INTRODUCTION

Contesting Democracy: Working-Class and Growth Politics in the City

Wisconsin Avenue, which cuts across the center of Milwaukee, also bisects the twentieth century. This downtown thoroughfare held center stage in two contrasting early post-World War II episodes – a 1947 ordinance fight and a 1951 parade – that illuminate a pattern of change underway in the industrial city. At the core of these incidents and of this history were ongoing frictions between contending visions of the city, defined as working-class politics and growth politics. These were crucial components that fit together uneasily in the city's mid-twentieth-century political culture. Both working-class and growth politics were shaped and reshaped by a series of social and policy clashes: from the hard-fought politics of housing and redevelopment, to controversies engendered by petty gambling, to questions about the role of organized labor in urban life, to a battle over municipal fiscal policy and autonomy. These local, everyday conflicts helped to shift the prevailing "common sense" of how a city works. As the second-half of the twentieth century began, an increasingly insistent growth politics reconfigured perceptions about the city's public purpose and constrained democratic aspirations.

Accounts of urban change in the midcentury industrial Midwest, especially as precursor to the Rust Belt city, often evoke images of economic dislocation, empty factories, and deteriorating blue-collar neighborhoods. But this transition in the Great Lakes city known as "America's Machine Shop" was not solely a function of changing economic circumstances. It also points to a rupture in urban political culture. Conflicts between working-class politics and growth politics propelled these changes, pitting the precepts of metropolitan efficiency and productivity against the principles of democratic access and distribution. This transformation toward a political culture driven by growth politics weakened the political and social arrangements that characterized the industrial city and its early

development. On the two sides of this divide, city residents thought and spoke differently about urban problems and prospects. Postwar democracy in the city, then, bore the imprint not only of changing economic relations, increasingly racialized images of urban disorder, and mounting Cold War fears, but also of the growth politics that had emerged dominant from this period of contention. This book contributes to the histories of the twentieth-century city and American political change by looking closely at local conflicts that both forged postwar growth politics and positioned it at the center of American urban political culture.

On Labor Day in 1951, business and civic leaders promoted the early phases of Milwaukee's postwar development program with a parade along Wisconsin Avenue. Rather than celebrate labor's power and place in the city, this Labor Day parade advertised the benefits that a "downtown modernization program" promised the city as a whole. Funded by a bond issue, the two-million dollar project removed streetcar tracks and rebuilt the city's main downtown thoroughfare. During an earlier groundbreaking ceremony for the project, business leaders lauded this as a requisite first step forward for Milwaukee's economic growth and promised to help develop a modern metropolis. The *Milwaukee Journal* boasted that "the new street will help make Milwaukee look like the big city it is."[1]

The Downtown Association, an organization of central city business leaders, sponsored this Labor Day parade which drew an estimated one hundred thousand onlookers. The labor councils for the American Federation of Labor (AFL) and Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) each contributed a float. They were overshadowed, however, by the many other entries in the parade. The *Milwaukee Journal*'s report barely noted organized labor's participation in this Labor Day event. Late in the article the CIO and AFL received a brief, belittling mention: "The AFL float had nice things to say about AFL workmen, and the CIO float felt the same way about the CIO."[2] The AFL's *Milwaukee Labor Press*, perhaps made uneasy by unions' marginal role, gave the parade minimal coverage. The *CIO News* expressed ambivalence, acknowledging "ironically enough this parade is sponsored by industry."[3] CIO attorney

[1] "Ceremony Launches Repaving Project: Buses to Replace Streetcars," *Milwaukee Sentinel* [hereafter MS], 9 January 1951; "Wisconsin Av. Work to Start," *Milwaukee Journal* [hereafter MJ], 7 January 1951; "Power Shovel vs. Concrete, There's a Show for Crowd," MJ, 11 January 1951; "100,000 Here Cheer Parade," MJ, 4 September 1951; and "Milwaukee: Wisconsin Av. Project Will Help Us Look Like a Big City," MJ, 9 January 1951.

[2] "100,000 Here Cheer Parade."

[3] "Plan Labor Day Celebrations," *Wisconsin CIO News*, 10 August 1951. CIO coverage of the parade consisted of just one front-page photograph of their float, with a caption blandly stating that the display depicted the "CIO's goals in community welfare." "Milwaukee CIO

Max Raskin mourned the loss of Labor Day. Raskin, who had served as a Socialist city attorney in the 1930s, contrasted this parade with Milwaukee's spirited Labor Day and May 1st festivities of the past. He lamented that the Downtown Association's event was "hardly a day of celebration for organized labor."[4] Labor Day had ceased to be labor's day.

The streetcar lines that this downtown development program displaced had been important for working-class life in the city. Workers had boarded Milwaukee's streetcars to toil in the city's factories and offices, to play in the city's bingo halls and bowling alleys, to shop downtown and in neighborhood markets, and to display their power on picket lines and in earlier Labor Day celebrations. As in many other cities, streetcars and streetcar companies also had been flashpoints for labor and political conflict. An unsuccessful two-month strike in 1896 by motormen and conductors, which included a boycott that gained widespread support, helped to establish grievances against the "streetcar ring" as a staple for local politics and contributed eventually to the Socialists' victories in municipal politics. An explosive four-day strike in 1934 forced the Milwaukee Electric Railway and Light Company to recognize the streetcar workers' AFL unions and energized the city's labor movement. Despite the company's forcible efforts to break the unions, the strikers enjoyed strong public backing and earned the support of local officials.[5] Mayor Daniel

Float," *Wisconsin CIO News*, 7 September 1951. The AFL promoted the parade to its members by claiming that the event would show "labor's role in making Milwaukee a bigger and better community." AFL coverage of the parade and Labor Day celebration consisted of just a photograph of their parade float accompanied by the slogan "AFL Skilled Craftsmen Built This Magnificent Mile – and On Time." "Plan Labor Day Parade," *Milwaukee Labor Press*, 9 August 1951; "Labor Float in Big Parade," *Milwaukee Labor Press*, 30 August 1951; [photograph], *Milwaukee Labor Press*, 6 September 1951. The AFL float was sponsored by the Milwaukee Federated Trades Council (FTC), the Building and Construction Trades Council, the Union Label Trades Department, the International Ladies Garment Workers, and the Allied Printing Trades Council. The FTC's Labor Day message stressed social harmony. "A Labor Day Message!," *Milwaukee Labor Press*, 30 August 1951.

[4] Max Raskin, "Labor Day, Now and Then," *Wisconsin CIO News*, 31 August 1951. While unions throughout the United States after the war had "relinquished their claim to the holiday," this 1951 parade signaled labor's displacement by business and civic leaders. Michael Kazin and Steven J. Ross, "America's Labor Day: The Dilemma of a Workers' Celebration," *Journal of American History* 78:4 (March 1992): 1320.

[5] Democratic candidate David Rose (1898) was the first to benefit from the earlier strike upheaval, but working-class voters moved later to support the Socialists. During the 1934 strike, the company paid the Bergoff Detective Agency thirty-nine thousand dollars to break the strike. The Amalgamated Association of Street, Electric Railway and Motor Coach Employees of America, Division 998, emerged from the strike to play an active role in 1930s labor disputes. Thomas W. Gavett, *Development of the Labor Movement in Milwaukee* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1965), 155–56; John Gurda, *The Making of Milwaukee* (Milwaukee: Milwaukee County Historical Society, 1999), 198–99, 291–92; Florence Higgins, "Trial by Fire," *The Nation*, 18 July 1934, 66–67; Karen Woolley Moore, "Missed Connections: The 'Progressive' Derailment of Public Transit in

Hoan condemned the company, writing emphatically: "Your attitude toward your employees, our people, our city, our Federal Government is more arrogant than that of any ruler in the world. ... You are now witnessing the harvest of pent-up public indignation you yourself have aroused."[6] The strike – the culmination of a forty-year fight for union recognition that was now spurred on by the promises of the early New Deal's National Industrial Recovery Act – had demonstrated the power of working-class politics in the city.

The removal of the streetcar tracks, undertaken to accommodate cars and buses, effaced part of this contentious past of the industrial city. Driving home the theme of "downtown modernization," planners also staged a summertime event with a truck carrying a replica of an early streetcar and "thirty-five of the downtown area's oldest employees," followed by a new diesel bus motoring down the refurbished avenue. Rather than commemorating working-class power, the rebuilt Wisconsin Avenue at the center of Milwaukee's 1951 Labor Day observance exhibited the strength of metropolitan business and civic leadership.[7] These leaders aimed to make this downtown avenue and surrounding blocks not only the "hub of the city's existence," but a center for commerce, finances, and services.[8] Downtown Association leader and department store executive Joseph A. Deglman hoped that the city center would become a "magnet," offering "whatever anybody needs – merchandise, entertainment,

Metropolitan Milwaukee during the Electric Street Railway Era" (Ph.D. diss., University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 2011), 250–52, 281–82; Anthony M. Orum, *City-Building in America* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1995), 104–5; and Robert W. Ozanne, *The Labor Movement in Wisconsin: A History* (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1984), 65–66. On the significance of streetcar strikes in urban politics, see Shelton Stromquist, "The Crucible of Class: Cleveland Politics and the Origins of Municipal Reform in the Progressive Era," *Journal of Urban History* 23:2 (January 1997): 192–220.

[6] Daniel W. Hoan, *City Government: The Record of the Milwaukee Experiment* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1936), 218–19.

[7] "'Magnificent Mile' in Business Again," MJ, 9 September 1951. The demise of Milwaukee's streetcars was an extended process, beginning in the late 1920s with the replacement of some street railway lines with buses. The last streetcar route was closed in 1958 (a trolley bus continued until 1965). Harold M. Mayer, "By Water, Land and Air: Transportation for Milwaukee County," in *Trading Post to Metropolis: Milwaukee County's First 150 Years*, ed. Ralph M. Aderman (Milwaukee: Milwaukee County Historical Society, 1987), 373–74. The closing of streetcar stops and routes was not uncontested. See for instance: "A Petition to the Common Council of the City of Milwaukee," July 1945, file 47–1070; William Ketterer, Assistant City Attorney, to Committee on Public Utilities of the Common Council, 1 March 1950, file 47–1067; both in Common Council files, City Records Center [hereafter CRC], City Hall, Milwaukee; and "Trolley Bus Fight Looms: Raised by Paving Plans," MJ, 19 March 1951.

[8] "Hub of City Has Continued to Grow," MJ, 2 September 1951.

convenience, and professional services."[9] Many of the advertisements tied to this campaign targeted white upper- and middle-class women as shoppers, highlighting easy access and ample parking.[10]

The postwar city imagined in the parade situated organized labor as just one among many interest groups invited to support the goals of urban efficiency and economic growth. Rather than a city marked by sharp antagonisms and conflicts over resources, this version of Milwaukee consisted of coexisting groups that both articulated their interests *and* concurred about the basic principles of growth politics. In a sense, each distinct contingent in the parade marched to the same drummer. Wisconsin Avenue on Labor Day in 1951 served as a forum for this postwar pluralist democracy built around growth. In order to realize their urban vision, however, postwar city builders had to displace more than the streetcar tracks on Wisconsin Avenue. This was not only a brick and mortar project, but one that sought to reconstitute the "patterns of shared values, assumptions, and behaviors associated with public life." Business and civic leaders had to excavate, remove, and reconstruct the political culture of the industrial city.[11]

[9] "Thousands Travel 'Magnificent Mile,'" MJ, 8 September 1951.

[10] See advertisements in "Up and Down the Magnificent Mile," MJ, 2 September 1951; and MJ, 5 September 1951. Plans for a modernized Wisconsin Avenue were designed, in part, to help the downtown compete against new suburban shopping areas. On the Southgate shopping center, see Milwaukee Common Council, *Roads to a Better Milwaukee: 1950 Report of 1949 Activities* (1950). On consumption and attracting consumers downtown, see: Lizabeth Cohen, *A Consumers' Republic: The Politics of Mass Consumption in Postwar America* (New York: A. A. Knopf, 2003); and Alison Isenberg, *Downtown America: A History of the Place and the People Who Made It* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004). On competing aims for downtown and urban renewal, see: John F. Bauman, "The Paradox of Post-War Urban Planning: Downtown Revitalization versus Decent Housing for All," in *Two Centuries of American Planning*, ed. Daniel Schaffer (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988), 231–64; Carl Abbott, "Five Strategies for Downtown: Policy Discourse and Planning since 1943," in *Planning the Twentieth-Century American City*, eds. Mary Corbin Sies and Christopher Silver (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 404–27; and Samuel Zipp, *Manhattan Projects: The Rise and Fall of Urban Renewal in Cold War New York* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

[11] Quotation from Joanne Freeman, "The Culture of Politics: The Politics of Culture," *Journal of Policy History* 16:2 (2004): 139. On conflict and change within and between political cultures, as well as contingency in these processes, see Margaret R. Somers, "Narrating and Naturalizing Civil Society and Citizenship Theory: The Place of Political Culture and the Public Sphere," *Sociological Theory* 13 (1995): 229–74. On political culture, see: Keith Michael Baker, *Inventing the French Revolution: Essays on French Political Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Elsa Barkley Brown, "Negotiating and Transforming the Public Sphere: African American Political Life in the Transition from Slavery to Freedom," *Public Culture* 7:1 (Fall 1994): 107–46; Ronald P. Formisano, "The Concept of Political Culture," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 31:3 (Winter 2001): 393–426; Glen Gendzel, "Political Culture: Genealogy of a Concept," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 28:2 (Autumn 1997): 225–50; David Scobey, "Anatomy of the Promenade: The Politics of Bourgeois Sociability in Nineteenth-Century New York,"

Four years earlier when business leaders had sought greater control over the use of downtown space, Wisconsin Avenue figured into a different calculus of working-class and growth politics. In 1947, the Milwaukee CIO Council (formally titled the Milwaukee County Industrial Union Council) opposed a business-sponsored measure to regulate downtown parades and demonstrations. Hoping to insulate commerce and economic life from the disruption of labor and political demonstrations, the Downtown Association proposed an ordinance prohibiting parades of more than twenty vehicles or two hundred persons on Wisconsin Avenue and other downtown streets during business hours.

The Milwaukee CIO Council, its member unions, and allies mobilized quickly to thwart the proposal. Appealing to a sense of class injustice and citizenship rights, they decried such a restriction on downtown protests and political parades. Democratic participation necessitated access to this key city space. Union activists speaking at the Common Council hearings stressed their role and their rights as citizens, veterans, and workers. United Auto Workers (UAW) Local 283 President Joseph Konkel, representing workers at Wisconsin Motors, argued: "We want our civil rights preserved and extended. That's what the boys fought for. That's what labor believes in." A representative from the Federated Trades Council, the AFL's central body, also challenged the proposal, warning that this "precedent" to restrict parades downtown might be adopted by "businessmen's associations" in other districts of the city. Bowing to union pressure, the Common Council soon dropped the measure.[12]

Attacked for having pushed this measure, the Downtown Association's Perry Anderson responded that they "did not mean to step on any toes."

Social History 17:2 (May 1992): 203–19; Margaret R. Somers, "What's Political or Cultural about Political Culture and the Public Sphere? Toward an Historical Sociology of Concept Formation," *Sociological Theory* 13 (1995): 113–44; and Robert B. Westbrook, *Why We Fought: Forging American Obligations in World War II* (Washington: Smithsonian Books, 2004). On the reconstitution of political culture, see Daniel T. Rodgers, *Age of Fracture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2011).

[12] "Milw. Parade Ban Killed as Labor Voiced Opposition," *Wisconsin CIO News*, 3 October 1947, 3; and "Parade Ban Hits Snag," *Wisconsin CIO News*, 19 September 1947, 4. See: Milwaukee County Industrial Union Council, "Minutes," 3 September 1947; Milwaukee County Industrial Union, Memorandum To all Local Unions, 11 September 1947; and Milwaukee County Industrial Union, Memorandum to Recording Secretaries, 19 September 1947; all found in folio 4, box 9, Milwaukee County Industrial Union Council Records, Milwaukee Mss DU, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Libraries, Archives Department, Milwaukee. See also the proposed ordinance and correspondence (especially Assistant City Attorney to Committee on Streets-Alleys-Sewers, 25 August 1947) in file 47–499, Common Council files, CRC. Although the Streets and Alleys Committee unanimously recommended the measure, in the face of opposition the full Council referred it back to committee and the proposal was dropped.

He claimed that the CIO misjudged the ban as an infringement on labor's and citizens' access to this important city space.[13] The *Milwaukee Journal*, a major player in postwar development efforts, responded indignantly to the proposed ordinance's defeat. The newspaper's editors complained that the council had "caved in like a wet paper box when labor leaders and some others vigorously objected." Declaring that the measure assisted business operations, just as prohibitions against double parking aided the flow of traffic and commerce, the *Journal* inquired: "Is it anybody's constitutional right to tie a city's traffic into knots? . . . To halt the movement of those activities on which the life of a city depends?"[14] For the *Journal* and the Downtown Association, the life of the market and the life of the city were inseparable. An orderly, efficient downtown marketplace, they suggested, would help to produce a modern city. Regulations against parades and demonstrations were portrayed as technical measures (akin to traffic engineering), designed to make the city function efficiently. They were defined as axioms of growth: precepts beyond politics.[15]

The CIO Council and its allies, however, were unwilling to let this issue be ruled out of bounds for political debate. This was not simply a matter of creating a more efficient city and market or of following the prescription for modernization and growth. Concerns about political and economic power also stood at center stage. For Milwaukee's business leaders, Wisconsin Avenue represented a commercial vision of urban vitality, one presuming that private economic interests rather than labor or even the wider public ought to guide the city. For the CIO, in contrast, this public site symbolized unfettered access to urban citizenship and collective action. Their organizing experience, their hours on picket duty, and the city's tumultuous labor history had taught them that the right of assembly, the protection of free speech, and the need to demonstrate power – above all in visible and strategic urban spaces – were decidedly political and relevant to this dispute. Democratic access and the ability to mobilize people in public view were crucial ingredients of urban working-class political power, which the CIO refused to sacrifice for the presumed imperatives of modern economic growth. They maintained this united stand for working-class politics even though the local labor movement had just been riven by a

[13] "Parade Restriction Proposal Set Back, Fails in Committee," MJ, 25 September 1947.
[14] "Council Committee Bows Weakly on Parade Control Plan," MJ, 26 September 1947.
[15] On the importance of physical public space and efforts to regulate access, see: Susan G. Davis, *Parades and Power: Street Theatre in Nineteenth-Century Philadelphia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986); Lisa Keller, *Triumph of Order: Democracy and Public Space in New York and London* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009); and John R. Parkinson, *Democracy and Public Space: The Physical Sites of Democratic Performance* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012).

fractious Allis-Chalmers strike (1946–1947) and despite the allegiance many labor activists held to New Deal policies inspired by Keynesian economics and to their own alternative visions of a modern Milwaukee. Those involved in the ordinance fight expressed a deep suspicion that this business-oriented version of urban growth politics threatened to remake the local landscape in ways that subverted working-class power.[16]

Both of these postwar episodes centered on Milwaukee's Wisconsin Avenue. The distance between them, however, indicates a shift underway in the city's political culture during the 1940s. This change, in turn, recast urban policy. The 1947 debate over the downtown parade ordinance arose amid a contested political culture. Organized labor and other working-class groups championed the principle of democratic access and contended that business leaders' priorities of economic efficiency and growth were fair game for political debate. The Wisconsin Avenue of 1947 harkened back to the first four decades of Milwaukee's twentieth century, in which the politics of the Social Democrats, the rising power of organized labor, and the patterns of everyday life in working-class neighborhoods shaped the social relations of the industrial city and the ways in which people imagined that city. The 1951 parade down Wisconsin Avenue, in contrast, reflected a pluralist conception of postwar urban politics in which the discourse of growth provided the glue for a new consensus. Diverse players, or interests, gathered together publically to celebrate growth. Decisions about the urban economy were placed outside the purview of political contest. Whereas in 1947 labor and its allies defended Wisconsin Avenue as a political space, in 1951 the Downtown Association and its allies defined this same thoroughfare as a commercial space. The ground had shifted from a vigorously contested terrain in which working-class politics held sway to a "vital center" in which growth politics set the direction for the postwar city. The Wisconsin Avenue of 1951 anticipated

[16] "Parade Ban Stopped," *Wisconsin CIO News*, 3 October 1947, 4. Wisconsin Avenue was also home to the CIO's headquarters. "State CIO Moves to Wisconsin Avenue," *Wisconsin CIO News*, 31 January 1947. On labor's public visibility, involvement in postwar cities, and defense of the right to strike, see especially: George Lipsitz, *Rainbow at Midnight: Labor and Culture in the 1940s* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994); Joshua B. Freeman, *Working-Class New York: Life and Labor since World War II* (New York: Free Press, 2000); and Josiah Bartlett Lambert, *"If Workers Took a Notion": The Right to Strike and American Political Development* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005). On limits black and female workers faced in making citizenship claims, see: D'Ann Campbell, *Women at War with America: Private Lives in a Patriotic Era* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984), 44–45; and Ira Katznelson, *When Affirmative Action Was White: An Untold History of Racial Inequality in Twentieth-Century America* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2005). On the Allis-Chalmers strike, see Stephen Meyer, *"Stalin over Wisconsin": The Making and Unmaking of Militant Unionism, 1900–1950* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1992).

the last four decades of the twentieth century when the growth politics espoused by civic and business leaders would set the pace for Milwaukee's political culture. With unintended but glaring irony, Labor Day at the beginning of the 1950s foreshadowed the neoliberal city.[17]

Challenges over democracy framed these contests and changes. As the 1930s drew to a close, New Deal supporters and opponents fought over the meaning of democracy in the United States. World War II became a war for democracy against dictatorship and the U. S. homefront was remade into the "arsenal of democracy." As the Cold War escalated, both internationally and domestically, democratic prospects and threats stood at the forefront. The language of democracy also showed the effects of an ongoing but complex clash between growth politics and working-class politics. In Milwaukee during the "long 1940s" (roughly the late 1930s to the early 1950s), workers, civic leaders, businessmen, reformers, conservatives, and other residents fought, compromised, and then fought some more in battles over policy and social order that posed urgent questions about self-rule, the prerogatives of private property, economic and political power, social welfare, access to urban spaces and resources, and participation in public life. Toward the end of this period a new understanding, or common sense, about the city had gained the upper hand, establishing different terms for urban development and civic order, while also altering expectations for postwar democracy.

Both working-class politics and reactions to workers' power played a pivotal role in this history of urban democracy.[18] The mid-twentieth-

[17] On the neoliberal city, see: Jason Hackworth, *The Neoliberal City: Governance, Ideology, and Development in American Urbanism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007); Judith T. Kenny and Jeffrey Zimmerman, "Constructing the 'Genuine American City': Neo-Traditionalism, New Urbanism, and Neo-Liberalism in the Remaking of Downtown Milwaukee," *Cultural Geographies* 11:1 (2003): 74–98; Christopher Mele, "Casinos, Prisons, Incinerators, and Other Fragments of Neoliberal Urban Development," *Social Science History* 35:3 (Fall 2011): 423–52; and Mark Purcell, *Recapturing Democracy: Neoliberalization and the Struggle for Alternative Urban Futures* (New York: Routledge, 2008). See also Joseph Heathcott, "The City Quietly Remade: National Programs and Local Agendas in the Movement to Clear the Slums, 1942–1952," *Journal of Urban History* 34:2 (January 2008): 221–42. On the vital center and the making of a postwar consensus, see: Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *The Vital Center: The Politics of Freedom* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1949); and Wendy L. Wall, *Inventing the "American Way": The Politics of Consensus from the New Deal to the Civil Rights Movement* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

[18] Works on the history of working-class politics and culture that inform this project include: Herbert G. Gutman, *Work, Culture and Society in Industrializing America: Essays in American Working-Class and Social History* (1976; reprint, New York: Vintage Books, 1977); Robin D. G. Kelley, *Race Rebels: Culture, Politics, and the Black Working Class* (New York: Free Press, 1994); David Montgomery, *Citizen Worker: The Experience of Workers in the United States with Democracy and the Free Market during the Nineteenth*

century city housed a politically and culturally robust working class. In the 1930s and 1940s, workers, working-class organizations, and allied groups laid claim to the city, extending the power they built in the workplace, in local communities, and in national politics. During the Great Depression, urban workers organized and established themselves as a political and social power. A rapidly growing CIO and a resurgent AFL, combined with increasing commitments to the national New-Deal Democratic Party and upsurges of support for local social democratic and progressive organizations, demonstrated the strength and vitality of the urban working class. At the same time, these organizations that faced regular attacks from outside were tested continually by the social and economic insecurities of their members' daily lives. These challenges accounted for much of the volatility and contingency of working-class politics in the 1930s and later.[19] As the new decade began, labor unions, civil rights groups, women's organizations, and progressives rallied to protect New Deal gains and to seize wartime political and social opportunities. The urban working class also changed rapidly during the war and in the years immediately following, as thousands of women found temporary jobs in defense plants, the city's black working class grew, and organized labor assumed a prominent place in society and politics. The wartime city, a busy and clamorous place,

Century (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993); and Sean Wilentz, *Chants Democratic: New York City and the Rise of the American Working Class, 1788–1850* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1984). Important critical interventions include: John Arena, "Bringing In the Black Working Class: The Black Urban Regime Strategy," *Science and Society* 72:2 (April 2011): 153–79; Ava Baron, ed., *Work Engendered: Toward a New History of American Labor* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991); Geoff Eley and Keith Nield, *The Future of Class in History: What's Left of the Social?* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2007); William H. Sewell, Jr., "How Classes Are Made: Critical Reflections on E. P. Thompson's Theory of Working-Class Formation," in *E. P. Thompson: Critical Perspectives*, eds. Harvey J. Kaye and Keith McClelland (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1990), 50–77; and Marc W. Steinberg, "Culturally Speaking: Finding a Commons between Post-Structuralism and the Thompsonian Perspective," *Social History* 21:2 (May 1996): 193–214.

[19] On 1930s urban working class politics and culture, see: Lizabeth Cohen, *Making a New Deal: Industrial Workers in Chicago, 1919–1939* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990); Cecelia Bucki, *Bridgeport's Socialist New Deal, 1915–36* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001); Michael Denning, *The Cultural Front: The Laboring of American Culture in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Verso, 1996); 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); Gary Gerstle, *Working-Class Americanism: The Politics of Labor in a Textile City, 1914–1960* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Sam Lubell, "Revolt of the City," in *The Future of American Politics*, 3d ed., rev. (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), 43–68; Andor Skotnes, *A New Deal for All?: Race and Class Struggles in Depression-Era Baltimore* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2013); and Robert H. Zieger, *The CIO, 1935–1955* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995).