# Gender and Labor History

## The nineteenth-century legacy

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All disciplines and sub-disciplines are defined through a series of inclusions and exclusions.[1] They are based on specific assumptions and conventions that delineate their appropriate objects and methods of study.[2] Historians, like scholars in other fields, including the so-called "natural sciences", do not simply record some objective reality that exists independently of their taken-for-granted ideas about the nature of that reality.[3] Rather, their decisions as to which subjects and events will be objects of study and how they will be conceptualized are shaped both by widely accepted philosophical tenets and common-sense understandings of the nature of human society.

Foundational to the dominant traditions of labor history, I will argue, has been the distinction between public and private as it was delineated in social and political theory, and as it was culturally and socially constructed during the nineteenth century. Thoroughly imbricated in the public–private dichotomy were understandings about the different capacities and rights of men and women. The consequence of these distinctions for history was a limited vision of who and what counts as historically interesting and important.[4] Despite the differences between earlier institutional and political labor history, and "new labor history" conceptualized

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[1] Michele Barrett, "Words and Things: Materialism and Method in Contemporary Feminist Analysis", in *Destabilizing Theory: Contemporary Feminist Debates*, edited by Michele Barrett and Anne Phillips (Stanford University Press, 1992), p. 212.

[2] Michel Foucault maintains that through discursive rules, disciplines create their objects of analysis. See *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, translated by A.M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Harper Colophon, 1972); *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences* (New York: Vintage, 1973).

[3] See Sandra Harding, *The Science Question in Feminism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986).

[4] In an important essay, Leonore Davidoff argues that a series of concepts, based on gendered assumptions, came to dominate sociology and history influenced by sociological theory. See " 'Adam Spoke First and Named the Orders of the World': Masculine and Feminine Domains in History and Sociology", in *The Politics of Everyday Life: Continuity and Change in Work, Labour and the Family*, edited by H. Corr and L. Jamieson (London: Macmillan, 1990), pp. 229–255. See also Susan Kingsley Kent, *Sex and Suffrage in Britain, 1860–1914*, (Princeton University Press, 1987), p. 5. As Richard Price notes: "Labour history has always privileged those who organized for and sought power in the public realm, be it industry or politics". See "The Future of British Labour History", *International Review of Social History* 36 (1991), pp. 249–260, esp. p. 252.

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as the study of working-class formation, both share this heritage.[5] In short, the public–private dichotomy, with its deeply gendered associations, forms a kind of "deep structure" of labor-history formation.

Most histories of labor and class formation have been centered on productive relations, traditionally defined.[6] The subjects of working-class history have mainly been male artisans and skilled workers.[7] The historical narratives concern how these workers have created formal organizations and working-class movements to press their interests; how various changes in the nature of their work (especially proletarianization and deskilling) have contributed to their politicization; and why these workers have not consistently focused their political energies on changing the production relations in which they were subordinated participants.[8] Moreover, the fount of resistance has been depicted to be "at the point of production".[9]

[5] This is the case, as well, with the so-called "new institutionalism" advocated in British labor history by Jonathan Zeitlin. See: " 'Rank and Filism' in British Labour History: A Critique", *International Review of Social History* 34 (1989), pp. 42–61, and the separate critiques by Richard Price and James E. Cronin, *International Review of Social History* 34 (1989), pp. 62–88. For the United States, see David Brody, "The Old Labour History and the New: In Search of an American Working Class", *Labor History* 20 (1979), pp. 111–126; Howard Kimeldorf, "Bringing Unions Back In (Or Why We Need a New Old Labor History)", and comments by Michael Kazin, Alice Kessler-Harris, David Montgomery, Bruce Nelson, Daniel Nelson and reply by Howard Kimmeldorf, *Labor History* 32 (1991), pp. 91–129.

[6] Mari Jo Buhle, "Gender and Labor History", in *Perspectives on American Labor History: The Problems of Synthesis*, edited by J. Carroll Moody and Alice Kessler-Harris (DeKalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 1989), p. 67.

[7] Leon Fink, "Looking Backward: Reflections on Workers' Culture and Certain Conceptual Dilemmas within Labor History", in J. Carroll Moody and Alice Kessler-Harris, *Perspectives on American Labor History*, pp. 13–14, 20; Michelle Perrot, "On the Formation of the French Working Class", in *Working Class Formation: Nineteenth-Century Patterns in Western Europe and the United States*, edited by Ira Katznelson and Aristide R. Zolberg (Princeton University Press, 1986), pp. 71–110, esp. pp. 71–83; William H. Sewell, Jr., "Artisans, Factory Workers, and the Formation of the French Working Class, 1789–1948", in *Working-Class Formation*, pp. 45–70; Friedrich Lenger, "Beyond Exceptionalism: Notes on the Artisanal Phase of the Labour Movement in France, England, Germany and the United States", *International Review of Social History* 36 (1991) pp. 1–23. For a critique see Jacques Rancière, "The Myth of the Artisan", and responses by William H. Sewell, Jr., and Christopher J. Johnson, *International Labor and Working Class History* 24 (Fall 1983), pp. 1–47, and responses by Edgar Leon Newman and Nicholas Papayanis, and the reply by Jacques Ranciere, *International Labor and Working Class History* 25 (Spring 1984), pp. 37–46. For a study that debunks the idea of an ideal preindustrial artisanal culture, see Michael Sonenscher, *Work and Wages: Natural Law, Politics and the Eighteenth-Century French Trades* (Cambridge University Press, 1989).

[8] For an overview that emphasizes the common themes in European and American labor history, see Leon Fink, "Looking Backward".

[9] For an excellent overview, see Richard Price, "The Future of British Labour History". As several commentators have noted, the presence of a Marxist teleology is lurking within much working-class history, whether revisionist or not. See Richard Price, "The Future of British Labour History", p. 254; Ira Karznelson, "Working-Class Formation: Constructing Cases and Comparisons", in *Working-Class Formation*, pp. 3–46, esp. pp. 3–15; Neville Kirk, "In

Central to these narratives are assumptions about what kinds of contention are important to class dynamics. Class-conscious action has often been conceptualized as rationally directed to altering the relations of production. Only resistance that appears to be directed toward the goals of workers as a collectivity counts as political, and actions undertaken in the service of family needs or for "immediate gains" are secondary to the story of history.[10]

Feminist labor historians have attempted to write women into these narratives, and to show that the social and cultural construction of gender difference has been a core feature of industrial capitalism. Yet the dominant paradigms in labor history continue to be reproduced as though neither women nor gender were particularly relevant. As a consequence, numerous feminist scholars have maintained that incorporating women workers and integrating gender into historical studies of labor and class mandate a complete revision in the conceptual frameworks of the field.[11]

To make gender a core analytical concept in labor history, we need to begin by rethinking and then revising the foundational assumptions of the discipline. In this essay I hope to make a contribution to this project by exploring the origins of deeply rooted assumptions about gender and the nature of public and private life in the dominant traditions of labor history.

In what follows I will argue that while the distinction between public and private with its associated gender means has been a significant feature of Western thought since the Greeks, how it was understood and elaborated both in Enlightenment thought and in Marxian social theory influenced the development of the social sciences generally, and labor

Defence of Class, A Critique of Recent Revisionist Writing upon the Nineteenth-Century English Working Class", *International Review of Social History* 32 (1987), p. 39. For a biting critique linked to the question of "exceptionalisms", see Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Rethinking Working-Class History, Bengal 1890–1914* (Princeton University Press, 1989), pp. 219–230.

[10] Joan W. Scott reveals how some of these themes are central to E.P. Thompson's *The Making of the English Working Class* in *Gender and the Politics of History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988), Chapter 4. For a critique of Scott's reading of Thompson, see Marc W. Steinberg, "The Re-making of the English Working Class", *Theory and Society* 20 (1991), pp. 173–197.

[11] See Sally Alexander, "Women, Class and Sexual Difference", *History Workshop* 17 (1984), pp. 125–149; Sally Alexander, Anna Davin, and Eve Hostettler, "Labouring Women: A Reply to Eric Hobsbawm", *History Workshop* 8 (Autumn 1979), pp. 174–181; Ava Baron, "Gender and Labor History: Learning from the Past, Looking to the Future", in *Work Engendered: Toward a New History of American Labor*, edited by Ava Baron (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), pp. 1–46; Kathleen Canning, "Gender and the Politics of Class Formation: Rethinking German Labor History", *American Historical Renew* 97, 3 (June 1992), pp. 736–768; Anna Davin, "Feminism and Labour History", in *People's History and Socialist Theory*, edited by Raphael Samuel (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981), pp. 176–181; Alice Kessler-Harris, "A New Agenda for American Labor History: A Gendered Analysis and the Question of Class", in *Perspectives on American Labor History*, pp. 217–234. Joan W. Scott broke new ground in her call to arms to make gender a central category of historical analysis in her important book, *Gender and the Politics of History* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1988).

history in particular.[12] Then I will suggest that both the nineteenth-century ideological construction of the private sphere as a feminine domain devoid of political significance, and the constitution of the emerging bourgeois and working-class public spheres as masculine realms of consequential action shaped the boundaries drawn around the subject matter of the field.[13] Finally, I will consider the historiographic consequences of these boundary definitions and will suggest how historians might begin to redraw them in order to incorporate women workers and gender into labor's history.

Despite major differences in approaches to questions of economy and politics in the main paradigms of liberalism and Marxism, both treat the public/private as gendered oppositions. In Enlightenment thought, according to Carole Pateman,

> The family is based on natural ties of sentiment and blood and on the sexually ascribed status of wife and husband (mother and father). Participation in the public sphere is governed by universal, impersonal and conventional criteria of achievement, interests, right, equality and property – liberal criteria, applicable only to men.[14]

The subject of Enlightenment political and moral philosophy was not the adult human person, but the male head of household.[15]

[12] See Susan Moller Okin, *Women in Western Political Thought* (Princeton University Press, 1979). Nancy Fraser examines the way unrecognized assumptions about gender are embedded in the ideas of Jurgen Habermas. See *Unruly Practices: Power, Discourse and Gender in Contemporary Social Theory* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), Chapter 6. Fraser specifically critiques his concept of the public sphere and its necessary separation from the private sphere in "Rethinking the Public Sphere: A Contribution to the Critique of Actually Existing Democracy", in *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, edited by Craig Calhoun (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1992), pp. 109–142.

[13] See Geoff Eley's important discussion of gender and the construction of the public sphere in nineteenth-century Europe to which some of my ideas about the public sphere are indebted, "Nations, Publics, and Political Cultures: Placing Habermas in the Nineteenth Century", in *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, edited by Craig Calhoun (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1992), pp. 289–339, esp. pp. 309–319. The public–private distinction has been a significant organizing framework for women's historians, although critiques of the idea of separate spheres have also characterized feminist scholarship. For an excellent overview, see Linda Kerber, "Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Woman's Place: The Rhetoric of Women's History", *Journal of American History* 75 (1988) pp. 9–39. Also see Susan M. Reverby and Dorothy O. Helly, "Introduction: Converging on History", in *Gendered Domains: Rethinking Public and Private in Women's History. Essays from the Seventh Berkshire Conference on the History of Women* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992), pp. 1–26, and the essays in that volume.

[14] Carole Pateman, "Feminist Critiques of the Public/Private Dichotomy", in *The Disorder of Women* (Stanford University Press, 1989), p. 121. Pateman's work demonstrates that the liberal concept of "the individual", while presented as a universal construct, is in fact, particular – masculine. See "The Fraternal Social Contract", in *The Disorder of Women*, pp. 33–57, and her *Social Contract* (Stanford University Press, 1988).

[15] Catherine Hall, "Private Persons versus Public Someones: Class, Gender and Politics in England, 1780–1850", in *White, Male and Middle Class: Explorations in Feminism and History* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1992), p. 155.

Ironically, although Marx and Engels were critical of both liberal political theory and the denigration of the private or domestic sphere under capitalism, they also assumed the existence of dichotomous spheres and linked the domestic sphere with women, and the public sphere with men. Engels argued that under capitalism in the "single monogamous family [ . . . ] household management lost its public character [ . . . ] It became a private service".[16] As Alison Jaggar has argued, Engels never really defines the difference in social relationships that constitutes public and private work. "He does not explain, for instance, why a man should not be described as engaged in 'private service' for his feudal lord or even for an individual capitalist".[17] Although Engels recognizes that the sexual division of labor in the household was a product of social arrangements, he still described the situation in which women went to work in factories and men stayed at home as depriving "the husband of his manhood and the wife of all womanly qualities".[18] Engels used such images of "unnatural" gender roles as a powerful condemnation of capitalism.[19]

Marx built his concept of class on a view of the "economic" as restricted to the production of food and objects.[20] What this does, of course, is to situate the social relations of reproduction outside of class. As Linda Nicholson has written, "When 'productive' activities [ . . . ] come to constitute the world of change and dynamism then activities of 'reproduction' become viewed as either the brute, physiological and nonhistorical aspects of human existence or as by-products of changes in the economy".[21] For many scholars influenced by Marx, the relations which define specific forms of the family (the private sphere) are determined by the pmode of production (conceptualized as being in the public sphere).[22] The "motor" of history is located in the public sphere.

[16] Friedrich Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, edited by Eleanor Burke Leacock (New York, Monthly Review Press, 1992), p. 137.

[17] Alison Jagger, *Feminist Politics and Human Nature* (Totowa, NJ: Rowman and Allenheld, 1983), p. 145.

[18] Friedrich Engels, *The Condition of the Working Class in England*, translated and edited by W.O. Henderson and W.H. Chaloner (Stanford University Press, 1958), p. 164.

[19] Linda Kerber, "Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Woman's Place", p. 13. Also see the discussion of Engels by Eli Zaretsky, *Capitalism, The Family, & Personal Life* (New York: Harper and Row, 1976), pp. 90–97.

[20] For a thorough discussion of the implications of Marx's work for understanding gender relations, see Linda Nicholson, "Feminism and Marx: Integrating Kinship with the Economic", in *Feminism as Critique*, edited by Seyla Benhabib and Drucilla Cornell (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987), pp. 16–30. Also see the important essay by Harold Benenson, "Victorian Sexual Ideology and Marx's Theory of the Working Class", *International Labor and Working Class History* 25 (1983), pp. 1–23.

[21] Linda Nicholson, "Feminism and Marx", p. 25. Also see the discussion by Joan Kelly, "The Doubled Vision of Feminist Theory", in *Women, History, and Theory: The Essays of Joan Kelly*, pp. 54–55.

[22] For a recent review of the debates among feminists on integrating Marxism and feminism in the analysis of gender and labor, see Miriam Glucksmann, *Women Assemble: Women Workers and the New Industries in Inter-War Britain* (London and New York: Routledge, 1990), Chapter 1 and pp. 265–279. See also my *Limited Livelihoods: Gender and Class in*

Marx and Engels appear to have considered the public also as the arena of politics where people engage in collective action to shape the course of history. Marx valorized working men's organization as the active force that would transform society.[23]

Thus, although liberals and Marxists might think differently about the terms "public" and "private", both imagined that sexual and family relations were in the realm of the private. In contrast, rational economic and political action were located in the realm of the public. In both theoretical traditions gender was deeply embedded in the conceptual distinction between public and private, and it was in the public sphere that men acted to shape their history.

It was not just the elaboration of gendered notions of the public and private in formal social theory that influenced the development of the social sciences and history, including contemporary working-class history. Social and political developments peculiar to the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were especially crucial. For it was during that period that the ideology of separate spheres came to be central to the world views of both the bourgeoisie and then later, many members of the working class.[24] Indeed, as Harold Benenson has argued, Marx's analysis of capitalism and the historical role of the working class was greatly influenced by this Victorian ideology.[25]

In England as well as in the United States the doctrine of separate spheres became an organizing principle in the lives of the rising middle classes.[26] Increasingly in the nineteenth century, women and men were seen as having essentially different natures.[27] Because of their different

*Nineteenth Century England* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1992), Chapter 1. For a variety of different approaches to the issue of integrating gender and class analysis see the essays in Lydia Sargent (ed.), *Women and Revolution* (Boston: South End Press, 1981).

[23] Harold Benenson, "Victorian Sexual Ideology and Marx's Theory of the Working Class", p. 18.

[24] For an important discussion of the formation of a masculine working class, and its relation to the embodiment of separate spheres in radical discourse, see Catherine Hall, "The Tale of Samuel and Jemima: Gender and Working-class Culture in Nineteenth-Century England", in *E.P. Thompson: Critical Perspectives*, edited by Harvey J. Kaye and Keith McClelland (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990), pp. 78–102.

[25] Harold Benenson, "Victorian Sexual Ideology and Marx's Theory of the Working Class", pp. 1–23. Also see Joan Scott's discussion of the construction of gender in the writings of nineteenth-century French political economists in " 'L'ouvrière! mot impie, sordide . . . ' Women Workers in the Discourse of French Political Economy, 1840–1860", in *Gender and the Politics of History*, pp. 137–163.

[26] For England, see the pathbreaking study by Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Man and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780–1850* (London: Hutchinson, 1987). For the U.S. see Mary Ryan, *Cradle of the Middle Class: The Family in Oneida County New York, 1790–1865* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981).

[27] For an interesting analysis of changing ideas about the similarities and differences between women and men and their relative status, see Ruth H. Bloch, "Untangling the Roots of Modern Sex Roles: A Survey of Four Centuries of Change", *Signs* 4 (Winter 1978), pp. 237–252.

natures, men were believed to be best equipped to deal with the worldly matters of commerce and politics; women were believed especially suited to providing moral sustenance as well as physical and emotional nurture to family members. These ideas about gender difference and the normative ordering of gender relations comprising the middle-class world view were incorporated into the emerging social sciences, as well as into the biological and medical sciences.[28] Mid-twentieth-century sociology and anthropology reworked these ideas, giving them renewed legitimation.[29]

The impact on the disciplines of the ideology that conceptualized home, family and kinship as a feminine sphere separated from the rest of society has often been noted. However, only relatively recently have scholars begun to appreciate the significance of who constructed the nineteenth-century *public* sphere and how they did it for the development of the concepts used in social analysis.[30]

In the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, middle-class men were laying claim to what scholars came to view as the public sphere. Joan Landes has argued that in France the bourgeois public sphere became gendered during the revolutionary era.[31] Geoff Eley remarks,

> the very breakthrough to new systems of constitutional legality – in which social relations were reordered by conceptions of right, citizenship, and property and by new definitions of the public and the private – necessarily forced the issue of woman's place, because the codification of participation allowed, indeed required, conceptions of gender difference to be brought into play.[32]

[28] There is an enormous literature on how gender, especially as it was worked out in Enlightenment thought, was a constitutive feature of both biology and medicine. For recent work, see as particularly good examples, Ludmilla Jordanova, *Sexual Visions: Images of Gender in Science and Medicine between the Eighteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Hemel Hempstead, Herts.: Harvester Press, 1989), and Lindsay Wilson, *Women and Medicine in the French Enlightenment: The Debate over Maladies des Femmes* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993).

[29] For a discussion of this point, see Jane Collier, Michelle Z. Rosaldo and Sylvia Yanagisako, "Is There a Family? New Anthropological Views", in *Rethinking the Family: Some Feminist Questions*, edited by Barrie Thorne with Marilyn Yalom (New York: Longman, 1982), pp. 25–39.

[30] Barbara Laslett has argued that the gendered concept of separate spheres strongly influences theories of human agency by expunging emotion. See "Gender in/and Social Science History", *Social Science History* 16 (Summer 1992), pp. 177–195. Also see her "Unfeeling Knowledge: Emotion and Objectivity in the History of Sociology", *Sociological Forum* 5 (1990), pp. 413–433. See Leonore Davidoff's exploration of the influence of separate spheres on the development of the social sciences in the nineteenth century: "Adam Spoke First". Also see Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes*, p. 29. For an early statement of the link between "representations of gender difference" and "scientific analyses of social and economic life", see Elizabeth Fox-Genovese, "Placing Women's History in History", *New Left Review* 133 (May/June, 1982), pp. 5–30.

[31] Joan Landes, *Women and the Public Sphere in the Age of the French Revolution* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988).

[32] Geoff Eley, "Nations, Publics, and Political Cultures", p. 310. For England specifically, see Catherine Hall, "Private Persons versus Public Someones".

In Landes' account revolutionary men used Enlightenment discourse, especially Rousseau's ideas about womanhood, to silence woman. Rousseau had depicted men as capable of unlimited rationality and abstract thought. Women were the opposite. The French revolutionaries reworked such Enlightenment ideas and contrasted men's capacity for reason with femininity depicted as passion and frivolity, justifying the exclusion of women from politics.[33] Women's place in the new world order was circumscribed in notions of Republican motherhood.[34]

In England women were actively marginalized as middle-class men dominated the institutions of civil society.[35] Bourgeois men developed a range of formal associations that brought them into contact with one another including their clubs, philanthropic activities, employer associations, and fraternal orders.[36] Social analysts developed their understanding of what counts as agency and of who and what made history using these political and associational activities for their models. In other words, historians took these male-centered activities and institutions as constituting "the social" and "the political" that were their objects of study.[37]

Yet, feminist historians have shown that middle-class women crossed the imagined boundaries of the public and private spheres as teachers, in their religious and philanthropical work as well as in their anti-slavery activities.[38] Moreover, as Davidoff and Hall have shown, many women contributed directly to family enterprises without recognition or reward.[39] Additionally, Davidoff and Hall expose the artificiality of the ideology of separate spheres by showing the many ways that home and family were central to middle-class male identity as well as to their enterprises. Furthermore, a spate of recent studies on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries has detailed the centrality of women's activities in the creation of state

[33] Joan Landes, *Women and the Public Sphere*, p. 46. Also see, Joan W. Scott, "French Feminists and the Rights of 'Man': Olympe de Gouge's Declarations", *History Workshop* 28 (Autumn 1989), pp. 1–21, esp. pp. 1–7.

[34] For an account of the construction of the notion of Republican motherhood in the United States, see Linda K. Kerber, *Women of the Republic* (Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 1980). The American public sphere excluded black men as well as all women.

[35] Catherine Hall, "Private Persons versus Public Someones", p. 152.

[36] See Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes*, Chapter 10. For a superb account of the importance of gender and fraternalism for the construction of class formation, see Mary Ann Clawson, *Constructing Brotherhood* (Princeton University Press, 1989). Also see Theodore Koditschek, *Class Formation and Urban Industrial Society: Bradford, 1750–1850* (Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 252–319.

[37] For a provocative discussion of creating a history of "the social", see Geoff Eley, "Is All the World a Text? From Social History to the History of Society Two Decades Later", in *The Historic Turn in the Human Sciences*, edited by Terence MacDonaly (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, forthcoming).

[38] Catherine Hall, "Private Persons versus Public Someones", pp. 165–166. Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes*, pp. 279–315.

[39] Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes*, pp. 279–289.

social policies.[40] However, contemporaries attempted to understand such activities as appropriate to female talents and they saw them as extensions of women's domestic activities.

While these developments in bourgeois society shaped the assumptions of the emerging disciplines that concerned themselves with the social world generally, there were related developments in the working class that were of special consequence for what was to count as labor history. First, the working-class public sphere was created by a distinct segment of working-class men. Second, laboring men and women created a working-class version of the ideology of separate spheres that redefined conceptions of working-class masculinity and femininity.

The emerging working-class public sphere was claimed by male artisans of plebeian communities who stood on speakers' platforms to air their grievances using language that conjured up the images of artisan culture under threat of being dismantled. For example, in England they created the public cultures of collective protest as they fought for their rights as men who had "property in skill", and could claim their independence through pride in their work, their status as heads of households, and their ability to provide a future for their sons.[41] By reworking particular traditions of English liberalism and dissent, these radicals "defined themselves as political agents while their wives, mothers and daughters were primarily defined as supporters and dependents".[42] In Chartism, as Dorothy Thompson has shown, women became marginalized as the movement relied less on spontaneous demonstrations, became more organized, and developed formal rules of procedure and a hierarchy of leadership.[43]

The working-class version of the ideology of separate spheres developed as particular working-class men led their communities' battles for political and social rights. A major strand of radical argument used by the Chartists

[40] For the U.S. see Theda Skocpol, *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: The Political Origins of Social Policy in the United States* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1992); Linda Gordon, "Black and White Visions of Welfare: Women's Welfare Activism, 1890–1945", *The Journal of American History* 78 (September 1991), pp. 559–590; Linda Gordon (ed.), *Women, the State, and Welfare* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1990); for England see Jane Lewis (ed.), *Women's Welfare Women's Rights* (London: Croom Helm, 1983); and for a comparative perspective, see Sonya Michel and Seth Koven, "Womanly Duties: Maternalist Politics and the Origins of Welfare States in France, Germany, Great Britain, and the United States, 1880–1920", *American Historical Review* 95 (October 1990), pp. 1076–1108.

[41] On the masculine language of political protest, see Sally Alexander, "Women, Class and Sexual Difference", *History Workshop* 17 (Spring 1984), pp. 125–149. On the notion of "property in skill", see Eric Hobsbawm, *Worlds of Labour* (London: Heinemann, 1984), p. 182, and John Rule, "The Property of Skill in the Period of Manufacture", in *The Historical Meanings of Work*, edited by Patrick Joyce (Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 107–108.

[42] Catherine Hall, "The Tale of Samuel and Jemima", p. 84.

[43] Dorothy Thompson, *The Chartists. Popular Politics in the Industrial Revolution* (New York: Pantheon, 1984).

as they agitated for universal male suffrage incorporated ideas of sexual differences derived from Enlightenment thought. By the 1840s the rhetoric of citizenship centered on notions of the independent male head of household with "property in labor" who needed the vote to protect his wife and children.[44] The ideals of domesticity for women and breadwinning for men were deployed as well in the 1840s by skilled male factory workers from Lancashire and Yorkshire as a political strategy to agitate for a Ten Hours Bill in Parliament.[45] Out of these struggles for the vote and for a ten-hour day emerged new working-class ideals of male and female relationships and family life, as well as a limited view of working-class citizenship,

Alternative visions of working-class citizenship based on ideals of mutuality rather than on individualism, and models of equality and cooperation between women and men dimmed during the Chartist period.[46] Their existence, however, further supports the idea that the developing masculine working-class public sphere was forged through contests about competing images of the future in which particular working-class leaders gained preeminence in working-class communities.[47]

What it meant to be an adult man in England changed during the second half of the nineteenth-century from being able to command one's family and provide a trade for one's sons to being a sole family provider. As I have argued elsewhere, this redefined understanding of manhood was intimately linked with working-class respectability.[48]

Working-class leaders promulgated an ideal of "respectable manhood" that emphasized both the family with the male breadwinner at its head,

[44] Anna Clark, "The Rhetoric of Chartist Domesticity: Gender, Language and Class in the 1830s and 1840s", *Journal of British Studies* 31 (January 1992), pp. 62–88. Also see, Catherine Hall, "The Tale of Samuel and Jemima", pp. 90–94.

[45] Marianna Valverde, " 'Giving the Female a Domestic Turn': The Social, Legal and Moral Regulation of Women's Work in British Cotton Mills, 1820–1850", *Journal of Social History* 21 (1988), pp. 619–624. Wally Seccombe argues that the norm of male breadwinning emerged from the ranks of skilled artisans. See his insightful "Patriarchy Stabilized: The Construction of the Male Breadwinner Wage Norm in Nineteenth-Century Britain", *Social History* 11 (1986), pp. 53–76. Also see, Harold Benenson, "Victorian Sexual Ideology and Marx's Theory of the Working Class".

[46] For an important exploration of the moral claims of "mutuality" made by working-class women prior to the Chartist period, see Ruth L. Smith and Deborah M. Valenze, "Mutuality and Marginality: Liberal Moral Theory and Working-Class Women in Nineteenth-Century England", *Signs* 13 (1988), pp. 277–298. For ideals of sexual equality among Owenites, see Barbara Taylor, *Eve and the New Jerusalem* (New York: Pantheon, 1983).

[47] Barbara Taylor, *Eve and the New Jerusalem*. Also see Anna Clark, "Gender, Citizenship and the Making of the British Working Class", in *Gender and the Reconstruction of Working-Class History*, edited by Laura Frader and Sonya O. Rose (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, forthcoming).

[48] See *Limited Livelihoods*, pp. 148–152. Also see Keith McClelland, "Masculinity and the 'Representative Artisan' in Britain, 1850–1880", in *Manful Assertions: Masculinities in Britain since 1800*, edited by Michael Roper and John Tosh (London: Routledge, 1991), pp. 74–91.

and the "self-improved" workman who knew how to conduct himself with proud restraint.[49] These images were key ones deployed in the 1860s as working-class members of the Reform League argued for the suffrage. They were central to the passage of the 1867 Reform Bill through which tax-paying, working-class men obtained the vote.[50] These were the working-class leaders who advocated a restrained style of labor protest, and promoted the harmony of interests between labor and capital.

They were the men who actively built working-class associations for themselves creating friendly societies, cooperatives, and working men's clubs. They also established and became leaders of trade union organizations. For most of the nineteenth century, it was these respectable men who developed the policies of their union organizations, and they were the decision makers in them for much of the period. They used their power to articulate their version of workers' interests often in masculinist terms, even when some of the workers that they represented were women.[51]

Until the rise of the new unions in the 1880s, "respectable men" dominated the working-class public sphere – not all men, and no women.[52] Then early in the last decade of the century there was a struggle for power within the Trades Union Congress, and the language of that struggle was, in part, about competing definitions of working-class manhood (including the kind of clothing that members of one or the other group were prone to wearing). It was also about competing directions for trade unionism, but the important point is that the terrain continued to be mapped by male persons and to be identified as masculine turf.

Labor and working-class historians took as their domain of inquiry these institutions and practices that were not only historically contingent, but were selective ones as well. Instead of understanding their particularity

[49] The following discussion of respectable manhood, the suffrage and trade unionism is drawn from Sonya O. Rose, "Respectable Men, Disorderly Others: The Language of Gender and the Lancashire Weavers" Strike of 1878", *Gender and History*, 5(1993), pp. 382–397.

[50] The Reform Act stipulated that in addition to tax-paying householders, lodgers with a year of residency paying 10 pounds rent annually could vote in national elections. Because of those financial and residency requirements, only 30 percent at best of adult males in urban working-class constituencies could vote. For a discussion of the 1867 Reform Act and its role in working-class politics, see Keith Burgess, *The Challenge of Labour. Shaping British Society 1850–1930* (London: Croom Helm, 1980), pp. 34–39.

[51] See my *Limited Livelihoods*, Chapter 7. Also see Patrick Joyce, *Visions of the People* (Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 129–130. For the U.S. see Elizabeth Faue, *Community of Suffering and Struggle: Women, Men, and the Labor Movement in Minneapolis, 1915–1945* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), Chapter 3. Keith McClelland suggests that these processes significantly influenced socialist politics and ideas. See "Time to Work, Time to Live: Some Aspects of Work and the Re-formation of Class in Britain, 1850–1880", in *The Historical Meanings of Work*, Patrick Joyce, edited by (Cambridge University Press, 1987), pp. 180–209.

[52] Women trade unionists attended TUC conventions from the mid-1870s, but the male leadership often ridiculed their concerns and arguments, especially in debates concerning hours legislation, and on the subject of female factory inspectors.

and exclusivity, historians took them as *models* for labor activism, resistance, and class identity. In other words, they provided the template for conceptualizing working-class formation. The consequence was to privilege certain male subjects and their actions as worthy of study and to ignore what fell outside the mould.

This analysis of the assumptions informing the boundaries of labor and working-class history helps us to understand why a major argument that has gone on between women's labor historians and men's labor historians is whether or not women were employed in the nineteenth century. In 1979, for example, Sally Alexander, Anna Davin and Eve Hostettler challenged Eric Hobsbawm who wrote that "conventionally women aimed to stop working for wages outside the house once they got married [ . . . ] Once married, she belonged to the proletariat not as a worker, but as the wife, mother and housekeeper of worker".[53] Alexander, David and Hostettler argued that Hobsbawm's view of class excluded wage-earning wives, and denied women any potential for participation in class struggle.[54] Within the confines of working-class history as he had conceived of it, women did not fit. In another context Hobsbawm has written; "Insofar as a conscious working class, which found expression in its movement and party, was emerging in this period, the pre-industrial plebs were drawn into its sphere of influence. And insofar as they were not, they must be left out of history, because they were not its makers but its victims".[55] In this statement he makes it clear that only some social actors are social agents and deserve to be counted as historical subjects. Hobsbawm's substantial contributions to social history have helped to formulate what counts as labor history, and so it is important to recognize that his conception of history has embedded within it the particular (not universal) images that were the legacy of the nineteenth-century definition of the public sphere.

Not only have some historians been reluctant to admit the significance of women's presence in nineteenth- and early twentieth-century labor history, but they not infrequently conflate gender and women. For example, Brian Harrison's essay, "Class and Gender in Modern British Labour History", is primarily about women.[56] By spotlighting women, Harrison implies that only women have gender, men do not. When gender is equated with women, masculinity remains unproblematic, and consequently the actions of male persons are seen either as gender-neutral or

[53] E.J. Hobsbawm, "Man and Woman: Images on the Left", in *Worlds of Labor: Further Studies in the History of Labour* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1984), p. 94.
[54] Sally Alexander, Anna Davin, Eve Hostettler, "Labouring Women", p. 175.
[55] E.J. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire, 1875–1914* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1987), p. 141.
[56] Brian Harrison, "Class and Gender in Modern British Labour History", *Past and Present* 124, (1989), pp. 121–158.

as the standard against which the actions of "others" are to be measured.[57]

Harrison devotes little attention to women's roles as "wage-earner and citizen" declaring in effect that women were mostly housewives, and that their attachment to the home made them apolitical. He argues

> housekeeping helped to mould women's political outlook. It could nourish the apolitical response that stemmed from prevailing cultural attitudes. The male's food-getting and fighting roles give rise to a male monopoly of the political process which has only recently and tentatively been challenged.[58]

In short, Harrison "naturalizes" the separation of spheres and their definition, explaining women's political attitudes by their location in the private sphere, and men's attitudes by their location in the public sphere.

The notion that male workers' identities are formed at work while female workers' identities are formed at home has been pervasive in labor history.[59] Ross McKibbin, for example, described a conversation between two women in a World War II machine-tool factory. McKibbin notes: "Girls seemed to derive considerable pleasure from this sort of nattering and [ . . . ] it substituted interest in time for non-interest in work."[60] Then he described "horseplay and practical jokes" as popular "routine-breaking techniques" for men and states, " [ . . . ] for men, more than for women, the workplace was an important social institution. Men did not just *work* there, it was in the factory more than anywhere else that they had their social being".[61] Not only does McKibbin conceptualize different forms of social interaction as gender-specific (using the familiar trope of women talking), but he locates that difference in women's and men's supposedly distinct sources of identity.

By uncritically assuming that women (naturally) gain their identities from the domestic sphere while men (just as naturally) gain theirs in the

[57] On the latter point and its bearing on public policy, see Martha Minow, *Making All the Difference: Inclusion, Exclusion, and American Law* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1990). For a discussion of the significance for working-class history of examining masculinity, see Ava Baron, "On Looking at Men: Masculinity and Working-class History", unpublished paper. For examples of outstanding work on the construction of working-class masculinity in the U.S. see Ava Baron, "Questions of Gender: Deskilling and Demasculinization in the U.S. Printing Industry, 1830–1945", *Gender & History* 1 (1989), pp. 178–199, and in the U.K. see Keith McClelland, "Some Thoughts on Masculinity and the 'Representative Artisan' in Britain, 1850–1915", *Gender & History* 1 (1989), pp. 164–177.

[58] Brian Harrison, "Gender and Class", p. 126.

[59] In sociology see Roslyn Feldberg and Evelyn Glenn, "Male and Female: Job versus Gender Models in the Sociology of Work", *Social Problems* 26 (1979), pp. 524–538.

[60] Ross McKibbin, "Work and Hobbies in Britain, 1880–1950", in *The Ideologies of Class: Social Relations in Britain, 1880–1950* (Oxford University Press, 1990), pp. 101–138.

[61] Ross McKibbin, *Ideologies of Class*, p. 156. Emphasis in the original. For examples of jokes and other rituals among women workers, see Sally Westwood, *All Day Every Day* (London: Pluto Press, 1984), and for women's expressions of their identities as workers in Germany see Kathleen Canning, "Gender and the Politics of Class Location", pp. 756–757.

workplace, men's labor historians have carried forward nineteenth-century ideology as historical argument. This is "ideological work" in two senses.[62] In the first place, as I have indicated above, it represents labor and working-class history as though it were gender neutral, even though it is primarily about male persons. It does this by ignoring the important links between nineteenth-century constructions of masculinity, workplace identity and politics. In the second place, it is ideological because it mystifies the agency of those laboring women who crossed the boundaries of public and private and implicitly contested their gendered associations.[63]

The dominant mode of labor history ignores how women's identities as workers and their political activities have been shaped at the workplace.[64] On the one hand, women workers are commonly assumed by men's labor historians to be temporary workers. However, as Richard Whipp's studies of the English pottery industry have shown, a generalized "image of the impermanent, young, unskilled, low paid and therefore marginal women worker" is inaccurate.[65] On the other hand, when women have been depicted as politically active, their political identities are portrayed as stemming from their "natural" concern for their families. Such thinking undermines the argument that working-class politics stem from productive relations.[66]

Women's history has also been caught up in the myth of separate spheres, and there is a substantial body of feminist scholarship that has stressed the distinctiveness of women's cultures at work, and the links between their political identities and their family lives.[67] Instead of taking these findings as indicative of the natural proclivities of women, or as

[62] I am using the notion of "ideological work" as developed by Mary Poovey in *Uneven Developments*, pp. 2–3.

[63] For an early essay on women in the economy of Britain, see Eric Richards, "Women in the British Economy Since About 1700: An Interpretation", *History* 69 (1974), pp. 337–357. For a recent review see Katrina Honeyman and Jordan Goodman, "Women's Work, Gender Conflict, and Labour Markets in Europe, 1500–1900", *Economic History Review* 44 (1991), pp. 608–628.

[64] For a critique of this assumption in German labor history, see Kathleen Canning, "Gender and the Politics of Class Formation", p. 748.

[65] Richard Whipp, "Kinship, Labour and Enterprise: The Staffordshire Pottery Industry, 1890–1920", in *Women's Work and the Family Economy in Historical Perspective*, edited by Pat Hudson and W.R. Lee (Manchester University Press, 1990), pp. 172–203. Other scholars have also shown that women are not necessarily more temporary and less committed than men are. See, for example, Kathleen Canning, "Gender and the Politics of Class Formation", p. 748; Alison Scott, "Industrialization, Gender Segregation and Stratification Theory", in *Gender and Stratification*, edited by Rosemary Crompton and Michael Mann (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1986), p. 158; Sonya O. Rose, *Limited Livelihoods*, p. 162.

[66] Joan W. Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History*, p. 75.

[67] This is an enormous literature. For an overview for the American case, see Linda Kerber, "Separate Spheres, Female Worlds, Woman's Place", Also see Susan Levine, "Labors in the Field: Reviewing Women's Cultural History", *Radical History Review* 35 (1986), pp. 49–56.

stemming directly from their family relationships, we need to ask why there were these distinctive cultures, how they were formed, and what accounts for the connection between women's family lives and their politics.[68] When women use a rhetoric of family need in supporting political causes, and in labor struggles, we cannot assume that such discourse is a simple consequence either of being born female or their presumed association with domesticity. There is ample empirical evidence that men also used familial rhetoric in political movements and labor struggles.[69] The demand for the family wage is only the most obvious example.[70] By uncritically incorporating a nineteenth-century distinction between public and private that constructed men and women as naturally suited to their respective spheres, labor historians miss both the ways that work was constitutive of women's identities as workers, and family was constitutive of the work and political identities of men. In addition, they fail to explore how family life can be a source of politics and labor activism.[71]

Implicated in these gendered understandings of the significance of work and family in the lives of women and men is the supposition that "interests" stem directly from people's positions in the social structure. When historians adopt such a view they assume that political rhetoric reflects an underlying structural reality, and that consciousness is immanent in social position.

Interests, however, are the outcome of political rhetoric and are generated in the context of struggle rather than simply determining the rhetoric and struggle. This idea is fundamental to the scholarship of those historians

[68] One approach to such questions is taken by Smith and Valenze who argue that women's use of "mutuality" as moral argument stems from their marginality. See Ruth L. Smith and Deborah M. Valenze, "Mutuality and Marginality". Another approach would follow Joan Scott's lead, and examine the discourses that construct women's identities. See *Gender and the Politics of History*.

[69] See Keith McClelland, "Some Thoughts on Masculinity and the 'Representative Artisan' ", pp. 170–174; Keith McClelland, "Time to Work, Time to Live", pp. 206–207; Michael P. Hanagan, *Nascent Proletarians: Class Formation in Post-Revolutionary France* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989).

[70] On the family wage see Hilary Land, "The Family Wage", *Feminist Review* 6 (1980); Martha May, "Bread Before Roses: American Workingmen, Labor Unions and the Family Wage", in *Women Work and Protest: A Century of U.S. Women's Labor History*, edited by Ruth Milkman (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1985), pp. 1–22; Mary Blewett, *Men, Women, and Work: Class, Gender and Protest in the New England Shoe Industry, 1780–1910* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1988), pp. 121–131.

[71] See Joanna Bornat, "Home and Work: A New Context for Trade Union History", *Oral History* 5 (1977) and "Lost Leaders: Women, Trade Unionism and the Case of the General Union of Textile Workers, 1875–1914", in *Unequal Opportunities: Women's Employment in England 1800–1918*, edited by Angela John (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986), pp. 207–234. For the U.S. see Carole Turbin, "Beyond Conventional Wisdom: Women's Wage Work, Household Economic Contribution, and Labor Activism in a Mid-Nineteenth-Century Working-Class Community", in *To Toil the Livelong Day: America's Women at Work, 1780–1980*, edited by Carol Groneman and Mary Beth Norton (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987), pp. 47–67.

who insist on the primary importance of language in social life, and who attempt to move beyond so-called "culturalist" approaches to working-class formation. The work of such historians threatens to displace class and production as the centerpieces of labor history, replacing them with the concepts of politics and discourse. Does the linguistic turn by itself ensure that gender will be integrated into a post-class labor or working-peoples' history?

An examination of such work is not at all reassuring. For example, as Joan Scott has shown, Stedman Jones' focus on the political rhetoric of Chartism ignores the gendered content of the radical rhetoric that he suggests shapes Chartism as a movement.[72] Scott maintains that Jones used a literal view of language, and as a consequence he denies the significance of class and misses how gender contributed to its construction. In a book of essays clearly indebted to Jones' idea about the continuities of radical political rhetoric, that literal view of language and politics is continued and gender as a constituting feature of politics features not at all, even though it was precisely during the period the essays cover that it became possible for working class *men* to vote, and woman's suffrage became a major issue.[73]

Gender does not figure either in Patrick Joyce's provocative new work which focuses on the meanings of "the people". Although Joyce makes an effort to include women in his analysis by indicating women's presence, generally his strategy is to link women and families. For example, in his discussion of community solidarities among the cotton textile workers, he maintains that because the primary idiom in which the factory population was represented by *The Cotton Factory Times* was "the family", its messages appealed to everyone, but especially to women.[74] While Joyce mentions the male domination of the unions and the masculine rhetoric of cotton trade unionists, he does not give this masculine language a role in his story. Rather, he implies that solidarities were created in spite of such rhetoric. His use of Sally Alexander's essay on class and sexual difference is illustrative. After noting Alexander's suggestion that artisan leaders' constructions of community were important for popular politics, Joyce writes:

> It was a male construction certainly [ . . . ] but this does not means that it was not without great effect in the community at large.[75]

Furthermore, in his analysis of custom and the ways that people symbolized order, Joyce says:

[72] Joan W. Scott, "On Language, Gender, and Working-Class History", in *Gender and the Politics of History*, pp. 53–67, esp. 55–60.

[73] See Eugenio F. Biagini and Alastair J. Reid (eds.), *Currents of Radicalism: Popular Radicalism, Organised Labour and Party Politics in Britain, 1850–1914* (Cambridge University Press, 1991). Women appear only in an essay by Pat Thane.

[74] Joyce, *Visions of the People*, p. 135.

[75] *Ibid.*, pp. 98–99.

Sex, age and social status were minutely mapped out by a series of cultural boundary markers, among them sayings, jokes and stories. The overwhelming concern was thus with the preservation of order. This was reflected in the maintenance of established gender distinctions even in the Lancashire of the waged woman millworker.[76]

Joyce maintains that the language of gender reflects an underlying concern that goes beyond gender – is more universal than gender. He acknowledges gender, but denies its relevance or significance to his project.

It is crucial for historians of labor to appreciate fully the constitutive role of language in social and political life, because it is only by doing so that we become cognizant of the cultural construction of social categories and social processes. Such analyses make it possible for historians to expose the myriad ways in which gender, race and sexuality have been imbricated in the intertwined cultural, socio-economic and political formation of modernity. They can show how such constructions worked both to create solidarities and simultaneously to exclude. However, they do not guarantee that historians will be attuned to these fundamental dimensions of modern human existence and their crucial roles in identity formation.

In order to forge a new vision of labor history that both includes women workers and examines the role of gender in class formation, it will be necessary to jettison the nineteenth-century legacy of separate spheres. An important step in transforming the boundaries of labor history is to examine the relationship between masculinity and male workers' identities. This is crucial as a way of exploring how solidarities among workers were created, and to understand how male workers dealt with competition from boys as well as from women.[77] Significant as well is an examination of the meaning of skill, steady employment, and unemployment for the construction of manhood. By making the link between masculinity and work a problem for study, labor historians will begin to appreciate and assess the possible differences in class identities *among* men as well as between women and men. By interrogating the gendered language of male trade union leaders and orators, and by searching for alternative voices of both women and other men, labor historians will be less likely to confuse a particular vision of working-class activism with resistance writ large.

This does not mean that labor historians should ignore trade unionism, and social movements for political and social rights. Rather, we need to pay greater attention to the question of how allegiances were forged; who joined and who did not. It is important to recognize that those who were marginal to those organizations and movements may actually have been central to the dynamics of labor's history. While the differences among workers, and the divisions within working-class communities may have weakened those movements, this is *not* the only reason to study them.

[76] *Ibid.*, p. 155.
[77] Ava Baron, "An 'Other' Side of Gender Antagonism".

The construction of difference, the very creation of "us" as distinct from "them", may have been crucial in the formation of worker and movement identities in the first place. Perhaps the best illustration of this idea is the work of American historian David Roediger that has explored the importance of being white in the creation of white male workers' class identities in the U.S.[78]

It is important, also, to reconsider what counts as resistance and to dissolve the opposition between resistance and accommodation.[79] It is not necessarily the case that resistance only takes place at the point of production, or that it counts only when it occurs in the form of an organized movement. Strikes are effective to the extent that whole communities, not just workers, become mobilized. Consumer boycotts illustrate resistance "at the point of consumption".[80] Furthermore, as the important work of anthropologist James C. Scott has suggested, people use a variety of tactics to thwart wholesale domination by elites.[81] In addition, as he makes clear, there is nothing necessarily apolitical or non-revolutionary about "bread and butter issues".[82] And as this essay has argued, the political sensibilities of men as well as women may be forged by their activities and relations at home.

Finally, I want to consider briefly what differences such an approach will make to the stories we tell about labor's history. The question "so what?" is sometimes asked by those who are sceptical of the significance of gender. Some wonder, for example, given the relative power of capital, if workers would have made greater gains had women and men been united, or if women had been more centrally involved in union affairs. What that question implies is that only victory and its opposite, defeat, are matters of historical significance. Such a view ignores historical process (and paths not taken) in favor of historical outcomes. By integrating questions of gender in labor history, and by attending to how meanings are constructed, and with what consequences, historians will be better able to address how and why events happened the way that they did. By paying closer attention to process, historians will not simply provide fuller accounts. Rather, their stories will be complex and multifaceted explorations of historical contingency.

[78] David R. Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class* (London: Verso, 1991).

[79] Ava Baron, "Gender and Labor History", pp. 27–32.

[80] Dana Frank, "Gender, Consumer Organizing, and the Seattle Labor Movement, 1919–1929", in *Work Engendered*, edited by Ava Baron, pp. 273–295.

[81] James C. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* (New Haven Yale University Press, 1985). Also see his *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts of Power* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990).

[82] James C. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak*, pp. 341–345.