

Tenement housing – Apartments in urban areas that were overly crowded, unsanitary, and dangerous. [7.4]

To treat – This term refers to an exchange of sex (by the woman) for food, clothing, a night out or a bed for the night (from a man). [7.4]

Tonneau – the part of an automobile without a roof or cover. In modern usage, this typically refers to the cargo area of a pickup truck or a convertible. In this poem, it refers to Santa’s sleigh. [7.4]

The Triangle—Triangle Shirtwaist factory was a modern shirtwaist factory in Greenwich Village, a neighborhood in New York City, where 146 workers, mostly women and girls, were killed in an infamous fire in 1911. [7.3]

U -- V

UAW-CIO -- UAW is the acronym for the United Auto Workers union. CIO is the acronym for the Congress of Industrial Organizations. The CIO was formed in 1936 as the result of a split within the American Federation of Labor [AFL] over organizing strategy. The UAW left the AFL to become one of the first CIO-affiliated unions. [8.1]

UAW stamp -- see union label, below. [8.1]

Union Square -- a theatre in Manhattan, New York that housed vaudeville shows from the Keith-Albee circuit. [7.5]

United Federation of Teachers [UFT] -- New York City's teachers union, created in 1960 through the "uniting" of several smaller teacher organizations. The UFT won their first contract in 1962, and has been the largest local union of the American Federation of Teachers since. The union today represents 185,000 members, including teachers, paras, other school workers, and school and hospital nurses. [9.1]

United Mine Workers of America – Main labor organization committed to unionizing coal miners in West Virginia. [7.1]; **United Mine Workers** -- The United Mine Workers was an industrial union led by John L. Lewis that initiated the break with the AFL and the formation of the CIO. The UMW financed the earliest stages of CIO organizing campaigns and volunteered some of its most effective union organizers to assist in the drive to establish industrial unions across the country. [8.4]

Union label --the image of a union logo that is affixed on a tag or stamped into a product; the union logo verifies that the product was made by workers whose work conditions were protected by a contract that was collectively bargained between the workers' union and their employer. [8.1]

Union Recognition -- Union recognition happens when an employer accepts its workers' request to be represented by a union in negotiations over the terms and conditions of their employment. In the period before the Wagner Act, workers expressed their desire for union representation through parleys with their employer and, if refused, through strikes and pickets. The workers "won" when employers agreed to meet with union representatives chosen by the workers to bargain their employment contract. After the Wagner Act and the creation of the National Labor Relations Board, workers generally engaged in a card drive campaign. Signed cards indicated workers' desire to have union representation. When enough cards were signed, the federal NLRB held a union representation election. In all cases, union recognition signified an employer's formal acceptance of their workers' demand to be represented by a union in contract negotiations. [8.4]

Vaudeville -- a live, staged variety entertainment show that was popular in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. [7.5]

Vaudeville monopoly -- the syndicate formed by vaudeville theater managers created a near monopoly by the turn of the twentieth century. [7.5]

W – X

Wagner Act – see National Labor Relations Act, above.

War on Poverty -- A "war" declared by President Lyndon Johnson in 1964 and fought with a series of federally-funded programs, most notably through the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, which created the Office of Economic Opportunity, or OEO, which in turn administered the Community Action Program (CAP), a series of programs aimed at funding locally-led efforts to combat poverty through the "maximum feasible participation" of poor Americans. Funding and support dwindled due to military commitments in Vietnam and rising political backlash, and President Richard Nixon declared the war over in 1973, with the shuttering of the OEO. [9.1]

Welfare -- A program of cash assistance created in the New Deal (1930s) and originally paid as “aid to dependent children” (ADC) living without a breadwinning male head of household. Renamed “Aid to Families with Dependent Children” (AFDC) in the 1960s, the program expanded rapidly as civil rights organizers pushed cities to get rid of racist and exclusionary policies and support black families. Often described as “welfare,” the program faced increasing attacks by politicians in the 1970s and 1980s, and was eventually repealed in 1996 under President Bill Clinton. [9.1]

Y -- Z