

insistence upon using parks in working class neighborhoods as they themselves desired.

In the course of commentary and discussion a firm consensus emerged that sport is indeed an integral part of social history, but that it is an autonomous development in its own right and not just a "reflection" of some more basic trends. This was not perhaps a surprising conclusion for a gathering of social historians. However, agreement as to what constituted the most important questions in sports history and the most appropriate conceptual framework remained somewhat elusive. And since sport does not for the most part appear in history as a "movement" or a "problem," this would seem to place the task of defining problematics squarely with the historians. To judge from the presentations at Brockport, the results should be quite stimulating.

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BREMEN CONFERENCE ON AMERICAN LABOR AND IMMIGRATION HISTORY

What questions are European scholars asking about American working class history? Judging by the papers presented to a symposium on American Labor and Immigration History, convened and orchestrated by Dirk Hoerder at the University of Bremen, November 13-17, 1978, three issues command current attention: insurgency, immigration, and socialism.

The first is the most provocative. To scholars who experienced the French May or the Italian Autumn of the late 1960s, the proverbial militancy of the American rank and file took on an immediate relevance. It seems only logical that sooner or later someone would turn to the Great Strikes of 1877, touchstone of mass insurgency, and Marianne Debouzy (Paris) has begun an in-depth investigation of those events. Her paper raised the themes of spontaneous resistance to industrial capitalism and creative organization from below, themes which were also threaded through the work of three Italian delegates to the symposium, who presented papers on the origins of labor historiography as a response to the mass insurgency of the 1880s (Bruno Cartosio), the Industrial Workers of the World in the South (Ferdinando Fasce), and W. E. B. DuBois as the theoretician of worker self-activity among Blacks after the Civil War (F. Gambino). If this kind of inquiry can be conducted across the entire field, American labor history will never be the same.

Immigration is a more familiar topic. A national perspective defined the field of vision for all the papers—why did our countrymen leave and what happened to them when they got there? This proved both a strength (there is

no such thing as *the* immigrant experience) and a weakness (the isolation of nationalities was presupposed). Nationalities represented at the symposium were the Irish (David Doyle); Yugoslavs (Ivan Čizmić); Germans (Hartmut Keil); Finns (Auvo Kostianinen); and Swedes (Sune Åkerman, Hans Norman, Lars-Göran Tedebrand). The last are part of the team of demographers at Uppsala, whose work has shown the importance of quantitative techniques in monitoring trans-Atlantic migration. Work on German involvement in the Chicago labor movement of the 1880s shows Engels' criticism of them as doctrinaire and aloof to be unmerited. During the discussions commentators raised a variety of points: immigrants must be seen in the context of a multinational working class (Herbert Gutman); the concept of Americanization is too monolithic to be useful (Rudolph Vecoli); immigrant adaptation is revealed through community life, as well as political activity (Alfred Young). Participants shared information for Hoerder's proposed bibliography of labor and radical newspapers published in the United States in a non-English tongue, and *Labor History* (Daniel Leab) offered help in collecting further citations.

The perennial question of socialism hung over the symposium like the ghost of Werner Sombart. The thesis that socialism foundered on reefs of roast beef and apple pie was challenged in a creative investigation of comparative living standards in Pittsburgh and Birmingham, which argued that at low-wage occupations, U.S. workers were no better off than their British counterparts (Peter Shergold). It is easier to attack an established position than to establish a new one, a frustration which befell a paper attempting to link the fortunes of socialism to the consciousness of skilled workers (Andrew Dawson); the linkage was questioned on the grounds that consciousness is more than a matter of which occupational stratum one belongs to (Alan Dawley), and that in the period considered (1890-1920) levels of skill were changing so rapidly it is impossible to treat skilled workers as a uniform body (David Brody). The factor of collaboration with the bourgeois state received attention in a study on the AFL during the Great War (Federico Romero). The topic of party organization was given a heuristic treatment in a sophisticated analysis of the Socialist Labor Party (Hubert Perrier), which considered the Party's failure to become more than a left sect in terms of a dialectic between the organization and its potential constituency, at once saying something new about the SLP and suggesting a new way of studying the general question of the failure of any socialist organization to become a major party.

When the papers are assembled and published as a book, it will be interesting to note questions *not* being asked. There is little on women in laboring communities. A study of women in workers' education (Dagmar Schultz) and a paper on housework under capitalism (Gisela Bock and Barbara Duden) provided only a limited introduction to that subject. Similarly there was little evidence here of European work on scientific management, workers' control, and working class culture in the United States. But if the Bremen

symposium followed the lines of the "old labor history," its creative work on mass insurgency and socialism demonstrates that those lines are by no means all played out.

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AMERICAN ITALIAN HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION: ELEVENTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

"The Italian American Working Class" was the theme of the Eleventh Annual Conference of the American Italian Historical Association held at John Carroll University in Cleveland on October 27 and 28, 1978. The conference brought together academics from several disciplines, students, and members of Cleveland's Italian American community.

Since its beginnings in 1966, the American Italian Historical Association has sponsored yearly conferences on some aspect of Italian American life. Previous conference topics have included "The Italian American Novel," "The Interaction of Italians and Jews in America," "The Religious Experience of Italian Americans," "Italian American Radicalism," and "The Italian Immigrant Woman in North America." The proceedings of most AIH conferences have been published and the proceedings of the 1978 conference will be available in 1979.

Papers presented at the 1978 conference covered a wide range of aspects of working-class life among Italian Americans. Most papers examined workers and their lives during the years of mass emigration from Italy. However, papers on the experiences of a group of Italian American Vietnam veterans (Frank Milano), on Italian American political consciousness (Charles La Cerra), and on the folk roots of modern Italian feminism (Lucia Chiavola Birnbaum) brought the conference audience into the contemporary world.

In keeping with a recent trend in ethnic history, researchers did not limit their investigations to the experiences of immigrants in the urban Northeast, where the majority of Italian Americans lived. In a session on "Italians in the Mines," Phillip Notarianni summarized immigrant participation in a UMW strike in southern Colorado and Utah. Separate sessions examined Italians in Chicago and in Rhode Island through film and slides, while a panel discussed the Italians of Cleveland.

Papers in a number of sessions focused on Italian immigrants' role in organized labor activities. A major session on labor, chaired by Luciano Iorizzo, President of the AIH, included papers by Rudolph Vecoli: "Anthony Capraro and the Lawrence Strike of 1919," by Robert Harney: "The Padrone