

Citizen Worker

*The Experience of Workers in the United States
with Democracy and the Free Market
during the Nineteenth Century*

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Contents

Acknowledgments	<i>page</i> ix
Introduction	1
1 Wage Labor, Bondage, and Citizenship	13
The Right to Quit	25
Free Labor in the Shadow of Slavery	31
Quitting and Getting Paid	39
Citizenship and the Terms of Employment	43
2 Policing People for the Free Market	52
The Definition and Prosecution of Crime	59
The Privatization of Poor Relief	71
The Crime of Idleness	83
Arms and the Man	89
Police Powers and Workers' Homes	104
3 Political Parties	115
Black Workers and the Republicans in the South	117
Industrial Workers and Party Politics	130
Workers and Tammany Hall	137
Labor Reform and Electoral Politics	145
Citizenship and the Unseen Hand	157
Bibliography	163
Index	182

Introduction

Workers in every industrializing country of the nineteenth century fought for civil and political rights within the national polity. In autocracies, where any popular mobilization could be regarded by the authorities as subversive, even strikes over economic issues frequently activated demands by workers for freedom of speech and association and for access to the decision-making power of government. Although social democratic parties proclaimed collective ownership of the means of production as their ultimate objective, and anarchists held all forms of government and all patriotism in contempt, the greatest mass mobilizations and general strikes of European workers before 1914 demanded political rights: the vote, civil liberties, and the end of autocracy. Where male workers could and did influence government by casting their ballots and were also free to form unions, as was the case during the last two decades of the century in France and the United States, they denounced the frequent intervention of soldiers in disputes between laborers and their employers as flagrant violations of that equality of rights on which republics were supposedly founded.

“In the end, it is the political context as much as the steam-engine, which had most influence upon the shaping consciousness and institutions of the working class,” wrote E. P. Thompson. While England underwent the momentous social transformation of its industrial revolution, he explained, its political “*ancien regime* received a new lease of life,” in reaction to the French Revolution and Napoleonic Wars, so that the working people “were subjected simultaneously to an intensification of two intolerable forms of relationship: those of economic exploitation and those of political oppression.”¹

The contrast between their situation and that found in the United States, where the democratic impact of the eighteenth-century revolution had preceded the country’s industrialization, was often noted by Britons who had battled for universal manhood suffrage and annual parliaments. “*Here*,” proclaimed Irish-born John Binns from Philadelphia, “the *people* are sovereign.” Thomas Ainge Devyr had expressed

¹ E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York, 1963), 197–9.

the same belief when he was arraigned in Newcastle before “their masquerading lordships in their black gowns and white wigs.” One of them reproached Devyr and his Chartist associates for “committing not only a crime but a folly, in assuming that the mass could govern, instead of being governed.” To which the irrepressible Devyr replied:

It is a glorious sunset streaming through that gothic window. Did your lordship ever hear of a great country lying away in the direction of that setting sun? Did you hear that its people assume to govern themselves? Actually do the very thing that your lordship informs us cannot be done?²

Nevertheless, from the moment he landed on American shores until his death some four decades later, Devyr was locked in battle on behalf of tenant farmers and wage earners on the western side of the Atlantic, whose ability to “govern themselves,” he concluded, was jeopardized by an emerging economic system propelled by the quest for private profits within the parameters set by market forces. The more that active participation in government was opened to the propertyless strata of society, the less capacity elected officials seemed to have to shape the basic contours of social life. Ray Gunn has written of the state of New York that by the 1840s “the economy was effectively insulated from democratic control.”³

In the industrializing regions of the United States social priorities were set by people whose accumulated wealth proved decisive in determining the uses to which factors of production were put. Moreover, the economic power exercised by that wealth was underwritten by the coercive power of the police, armed forces, and the judiciary (or, more appropriately, as we shall see, the legal profession), and by privatized administration of poor relief. In addition, the inexorable grip of urban real estate owners on the decisions of local government persuaded Devyr and such successors as Terence V. Powderly and Henry George that monopolized access to land was the primary source of new forms of mastery of some human beings over others, which had become by the end of the century as onerous as those of the old regime.

Investigating the experience of workingmen and women with the simultaneous evolution of political democracy and a capitalist economy between the Jeffersonian triumph of the 1790s and the con-

² John Binns, *Recollections of the Life of John Binns: Twenty-Nine Years in Europe and Fifty-Three in the United States* (Philadelphia, 1854), 227; Thomas Ainge Devyr, *The Odd Book of the Nineteenth Century, or, “Chivalry” in Modern Days* (Greenpoint, N.Y., 1882), “Irish and English Sections,” 185–6.

³ L. Ray Gunn, *The Decline of Authority: Public Economic Policy and Political Development in New York, 1800–1860* (Ithaca, N.Y., 1988), 9.

solidation of business' power in the 1890s provides an opportunity to assess just what advantages political democracy provided workers in "the land beyond the setting sun," in comparison to those in industrialized portions of the Old World. Of the major industrial states in the 1880s only France had extended voting rights to virtually all its adult male population, while also securing freedom of the press and of association for its working people. The inclusion of workers in a French polity, which was still dominated by rural values and interests, placed severe restraints on the country's capitalist development, in the view of Gérard Noiriel, and "forced successive governments into compromises aggravating the rigidity of the labor market."⁴ Neither democracy nor the indisputable political might of rural values and interests effectively restrained capitalist development in the United States, any more than it was impeded by autocracy in Germany or highly restricted franchise in England.

The contrast between the two sides of the North Atlantic had been more pronounced during the first half of the century than it was by the final decades. The United States had opened the franchise to propertyless white males in the northern states between the 1790s and the 1840s, and to black males in the southern states in the 1860s. In Europe the broad expansion of the suffrage achieved by the revolutions of 1848 had survived in few states outside of Switzerland and southern Germany.

During the 1860s the British Parliament had cautiously allowed the most prosperous of urban workingmen into the electorate, and the French Republic had bestowed the vote on virtually all adult males thirteen years after the suppression of the Paris Commune. By this time, the extension of voting rights, after workers' rebellions had been put down, appeared to many governments a promising way to enlist popular support for pending or probable wars. The German Empire offered its workers a frustrating blend of electoral privileges and authoritarian rule. All males over twenty-four years of age could vote for representatives to the imperial parliament, but the parliament could not overrule the kaiser and the government he selected. Its most industrialized state, Prussia, retained a three-class voting system for its own elections, while other states, such as Baden and Bavaria, boasted a more egalitarian franchise. After the demise of the oligarchical National Liberals early in the 1890s, however, voter participation and electioneering in both rural and urban regions of Germany had assumed an exuberant and populist quality rivaling that found in American campaigns, while the powerful Social Democrats proved

⁴ Gérard Noiriel, *Les ouvriers dans la société française* (Paris, 1986), 134–5. My translation.

reluctant to resort to mass action on behalf of parliamentary rule. Elsewhere in Europe social conflict over voting rights reached new heights at the end of the century. Austria, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Spain, Russia, and Finland all produced huge mobilizations of workers demanding one man, one vote (in the Finnish case, one person, one vote) during the first decade of the twentieth century. Only in the aftermath of those struggles could the secretary of the Socialist International write with misplaced confidence, "No one doubts that within a few years democracy will triumph in all countries of European civilization."⁵

Important as they were, therefore, formal voting rights do not provide the only point of contrast, or even the most consequential one. Outside of the slave states, the formation of popular associations was subjected to far less police supervision in the United States than it was in Europe, and the culture of mass politics both encouraged popular assembly and lent the rights of assemblage a profound racial twist. The land of liberty was also the land of slavery. Political rights were identified as the privilege of white men everywhere in popular imagination, and in all but a few New England states by law. Consequently, the most intense and sanguinary battle waged by its working people for citizenship and suffrage was that by African Americans in the South after a war in which they had been enlisted on the winning side and slavery had been destroyed.

Democratization of the polity did have an impact on American economic development. It hastened the replacement of older forms of physical and legal coercion – such as imprisonment for debt or for "absconding from the service" of their masters, and the post-Civil War southern Black Codes – by the legal doctrine of "freedom of contract." Blatantly visible styles of domination and exploitation yielded to new forms, which were disguised as commodity exchange and justified by the ascendant discourse of equal rights and freely contracted arrangements. Amelia Sargent wrote in 1846 that when a worker first entered a textile mill, she

receives therefrom a Regulation paper, containing the rules by which she must be governed while in their employ; and lo! here

5 Dick Geary, *European Labour Protest, 1848–1939* (London, 1981), 59–65, 103–18; David Blackburn and Geoff Eley, *Peculiarities of German History: Bourgeois Society and Politics in Nineteenth-Century Germany* (Oxford, 1984), 256–7, 275; Geoff Eley, *Reshaping the German Right: Radical Nationalism and Political Change after Bismarck* (New Haven, 1980), 21–4; Marcel van der Linden and Jürgen Rojahn, eds., *The Formation of Labour Movements, 1870–1914* (two vols., Leiden, 1990); Göran Therborn, "The Rule of Capital and the Rise of Democracy," *New Left Review*, 103 (May–June 1977), 11–17; Emile Vandervelde, *Socialism versus the State* (translated by Charles H. Kerr, Chicago, 1919), 61. Vandervelde wrote this important book in 1914.

is the beginning of mischief; for in addition to the tyrannous and oppressive rules which meet her astonished eyes, she finds herself compelled to remain for the space of twelve months in the very place she then occupies, however reasonable and just cause of complaint might be hers, or however strong the wish for dimission.⁶

Sargent sought the remedy for this new form of bondage “through the Ballot Box.” She summoned the “hardy independent yeomenry and mechanics,” who had “daughters and sisters toiling in these sickly prison-houses,” to “see to it that you send to preside in the Councils of each Commonwealth . . . men who will watch zealously over the interests of the laborer in every department [and] who will protect him by the strong arm of the law from the encroachments of arbitrary power.”⁷

Sargent’s appeal to legislatures elected by broad-based manhood suffrage for protection from the regulations imposed by her employers under the “free market” proved futile. The law of master and servant, which found no place in the statutes adopted by elected legislatures of the free states, reappeared in court decisions and in commentaries on the common law, to provide legal sanction for employers’ authority. At the same time, control of relief for unemployed but able-bodied men and women was commandeered by bourgeois reformers who reshaped charity to reinforce industrial discipline. The contribution of legislatures, especially after the 1860s, was to enact increasingly draconic vagrancy laws that made it a crime not to have a job. As labor reformer George McNeill wrote in his famous protest of 1877: “When [the worker] is at work, he belongs to the lower orders, and is continually under surveillance; when out of work, he is an outlaw, a tramp, – he is a man without the rights of manhood, – the pariah of society, homeless, in the deep significance of the term.”⁸

It would be a serious error of judgment, however, to conclude that the revolution of the eighteenth century had left no durable legacy of egalitarian practice. “Nothing is more striking to an European traveller in the United States,” wrote Alexis de Tocqueville, “than the absence of what we term Government, or the Administration.”⁹ Even the mechanisms through which the business and professional strata tried to dominate the nineteenth-century cities and factories leaked like a sieve. Although popularly elected governments secured little

6 Philip S. Foner, ed., *The Factory Girls* (Urbana, Ill., 1977), 135.

7 *Ibid.*, 137–8.

8 George E. McNeill, *The Labor Movement: The Problem of To-day* (New York, 1887), 455, quoting from his own editorial of 1877.

9 Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, translated by Henry Reeve (New York, 1838), 51.

effective leverage over economic and social life, civil society nurtured community solidarities and a swarm of institutions such as fraternal orders, trade unions, Catholic parishes, self-governing plebeian Protestant congregations, and political clubs, all of which obstructed bourgeois control of American life at every turn. For working people the most important part of the Jeffersonian legacy was the shelter it provided to free association, diversity of beliefs and behavior, and defiance of alleged social superiors in society.

As Alfred Young demonstrated in his exegesis on the memoirs of the shoemaker George Robert Twelves Hewes, the revolutionary struggle against British rule profoundly bolstered the self-esteem of the artisans who had taken part, and eroded their readiness to defer to the judgment and personal authority of fellow citizens who exhibited greater wealth or education.¹⁰ Hewes's political and psychological odyssey, and that of innumerable contemporaries, suggests that workers' claims to citizenship, which derived from the revolution of the eighteenth century, informed the heady boast inscribed on a banner carried by bricklayers in Philadelphia's 1788 parade in celebration of the new constitution: "Both buildings and rulers are the work of our hands."¹¹ The bearers of that banner believed that the archetypal citizen of classical republicanism, the "accomplished" man who commanded property and arms, had no greater claim to guide the polity than the less eminent male whose labors contributed to its material welfare.¹²

The claim of every white man to equal political rights had been championed by the Jeffersonians against what the Democratic-Republicans of New York in the 1790s called the "consummate and overbearing haughtiness" of the postrevolutionary Federalist elite.¹³ Theirs was the political community into which John Binns of the London Corresponding Society and the United Englishmen fit with ease. Its doctrines framed nascent awareness of class conflict in the vocabulary of patriotism, race, and rights. The legacy of the eighteenth century revolutions, which had characterized the patriot as a determined enemy of the status quo and especially of "feudal" privilege, while perpetuating the subordination of African Americans,

10 Alfred F. Young, "George Robert Twelves Hewes (1752–1840): A Boston Shoemaker and the Memory of the American Revolution," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d series, 38 (Oct. 1981), 561–623. The literature on deference and the Revolution is too vast to be cataloged here.

11 [Anon.], "Account of the Grand Federal Procession," *American Museum*, July 4, 1788, 63.

12 On classical republicanism, see J. G. A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (Princeton, N.J., 1975).

13 Quoted in Howard B. Rock, *Artisans of the New Republic: The Tradesmen of New York City in the Age of Jefferson* (New York, 1979), 50.

made this usage both easy and very durable. The bloody test of the Civil War reaffirmed for the victors the linkage of loyalty to a common nation-state with struggle against social injustice. In the midst of that contest almost four million slaves laid claim to the rights of citizenship, and thereafter the advocates of both black and white workers justified their claims in terms of defense of the nation against southern and northern reincarnations of slavery.

The citizen-producer was customarily depicted as male. "To be adept in the art of Government," wrote Abigail Adams to her husband John, "is a prerogative to which your Sex lay an almost exclusive claim."¹⁴ Neither the unsuccessful challenges raised by upper-class women to the doctrine of *coverture*, which vested all property possessed by the wife in her husband and subsumed her political identity in his, nor the prominence of women among the workers employed by factory experiments of the 1790s, altered the reality that women were expected to obey the laws, but might have no part in making them. Like the "passive" citizens of the French constitution of 1791, whose status as domestic servants or inability to pay taxes equivalent to three days' labor disqualified them from voting, those American women who were not slaves or indentured servants could – as we shall see often did – bring criminal charges before the courts against other men and women, but they could not participate in the selection of government officials. Unlike the male "passive" citizen of France, however, women who married during the antebellum decades transferred their legal capacity to make contracts and own property to their husbands. In the words of the prestigious legal commentator Tapping Reeve, the marriage contract gave the husband dominion over everything she had acquired by "labor, service, or act," as well as the "person of his wife."¹⁵

Moreover, as Joyce Appleby has argued, it was not simply their political egalitarianism that distinguished the views of Jeffersonian Republicans from classical republicanism, but also the Jeffersonians' conviction that public needs were best met by private arrangements rather than by the actions of governments or incorporated bodies. Appleby added that the Jeffersonian ideological victory of 1800 was so complete that it drove all other styles of discourse from the national political arena.¹⁶ Many a writer on "working-class republicanism"

14 Abigail Adams to John Adams, May 9, 1776, quoted in Linda K. Kerber, *Women of the Republic: Intellect and Ideology in Revolutionary America* (Chapel Hill, N.C., 1980), 269.

15 Kerber, 119–27; Tapping Reeve, *The Law of Baron and Femme, of Parent and Child, Guardian and Ward, Master and Servant and of the Powers of the Courts of Chancery* (Albany, N.Y., 1862), 482. On early factories, see this volume Chapter 1. On the French constitution of 1791, see Georges Lefebvre, *The French Revolution*, translated by Elizabeth Moss Evanson (two vols., London, 1962–4), vol. 1, 151–2.

16 Joyce Appleby, *Capitalism and a New Social Order: The Republican Vision of the 1790s* (New York, 1984).

would agree with that proposition, at least in part. From another point of view, the Jeffersonian ideological triumph left dependent classes – slaves, indentured servants, wage earners, married women – bereft of a political vocabulary suited to their experiences and desires. We will have several occasions in these pages to examine working people’s appropriation of portions of the Jeffersonian discourse for their own use. Such appropriation required the infusion of collective action and mutualistic values into republican rhetoric. As Raymond Williams has argued, “Certain experiences, meanings, and values which cannot be expressed or substantially verified in terms of the dominant culture, are nevertheless lived and practiced on the basis of the residue – cultural as well as social – of some previous social or cultural formation.”¹⁷

The point of departure for popular blendings of traditional values with claims to active citizenship was the conviction that there was a common good to be fashioned by both private and public behavior, and that it was nurtured by freedom of speech and action and by self-organization. Mutual benefit societies, lyceums, mechanics’ institutes, cooperatives, trade unions, and workingmen’s parties all clothed themselves in Jeffersonian celebration of diversity and popular initiative. “Let a thousand flowers blossom” – to borrow a phrase from Mao Zedong.

But not all those flowers could find a place in the garden of capitalism. As commodity exchange assumed its industrial shape, bourgeois reformers approached plebeian life in the spirit John Milton had attributed to Adam in the Garden of Eden:

To-morrow, ere fresh morning streak the east
 With the first approach of light, we must be risen,
 And at our pleasant labour, to reform
 Yon flowery arbours, yonder alleys green,
 Our walk at noon, with branches overgrown,
 That mock our scant manuring, and require
 More hands than ours to lop their wanton growth.¹⁸

The expansion of wage labor and the reification of the wage relationship by the legal doctrine of freedom of contract severed all but monetary bonds between employer and employee, while encouraging new forms of discipline through work rules, public institutions, and police powers. The new impositions by no means went uncontested. The social networks of urban economic and neighborhood life, mass communication systems based on the printed word, interaction among peoples of diverse cultures and beliefs, and the Jeffersonian legacy encouraged

¹⁷ Raymond Williams, *Marxism and Literature* (Oxford, 1977), 122.

¹⁸ John Milton, “Paradise Lost,” *The Complete Poems of John Milton, with Complete Notes by Thomas Newton, D.D., Bishop of Bristol* (New York, 1936), 119.

ordinary people to believe that destiny lay “not in our stars but in ourselves.” Working people sought to use their access to the powers of government not only to defend their customs against unpalatable innovations, but also to reshape social life according to their own aspirations and their own sense of the priority of the common welfare over individual advantage.

My interpretation of this contest owes much to two recent developments in the study of law. The first stems from the emergence of a body of legal protections of the individual worker (rooted in antidiscrimination legislation), which has recently amended legal application of free-market principles. This contemporary development has awakened scholarly interest in what the rights, obligations, and protections of individuals on the job were in the past. Previous scholarship on labor and the law was devoted primarily to legal regulation of collective action and to the law of slavery.

The second influential development has been the maturing of critical legal theory. This reexamination of American law and its history has produced rich evidence on the role of courts and the legal profession in the development of the state in the United States. In tandem with renewed scholarly interest in the individual worker, it admonishes those who call for “bringing the state back” into the history of American labor to scrutinize carefully the nature of the nineteenth-century American state, and not to exaggerate the “relative autonomy of the state” in that period.¹⁹

Moreover, critical legal theory has also forced historians to come to grips with the notion of discourse as power. Much historical analysis today focuses on the role of historically evolving styles of conceptualizing human and even physical entities and relationships in the molding of social dominance and subordination. Denouncing the notion that language and law simply reflect material reality, and seeking to “interrogate” vocabularies used in the past as well as those of the present, these historians have called into question Karl Marx’s famous maxim, “It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their conscious-

19 Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol, *Bringing the State Back In* (Cambridge, 1985). Among many contributions to critical legal history, I am especially indebted to Christopher L. Tomlins, *The State and the Unions: Labor Relations, Law, and the Organized Labor Movement in America, 1880–1960* (Cambridge, 1985); William Forbath, *Law and the Shaping of the American Labor Movement* (Cambridge, Mass., 1991); Robert J. Steinfeld, *Invention of Free Labor: The Employment Relations in English and American Law and Culture, 1350–1870* (Chapel Hill, N.C. 1991); and Amy Dru Stanley, “Contract Rights in the Age of Emancipation: Wage Labor and Marriage after the Civil War” (Ph.D. diss., Yale University, 1990).

ness.”²⁰ Some, like Joan Wallach Scott, would have us “acknowledge ‘class’ but locate its origins in political rhetoric.”²¹ Others, somewhat more modestly, would argue, as does William Forbath, that the “language of the law, along with other discourses of the powerful, lays down the very terms within which subordinate groups are able to experience the world and articulate their aspirations.”²²

The historicizing of discourse has greatly enriched our understanding of the operation of what Antonio Gramsci called the hegemonic ideas of any social order, and has helped us especially to appreciate the power of the way of thinking that appears in a given historical period as “common sense,” in limiting ordinary people’s sense of which courses of action are realistic and which utopian, and in shaping their verbalization of their own aspirations.²³ Nevertheless, to locate the origins of class merely “in political rhetoric” is to uncouple historically specific ways of thinking from the relationships of exploitation that are embedded in creating the goods and services used in everyday life, and also from capitalism’s relentless compulsion to disrupt the patterns of life it had earlier brought into existence. Nineteenth-century men and women were set to thinking about social conflict in terms of antagonistic classes by their encounter with new forms of exploitation. These did not involve the simple commandeering of produce and persons that had characterized earlier societies and that continued to thrive in southern states until the 1860s, but instead disguised the generation of wealth and the economy’s creative and ruthless dynamism as market relations, in which everyone received some equivalent for what he or she had contributed.

Although my analysis of the transformation of the master-and-servant relation, of the effort to police people for the sake of market freedom, and of the role of political parties in the lives of working people, devotes close attention to the ideological categories with which working people interpreted their own experience and formulated their goals, it does not reach the conclusion that the world of ideas provided the driving force of social domination and change.

Moreover, to argue, as Forbath does, that “the very terms within which subordinate groups are able to experience the world and articulate their aspirations” were laid down by “the discourses of the power-

20 Karl Marx, “Preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*,” in Marx, *Selected Works*, (2 vols., New York, n.d.), vol. 1, 356. For a critique of discourse, which offers an informative survey of the history of this style of thinking, see Bryan D. Palmer, *Descent into Discourse: the Reification of Language and the Writing of Social History* (Philadelphia, 1990).

21 Joan Wallach Scott, *Gender and the Politics of History* (New York, 1988), 59.

22 Forbath, 170.

23 Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from the Prison Notebooks of Antonio Gramsci* (translated and edited by Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey N. Smith, New York, 1971), 195–6, 246–7.

ful," helps us understand the content and appeal of what many historians have called "working class republicanism" only if we add a caveat. To avoid the trap of a new consensus history, in which everyone becomes "republican" and working-class culture appears only as a mental legacy of bygone social formations, it is urgent to devote close attention to people's actions along with their words, and to what some students of women's literature have aptly described as "silences." We will encounter the limitations of Forbath's formulation most dramatically when we examine the post-Emancipation struggles of African Americans in the South. Virtually overnight former slaves pulverized the hegemonic ideology so eloquently described by Eugene D. Genovese in *Roll, Jordan, Roll*, while they acted on aspirations that would simply not fit into the terms of thought professed by northern Republicans. Pierre Bordieu's description of the ambiguous and often hostile response of subordinate classes to the very styles of expression employed by the dominant strata serves as a warning to historians to tread warily when interpreting popular uses of republican ideology:

The dominant language discredits and destroys the spontaneous political discourse of the dominated. It leaves them only silence or a borrowed language, whose logic departs from that of popular usage but without becoming that of erudite usage, a deranged language, in which the "fine words" are only there to mark the dignity of the expressive intention, and which, unable to express anything true, real, or "felt", dispossess the speaker of the very experience it is supposed to express. . . . And often the only escape from ambivalence or indeterminacy toward language is to fall back on what one *can* appreciate, the body rather than words, substance rather than form, an honest face rather than a smooth tongue.²⁴

Finally, wrestling with the meaning of citizenship to the nineteenth-century worker may also shed some light on contemporary issues, which have been made murky by the discourse of the 1990s. No two phrases come coupled together more often today than "democracy" and "a market economy." A front-page article in the *New York Times* even referred to Czechoslovakia's pending transition to a "democratic market economy."²⁵ How an economy can be democratic, or what a market economy is like in the age of multinational corporations, we are never told. Both notions are employed in a manner that is deliberately vague, and just how they are related to each other is even

²⁴ Pierre Bordieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste* (Cambridge, Mass., 1984), 462, 465; Eugene D. Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made* (New York, 1972).

²⁵ *New York Times*, May 19, 1992.

more so. We can only rest assured that they are both Good Things. As Judge Anthony M. Kennedy wrote in his judgment against Washington State's comparable worth statute: "Neither law nor logic deems the free market system a suspect enterprise."²⁶

There is much in the experience of workingmen and women in this country that should lead us to think more carefully and precisely about these two notions and the historical relationship between them. In important ways the meaning of citizenship and the freedom of economic activity from state control did expand together, though neither one turns out to have been a simple logical consequence of the other. Over the course of the century, however, both the contraction of the domain of governmental activity and the strengthening of government's coercive power contributed to the hegemony of business and professional men, which was exercised through both governmental and private activity. It was the working people who sought to preserve the community welfare through both spheres.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, Nov. 15, 1987.