



From the Folks Who Brought You the Weekend: A Short, Illustrated History of Labor in the United States

By Priscilla Murolo, A. B. Chitty

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Hailed in a starred Publishers Weekly review as a work of impressive even-handedness and analytic acuity . . . that gracefully handles a broad range of subject matter, This is the first comprehensive look at American history through the prism of working people. of illustrations.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Management's perpetual dream of cheap labor explains the invention of slavery, though few may couch it in those terms. Drawing such connections with impressive evenhandedness and investigative and analytic acuity, this readable popular history covers U.S. labor from precolonial times to the late 1960s, with two short chapters on the last few decades. Brandishing little-known facts, the authors reshape common views of social history. Remarkably, for instance, hundreds of black indentured servants came to the colonies from Africa in the 1600s, and throughout the century, as the "peculiar institution" was legalized, these free men and women were forced into slavery. Less astonishing but still significant, the Wobblies pushed as much for free speech as union organizing, and their newspapers were illustrated by famous avant-garde artists. Sometimes the authors simply highlight an obvious fact that has languished in obscurity for instance, that the American Revolution was sparked by the discontent of working people, not the wealthy or landowning, or that many defenders of slavery believed that all labor should be enslaved. Murolo (who teaches American history at Sarah Lawrence College) and Chitty (a librarian at Queens College) gracefully handle a broad range of subject matter Chinese railroad labor is considered alongside housework and steel-mill work making it easier to understand the complex historical relationships between work, gender, ethnicity, race, immigration and sex. (Sept.) Forecast: Accessible to high school students as well as adults, this extraordinarily fine addition to U.S. history and labor literature could become an evergreen paperback comparable to Howard Zinn's award-winning *A People's History of the United States*.

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From Library Journal

Chitty (librarian systems officer, Queens Coll., CUNY) and Murolo (history, Sarah Lawrence Coll.) have constructed a useful but flawed history of labor in America, starting with the arrival of Columbus in 1492 and ending with the election of George Walker Bush to be the 43rd President of the United States. The book's greatest strength is in putting a human face on the people, places, events, and social conditions that have shaped the evolution of organized labor. Also useful is the book's list of suggested readings. Its greatest weaknesses include the authors' obvious bias against business for example, they focus on class privilege, industrial capitalism, and the accumulation of wealth by a limited number of individuals while ignoring the vast number of small business owners who, like their workers, are challenged to survive in a rapidly changing global economy and the lack of footnotes, citations, or a thorough bibliography, all of which could be useful for students, scholars, and citizens interested in increasing their knowledge of this very important topic. Perhaps a better buy for both academic and public libraries would be *Rekindling the Movement: Labor's Quest for Relevance in the Twenty-First Century* (LJ 7/01). Not a priority purchase. Norman B. Hutcherson, California State Univ., Bakersfield
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From [Booklist](#)

Murolo teaches American history at Sarah Lawrence College; Chitty is a librarian systems officer at Queens College in New York. Even with such recent titles as Paul LeBlanc's *A Short History of the U.S. Working Class: From Colonial Times to the Twenty-First Century* (1999), Jacqueline Jones' *A Social History of the Laboring Classes: From Colonial Times to the Present* (1999), and a new edition of Melvyn Dubofsky's classic *Labor in America: A History* (1999), Murolo and Chitty's book is important, because it devotes more

attention to the impact of globalism on working Americans and considers recent changes in the labor movement as reflected by the election of the "New Voice" slate to the leadership of the AFL-CIO. As did the authors of the aforementioned works, Murolo and Chitty also begin in colonial America; but their survey more thoroughly includes the contributions of women, Native Americans, African Americans, immigrants, and minorities, and considers events often ignored in other histories. Thirty pages of stirring drawings by "comic journalist" Joe Sacco add an unusual dimension to the book. *David Rouse*
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Users Review

From reader reviews:

Joaquin Hogan:

Nowadays reading books are more than want or need but also work as a life style. This reading habit give you lot of advantages. The advantages you got of course the knowledge even the information inside the book which improve your knowledge and information. The information you get based on what kind of e-book you read, if you want get more knowledge just go with training books but if you want experience happy read one along with theme for entertaining including comic or novel. Often the *From the Folks Who Brought You the Weekend: A Short, Illustrated History of Labor in the United States* is kind of book which is giving the reader capricious experience.

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Michael Fischer:

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