
The City and Community: The Impact of
Urban Forces on Working Class Behavior

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Urban Forces on Working Class Behavior**

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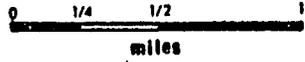
In 1871 a Congregational minister came to Lynn, Massachusetts, the leading industrial center for shoe production, the nation's largest industry at the time. The Reverend Cook delivered in Lynn a series of lectures on factory reform. In trying to understand the militant nature of the Lynn workers in comparison to the workers of Lowell and Lawrence, Cook noted that "a study of the subject at a distance might lead to the opinion that a shoe town and a cotton town are much alike; but the reverse is true. Each has a set of exigencies of its own."¹ The Reverend went on to argue that these differences in turn affected the behavior and attitudes of the workers themselves. ". . . the periodical lulls in the activity of the shoe factories and the large percentage of changeable operatives [make] it difficult to introduce into the shoe factory system the admirable method of sifting operatives according to characters that has long been practiced in the cotton factory system . . ."²

The Reverend Cook may have been inaccurate in his analysis of the effects of the differences between the cotton factory town and the shoe town. Furthermore his concern for reform may have degenerated into a call for moral purity of the work shop, the segregation of the sexes in the factory, more church services for the factory workers, and greater striving for temperance reform among workers. But he did, almost by accident, put his finger (with all its moral waving) on a fruitful area for research by the urban and labor historian - the impact of ecological factors on class behavior and collective action and consciousness.

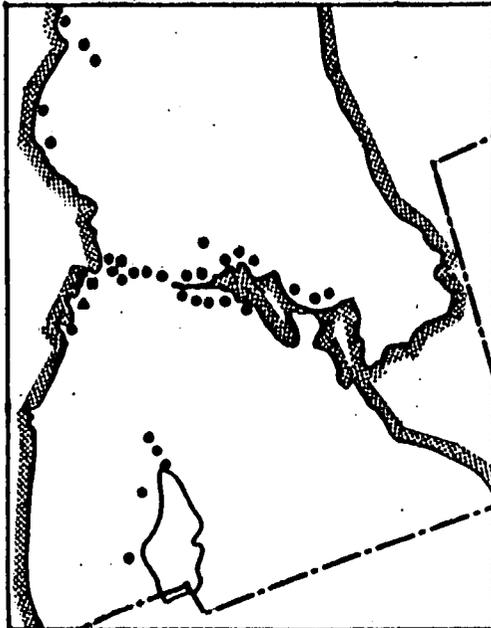
FALL RIVER

MILL DISPERSAL 1850-1920

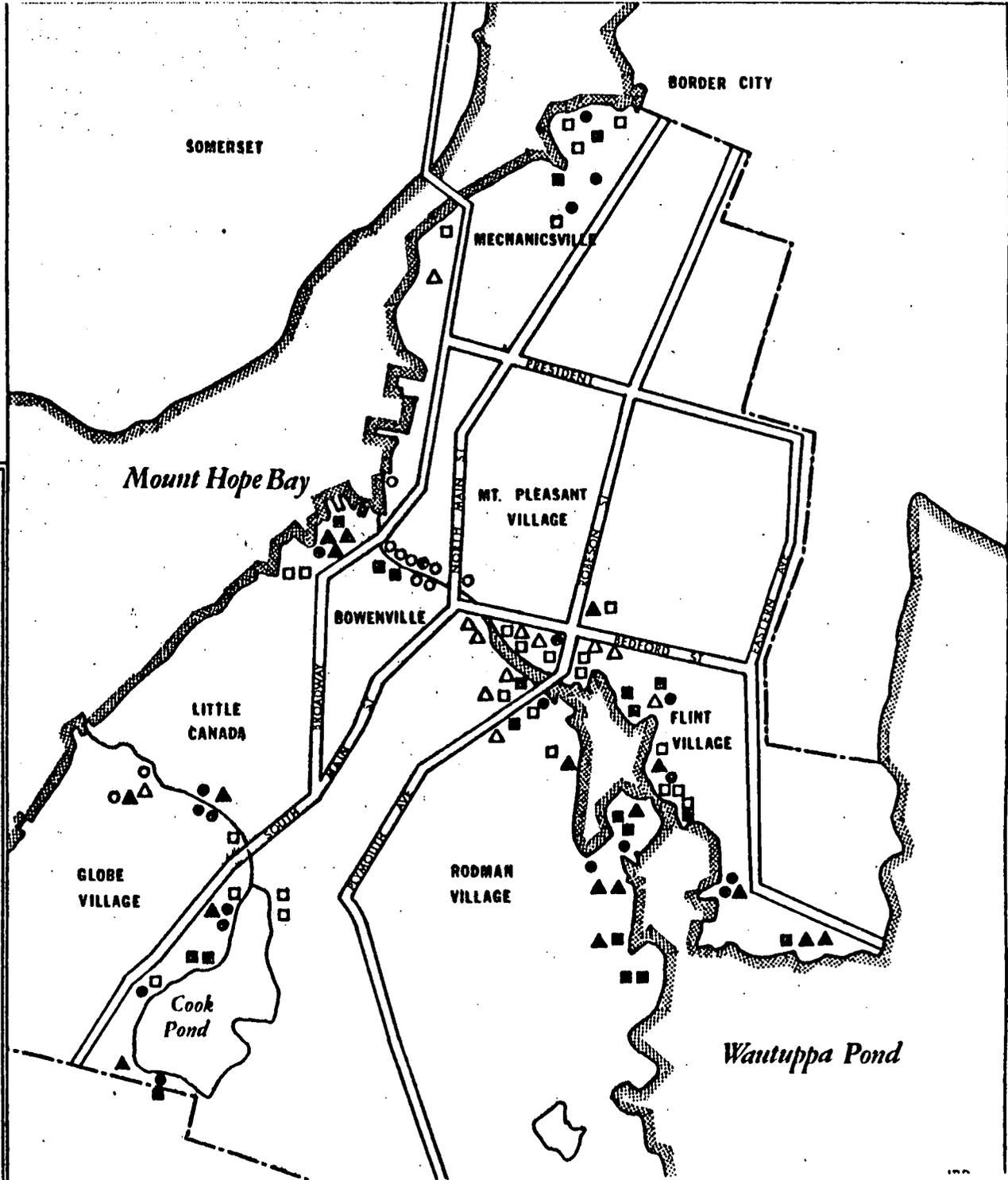
mills built			
BEFORE 1850	○	1880 - 1889	●
1850 - 1869	△	1890 - 1899	▲
1870 - 1879	□	1900 - 1920	■



MANUFACTURING ESTABLISHMENTS IN 1875



Cotton Goods ● Print Works ■ Iron Works ▲



Historians of the American working class and labor, following the tradition of John R. Commons, have written a history of the American worker's organizations, his trade unions and his labor parties. They have traditionally emphasized the materialistic goals of organized labor, accepting Commons' notion that with the development of capitalism, group consciousness or individual self-interested unions, united only by the pragmatic self-interest of the members, formed to advance the interests of the member workers.³

The concern of these historians over bread and butter unionism led them to a detailed analysis of the history and structure of the formal institutions of the American worker. Their work has contributed much to our understanding of the history of the American trade union movement and of the uniqueness of that movement. Unfortunately by focusing primarily on formal trade union institutions, their work has overlooked important cultural and social dynamics of the American workers' experiences.⁴ In overlooking these dynamics of the workers' experiences, the traditional school has assumed that the American worker had no unique culture or community. The history of American trade unionism was pictured as a history of consensus and accommodation and conflict was seen as confined to issues of "how much" or union recognition.

Labor historians in the 1960's, following the lead of the English labor historian E. P. Thompson, have begun to break down many of the original assumptions about the American working class.⁵ Unfortunately

for those who are interested in modern urban or labor history their work has tended to concentrate on the workers as pre-industrial types, either immigrants or artisans. They have looked at him as a carrier of pre-industrial values but not as an actor in the industrial community. They have not looked at the American industrial worker or at the formal or informal institutions, which make up the environment or world of the American worker. Not all workers in this country were newly arrived immigrant peasants, and those that were did not only enter the industrial factory, but also entered the urban world and the community of urban workers. They often joined established working class institutions and became part of a complex of urban factors which affected their behavior.⁶

Researchers in labor relations, although not disputing the Commons' school and independent of Thompson's work also began to raise the question of community or social factors on the workers' behavior and consciousness in their attempt to understand labor conflict. In 1954, Clark Kerr and Abraham Siegal argued that although there were several factors which help explain labor conflict, "strikes occur where they can occur, that is where the working class community is closely knit and the workers forceful, and not where the workers are dispersed and subdued."⁷ Although this appears fairly obvious, it points to the importance of understanding the workers' world, that extends beyond his membership in a trade union. Kerr and Siegal found that workers "strike most oftenly and most violently when they [were] in an isolated mass with a strong sense of group if not class consciousness."

Again, this is a fairly obvious finding, but it is a finding which causes us to consider the affects an industrial environment has on the workers and their ability to maintain class solidarity and collective action. Kerr and Siegal found that the nature of the industrial setting and particularly its tendency to direct workers into isolated masses or to integrate them into the non-working class urban setting was the most useful explanation for understanding the working class propensity for militancy. Yet the Kerr and Seigal work is highly simplified and suffers from over generalization and a failure to isolate and investigate the environment that they found to be so important.⁸

This paper seeks to analyze that environment in order to understand how the "isolated mass" functioned to maintain militancy, and how working class community institutions, both formal and informal, have acted to maintain strong class solidarity and contribute to collective action. It will look at the impact urban factors such as geographic dispersion (or centrality) of the work place and residential area of the working class, the demands, scale, conditions, technology, and discipline of the work place, and the nature of immigration patterns and the modes of integrating immigrants into existing working class organizations have on the working class community institutions which sustain class cohesion and provide the base for collective action.⁹

Lynn and Fall River, Massachusetts from 1880-1950 will be the case studies for this analysis. Although these are two Eastern cities, the analysis developed here should be testable in other cities in other

parts of the country.

Lynn and Fall River were leading industrial cities in America at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth. Lynn led the nation in shoe production and later was transformed into the center for a large electrical industry centered in G. E. which grew up in the early twentieth century. Fall River led the nation in textile production in the late nineteenth century. In the 1920's, the city lost most of its textiles and came to rely instead on the garment industry. Both cities had ethnically mixed work forces, but each experienced different patterns of immigration.¹⁰ Furthermore, the structure of the urban environment and the conditions and nature of the work put different demands on the work force of each city and in turn on its community.

Lynn and Fall River had the topography of industrial towns. For the greater part of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries their working classes lived crowded together in tenement houses under the most deplorable of conditions and in the most wretched area of the city. Yet the cities had significant differences in their urban structure, differences which related to the nature and structure of their industrial development.

The shoe industry of Lynn developed from early pre-industrial shoe making, which was dominated by the merchant, jobber, and skilled craftsmen. Before the civil war, Lynn's master craftsmen worked in small shops called "ten-footers" with two or three journeymen or apprentices turning out shoes which were sold to markets or jobbers in

Boston. In the 1830's and 40's, Lynn's merchants began to centralize production. With the introduction of the sewing machine in 1852, this process of centralization was accelerated.

Following the civil war, the factory system dominated the production of shoes and the shops were highly centralized in the downtown area. This centralization was encouraged by the need of the highly seasonal and low capital shoe industry to be close to both the financial and warehouse districts of the city in order to have easy access to capital and to the urban^{labor} pool, (external economies). The centralization of the shops was enhanced by the habit of the independent real estate developers to build the factory structures several stories high and lease out the floor space to the individual shoe factories. Thus, the historic and dominant role of the merchant and jobber in organizing the industry coupled with the control over factory construction by real estate interests, drew the developing shoe industry to the central warehouse district of the city. The pedestrian city allowed the manufacturer to make quick response, in labor variations and warehouse utilization, to the elastic and unpredictable market of the shoe industry.

These same factors also contributed to the centralization of Lynn's working class residential district in the fourth, fifth and sixth wards. These centralized working class residential areas were known as the Brickyard, between the downtown warehouse district and the marshland southeast of town; Highlands, located northeast of the Brickyard and the downtown; and East Lynn, located east of the Brickyard

and the downtown. The location of their downtown residences, like the manufacturer's shops, was determined by the highly volatile and seasonal labor market. The constant change in jobs due to the seasonal nature of shoe production meant that they had to live within easy access to several shops as well as to the central job procurement institutions of the downtown lunchrooms, cafes, and the union hall. Thus the residential area of the work force, whether native or foreign born was centralized next to the downtown manufacturing district. ¹²

Fall River developed differently than Lynn because its industrial structure and requirements were different. The city itself and its residential and commercial sectors grew up around the original mills which were located along the Quequechan River. The central recreational areas for the working class just before the expansion in the late 1870's and 1890's centered along Main Street which intersected the River and the mills. Here the workers built their unions' halls, their cooperative stores, and held their political and social functions. As Fall River expanded and switched over from water power to steam, the mills moved away from the river and sought spacious waterside sites on the urban periphery. The textile mills, unlike the shoe shops, required large amounts of water and space, and did not have the fluctuating labor demands of the shoe industry. They were constructed by the corporations which operated the mills. Although subsequent growth of the city absorbed these originally peripheral or isolated locations, the scattering of the mills decentralized the city and contributed to the residential and industrial dispersion of Fall River. Residential

areas began to spring up around the various mills, some of which were several miles from the central district, with many of these homes being built by the textile companies themselves to accommodate the growing work force in the peripheral areas. These residential areas took on their own characteristics so that by the end of the century Fall River was known as a collection of villages. The separate villages such as Mechanicsville, Bowenville, Border City, Flint Village, etc., built up their own institutions. Their workers were less and less likely to go downtown to socialize or interact with workers from other villages.

The workers in these cities lived in working class ghettos. In the late nineteenth century the ghettos of Fall River took on ethnic characteristics. Immigrants first settled in areas around the mills which had brought them to the city. The French Canadians for example, brought in as strike breakers by the American Linin Company settled around those mills. As an area became identified with a particular ethnic group, workers in other mills moved, if they were able, into the ethnic ghetto of their fellow immigrants. This pattern tended to concentrate certain ethnic groups within certain areas and mills. In Lynn the centrifugal forces of the working class residential area discouraged residential segregation into ethnic enclaves.

In these ghettos, a community in both Lynn and Fall River attempted to deal with the problems confronting it, ranging from job procurement and unemployment (two to four months out of every year for the shoe workers in Lynn) to child care. They were communities which developed their own institutions to meet these problems, whether these

institutions were formal such as unions and benefit or fraternal societies, or informal such as child care arrangements for working mothers and lunchrooms or pubs for social activity and job information for the men. Through these institutions the working class in Lynn and Fall River built their communities and passed on from generation to generation their culture and history.

These working class community institutions were the focal point of collective action and class cohesion. They have been multi-faceted and have acted as integrating agents to bring in new members of the class whether those new members were youngsters or immigrants from abroad. But these institutions could prove to be vulnerable to massive or rapid changes in urban, demographic, and industrial processes. When they were strong and healthy they could support and direct collective action by the class, but when they were weak and disrupted they could act as segregating agents and disrupt or weaken collective action. Under pressure the community could segment, and class based community institutions would break down and be replaced by ethnic and craft sub-community institutions. The viability of the working class institutions affected the ability of the community to hold itself together over time, to maintain class solidarity, and to sustain collective action among its members.

This paper will focus on three specific urban factors, centrality or dispersion of the urban setting, demands of the workplace, and the nature of immigration, and how they can act, depending upon a whole configuration of elements, to strengthen or weaken community institu-

tions. The needs of the members of the working class community created by the structure of work reinforced community institutions. These institutions in turn affected the job through worker-group action which the community supported.

In Lynn and Fall River contradictory historical experiences developed. Lynn in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries with its relatively small shops, regular breaks during the work day, seasonal slacks in the trade, inter-shop discussions among the workers, some control over the work place and job conditions, and an integrated relationship between leisure, work and home due to the centrality of the work place and residence, developed and maintained strong class based community institutions. These reinforced community solidarity and cohesion, and minimized the stress of integrating new members into the work force. In the late 1920's when the electrical industry dominated Lynn with its large work force, "prison-like" working conditions and the use of Taylorism and efficiency management procedures, and when the federal housing policy encouraged suburbanization of the skilled work force, the community was disrupted, class based institutions were weakened and collective action was more difficult to sustain.¹³

Fall River in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries with its large work force, decentralized work and residential areas, excessive on-the-job pressure, machine tending technology that limited control and participation in the production process by the worker, and excessive noise and concentration required that prevented inter-

shop communication and discouraged after work socializing, saw the disruption and segmentation of its work force under the pressure of immigration and severe job competition. Ultimately the work force was fragmented into isolated ethnic and craft sub-groups.

I

In 1871, Reverend Cook's lecturers on factory reform emphasized that the earlier Lynn of the pre-civil war years and the pre-factory years was a coherent community with a common interest, common concerns, and common moral character. With the new factories Cook saw Lynn gaining power and wealth, but losing its old community and developing instead a new city with two opposing classes: "an operative class and an employing class."¹⁴

Yet, the new Lynn was not without its community and its coherence. What disturbed Cook was that the community now rested totally outside the middle and upper classes. It was now a community of workers. Lynn evolved into the very environment which Kerr and Siegel saw conducive for class solidarity and militancy.

When the factory system was finally installed in Lynn the workers maintained their solidarity with in-shop discussions and after hours socializing in neighboring lunch rooms and in the union halls. Despite the fact that the production of shoes had been subdivided into over 33 operations by 1880, the workers still maintained close contact among themselves. The close structure of the factories encouraged this fraternizing. The Lynn shops were so close together that in 1896 when the secretary of the Lasters Union was denied entrance into a fifth

floor factory, he went next door and called out instructions to the Lasters from the fifth story window of a neighboring factory.¹⁵

The workers who came to Lynn's expanding shoe industry in the 1880's were mostly native Americans who had connections with the pre-industrial shoe making. These natives were augmented by Irish between 1865 and 1895, many of whom originally settled in the shanty-town brick-yard area. English and French Canadians followed the Irish in the 1870's and 1880's. In the middle of the 1880's, Lynn's working class population saw the addition of a number of Germans and Scandinavians. By 1905 Polish, Russian, Italian, Greek, and Austrian immigrant groups grew rapidly and the names on the dues list of the local unions began to reflect this new immigration from eastern and southern Europe.¹⁶ By 1905 the Lynn shoe industry had grown to accommodate over 11,000 workers. By 1919 over 12,000 were employed in her shoe factories.

Lynn workers replaced the informal social center of the ten-footer of the pre-industrial city with informal activity in the lunch-rooms and union halls. In 1870's the Lynn workers maintained a strong Knights of St. Crispin movement. The Crispins provided community and fellowship and developed an intricate pattern of social functions. This social activity appealed to all sectors of the skilled and unskilled working class community and helped maintain the spirit of unionism and solidarity in Lynn after the crippling strikes of 1872 and 1879.¹⁷ This social activity provided Lynn with the basis for later union activity. The unions which followed the Knights maintained an active social center. After work, workers would drift over to the union hall

to play cards, pool and billiards and to sing union songs and listen to old-timers's tales of past struggles.¹⁸

The series of formal and informal institutions of the community helped the Lynn workers cope with the problems of being industrial workers in a changing and often alienating environment. They provided job information, fellowship, and in time of pecuniary need, financial aid, especially during layoffs. These institutions, also provided the workers with a center for entertainment, socializing, and group and class interactions. They reinforced class alliances and established class identity.¹⁹

Lay offs, seasonal unemployment, and accompanying job rotation, as well as continual in-shop discussions and out-of-work socializing helped break down worker isolation and helped integrate the newly arrived immigrant into the urban working-class world. Shoe workers were in constant contact with other shoe workers despite ethnic and craft differences.²⁰ Unlike the textile towns of New England, Lynn's working-class community did not segregate into isolated ethnic ghettos. A turn of the century observer noted of the city that there was "no distinct race quarter."²¹

Central Lynn was the location for most of the social activity of the shoe workers. The downtown area created a central gathering place for shoe workers with its series of social institutions from lunchrooms and pool halls to theatres, and union halls. Shoe workers took their breaks together. Emptying out of the various shops into the lunch rooms and cafes, they socialized with workers from other shops and

crafts within the trade. These centers provided the workers with informal institutions which tied them together and helped integrate the world of work and the world of leisure.²² As one retired shoe worker stated:

If you were to come down to central square in Lynn, the place was full of people, always a friend, if you go to a restaurant and have a cup of coffee, there was a half dozen friends at least, who were sitting down, having a cup of coffee or what not, something like that.²³

A popular gathering place in Lynn was Hunt's Cafe, known as "Crispins' Congress" because of all the shoe workers who spent their time there discussing the affairs of the trade and the world. Hunt's functioned much like a French bistro for the Lynn workers, and even as late as 1941 Vincent Ferrini, a Lynn poet, noted how Lynn workers gathered around lunch rooms and cafes to "analyze the city's ills and question the cutting of salaries of union job holders."²⁴ These socializing patterns reinforced class solidarity as one worker noted in comparing the present with the past: "shoe workers are not together the way they used to be even in the shop. There is no more familiarity. Years ago it seemed that everybody came from the brickyard or something, you knew everybody who worked next to you, you knew him from somewhere, you either met him for coffee, or you met him for lunch."²⁵ When hard times came or when there was a cut in wages, these social institutions became the focal point for class discussions and actions. They also supplied information about jobs in shoe factories in neighboring cities, in other related industries such as leather processing, or within the city. When job openings occurred the news was spread

through the local cafes and the union hall, and friends names were put in.²⁶

Besides the lunchrooms, cafes, and unions the Lynn workers socialized around the lodges and benefit organizations, many of which, such as the Odd Fellows, were almost exclusively working class and catered specifically to their needs.²⁷ Ethnic clubs in Lynn tended to be confined to the most recent immigrants. As the immigrants became familiar with the city they tended to move on to more class based organizations.²⁸

The central location of the shops in the Central Square area of the city not only created a gathering point for the shoe workers going to and from work, but it also contributed to the concentration of the working-class residential area within easy walking distance to both the workplace and the central entertainment area. Residentially, Lynn's working class was gathered close together near the central workplace.²⁹

The very structure of work contributed to the shoe workers' sense of common identity with his fellow workers. Work in the shoe shops approximates Robert Blauner's model for relatively non-alienating work.³⁰ The shoe workers had control over the pace of their work. They worked together in small shops employing between fifty to two hundred workers. Although the industry had by the second half of the nineteenth century specialized to a degree which shocked contemporaries, that division of labor did not isolate the shoe workers.³¹ The awareness of their relationship to each other and their identification with the group was heightened by continual in-shop discussion of common concerns which

went on above the hum of the machines. ³²

During periods of conflict between labor and capital, these institutions were vital in supporting class solidarity and maintaining a common front. Workers looked to their community institutions for communication and programs for action concerning wages, labor conditions, and the possibility of the success or failure of a strike. The institutions provided workers with relief during the periods of labor conflict, and information concerning temporary jobs for the duration of the conflict. They linked together workers of different skills and crafts and even different industries, to create a common class consciousness and action, as well as supportive links between workers for both financial and boycotting purposes. ³³

In a broader sense these institutions became the vehicle of class ideology and class consciousness. They were the schools of class consciousness. The workers learned who were their enemies and who were their friends, the institutions ^{helped define} the relationship between labor and capital, a definition which dominated the working class community during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The institutions forged ~~an~~ an alliance between workers.

In Lynn, the working class institutions remained strong throughout the late nineteenth century and early twentieth. Lynn's community institutions were strong enough to maintain a common class alliance among the various crafts and skills and ethnic groups in Lynn. The city's workers rejected attempts by more conservative, exclusive unions to organize them. During the 1920's when Lynn's shoe industry

was on a serious decline, the skilled workers of Lynn voted to remain in their integrative militant union, despite the better wage contract offered by the more conservative craft unions. Specifically this was because the conservative union, although stronger on a national level and supported by the manufacturers, did not offer enough protection for Lynn's unskilled workers, a large percentage of whom were immigrants.³⁴ Lynn's skilled workers opted to support their unskilled fellow workers rather than gain better benefits for themselves, despite the fact that the industry was on the decline and there was severe job competition.

II

The textile industry of Fall River during the late nineteenth century fits Blauner's description of alienation and machine tending work.³⁵ The on the job "gaps and pores" which Marx saw beginning to erode away in the middle of the century, and which were so important for the Lynn shoe workers, were almost completely eliminated for the late nineteenth century textile worker. The worker saw what little freedom he or she had being whittled away with speed-ups and stretch-outs.

Fall River like many of the mill towns of the nineteenth century owed its development to the combination of local geographic advantages, (humid climate, and an even fast flowing river), plus the initial investment of outside capital. Once involved in textile production, Fall River rose quickly to a position of national dominance, with local entrepreneurs directing her course. The early mills of the first half of the nineteenth century depended upon local farmers, their wives, and their children for labor in the mills. The families that owned the

mills also owned the stores, and the land on which the population settled. These leading families controlled the city, her mills, her banks, and her commerce from the early nineteenth century down to the twentieth.

The early mills were small. They usually only rose two or three stories high and were built of wood or stone. The operatives worked in groups of less than a hundred per mill. The city grew rapidly in the late 1940's and 1950's. Bigger and more substantial mills were built, many of which employed almost 300 workers. The mills began importing skilled English and Irish workers from Lancashire England to work the spinning mules, fix the looms, and manage the more skilled positions in the mills.

Following the civil war, the city began building her huge granite mills which came to dominate the city's landscape. The number of spindles increased more than ten fold and the population increased almost four fold. With the development of the steam power in the mills, Fall River mills began to spread from their central location along the fall of the Quesquechan river to other water site locations. The expansion of the textile mills brought more and more textile workers into the city especially workers escaping the depressed conditions in Lancashire County England. By 1875, almost 9,000 of Fall River's population were born in England and another 9,000 born in Ireland, many of whom spent several years in Lancashire textile mills before catching the boat from Liverpool to America. These English and Irish workers made up the heart of Fall River's trade union and working class movement. In 1858, they

formed the Mule Spinners Association. In the 1860's they formed cooperative stores, and maintained a whole series of social institutions many of which were transported directly from Lancashire, England. These ranged from Odd Fellows lodges (the first branch of which was actually a branch of the Lancashire, Manchester United Odd Fellows), to informal social gatherings at taverns.³⁶

Taverns became an important social activity for Fall River workers and a center of trade union activity. The operators of these taverns, in the tradition of the Lancashire publicans, encouraged trade unionism and activity in their establishments. The taverns, lodges, and unions of Fall River helped transform the city from the quiet community of the pre-civil war period into a mill town with two distinct communities, a community of mill owners and supporters and a community of workers.³⁷ And the community of workers earned for the city the deserved reputation as the most militant trade union town in New England.

The workers of Fall River, despite their extensive structure of community institutions experienced throughout the nineteenth and twentieth century long hours of exhaustive and intensive labor with low pay. The low wages forced the children of mill families into the textile factories. In order to survive the workers depended upon the labor of the family, and as they worked in the mills, they became trapped in a cycle of low wages, long hours, and exhaustive work.³⁸ The textile worker of the 1870's and 1880's relied upon the social institutions outside the mill to compensate for the alienation and oppressive conditions inside.³⁹ The worker depended upon their institutions — friendship ties, Coops., clubs and unions

protect their interests in a labor relation they saw continuing for the rest of his or her life.⁴⁰ The social institutions of the working class supplied the workers with a world view that was larger than their own experiences. Information coming from the middle class networks were distrusted. A Fall River operative testifying before the Industrial Commission of 1901 stated that he did not believe the statistics and facts of the "moneyed men or capitalists" for he knew the contrary, "as an absolute fact, as a party told (him) who live(d) in the same block."⁴¹ Communication networks within the working class community were established "absolute fact(s)" while those outside were suspect.

With the extensive building of newer and ever larger mills in the late 19th century Fall River spread out from the central river location. The newer mills moved out to the periphery of the city, some of which were several miles from the downtown area. The resulting dispersion created several separate residential villages within the city. A local newspaper reporter described the Globe Village, located south of the city, and which gathered around the King Phillips Mills, as "clustering, like chickens under their brooding mother's wings [King Phillips Mills]. [There were] long lines scattered groups of one, two, and three story wooden tenements where the [operatives lived]. Some of these homes [had] fifty tenements under one roof, others [had] but two or three."⁴²

The dispersion of the mills and the residential area of the operatives discouraged the use of or participation in the downtown social institutions of the working class by those who lived outside the

downtown area. Workers within the older mills continued to socialize at the union hall or other social centers, but for the workers in the outer mills the very distance to the downtown, coupled with the long hours and exhaustive working conditions, discouraged the walk and participation in these activities. Instead they tended to remain in their villages, socializing in a local tavern or on the doorsteps of their tenements.⁴³

This process of decentralization was paralleled by the stretch out and speed ups within the plants which broke down many of the informal socializing within the plants. When Fall River began to feel the pinch of competition from the South, rather than modernizing the machinery, the Fall River manufacturers demanded greater productivity of the work force with speed ups and stretch outs. Weavers who traditionally worked eight looms, now worked ten, twelve, or even as many as sixteen if the looms were adapted with semi-automatic devices. With low wages and piece time work and without control over the speed of the machines, workers were forced to use whatever free time they had during breaks to keep the machinery in operational order. Lunch breaks were taken next to the machines in the mills and the workers were quick to bolt down their breakfasts or lunches to give themselves time to clean and prepare their machines. The stretch outs affected all levels of the productive process from carders and spinners down to weavers and loomfixers. All were put under the strains of excessively long and tiring labor with low wages. As such, there was little communication or socializing in the mills and little energy or time

to do so afterwards.

The community institutions, which were brought over from England and had been used to integrate new members into the community and working class during the 1870's and 1880's, began to feel the pressure of a tired and residentially fragmented community. Workers from the outer regions failed to come into the central institutions for social activity. When collective action or strikes were called it was the workers from the outlying mills who were the last to go out and the first to break ranks. There was continual debate among the militant and active trade unionists over how to bring the workers from the outlying residential districts into the movement and keep them active.

The workers in the scattered villages did enjoy social institutions within their village. Although these institutions were important social centers, they reinforced residential isolation, and as the residential areas became identified with ethnic minorities, the residential institutions furthered ethnic isolation and fragmentation of the class.

These forces alone do not necessarily create a segmented work force. But the weakening factors of urban dispersion and excessive on the job demands weakened these community institutions. They left Fall River's working class community in a position to fragment and disorganize under the pressure of increased immigration of new and alien members into the work force.

In the 1870's Fall River's mills began to draw in French Canadian farmers from agriculturally depressed Quebec. The mills of New England, during the early years of this migration, offered a temporary break for

the "annual Canadians" from over mortgaged and indebted farms. The work was hard and the pay low, but the minimal skill level and the fact that mills would take children and women, enabled the family to utilize the total wage earning potential of the family unit.⁴⁴ With the strike of 1879 mill agents for the American Linen mills brought down hundreds of French Canadians to break the strike. The American Linen mills, the first company to use French Canadians in large numbers, used their tenements on Broadway, Division, and Bay Streets to house the French Canadians. This settlement soon grew to be known as Little Canada or the French Village. It was to this section that the French Canadians first came when they arrived from Canada.

The migration of French Canadians was heavy from 1885 to the turn of the century. By 1905 there were 36,000 French Canadians in the city, a number which almost equaled the combined Irish and English population. Fall River's separate villages now began to segregate by ethnic characteristics. This ethnic segregation was exacerbated by the practice of hiring. Not only were the mills themselves recruiting French Canadians, but the very practice of job procurement, which in Fall River was usually done through informal family and village connections, tended to direct different ethnic groups into different mills. By the late 1890's certain mills had noticeably heavy concentrations of French Canadians. The French Canadians tended to concentrate, as well, in certain crafts in the mills which furthered their isolation.⁴⁵ As the city of Fall River expanded, the French Canadian population spread out and a new colony was formed around the King

Philip Mill built in Globe Village to the South. French Canadians who worked in other mills tended to live in or next to the French Canadian mills and endure the longer trek to work if possible.

The ethnic segregation of the French Canadians, the distrust of them as strike breakers by the other workers, and the initial suspicion by the French Canadians of the union movement which they saw depriving them of a chance to labor, put severe strains on the working class community.⁴⁶ It tested the strength of its institutions and their ability to integrate new members.

Although Fall River's community fragmented residentially and many of the older working-class institutions became the preserve of the English and Irish workers, the young and still growing union movement was able to integrate the French Canadians and keep alive the informal social activity which helped tie the community together. That integrating process was nonetheless difficult and trying.⁴⁷ The French Canadians were eventually brought into the same taverns and clubs and became good union brothers in the eyes of the English and Irish workers. A Thomas O'Donnell, Secretary of the Spinners, testified to the Industrial Commission, the "French Canadian labor in the cotton mills . . . reduced the wages, but after some years the genius of unions took hold upon them."⁴⁸ Once the French Canadians had been integrated into the union movement and the community institutions, rather than being an obstacle to collective action, they became active and vigorous participants. In the strike of 1884, a committee of three French Canadians and three Englishmen were elected to represent the strikers

from the King Phillips mills in Globe Village.⁴⁹ In 1889, it was the French Canadians who were the strongest supporters of a strike against the increased stretch outs and long hours. In both strikes, the French Canadians were active in the informal parades, dances, rallies, and other activity during the strike.

Although there was initial suspicion of the French Canadians, they were not excluded from either the union or the general class activities. But the beginning of the fragmentation of the community could be seen in the residential segregation by ethnic group which began with the migration of the French Canadians. Ethnic segregation was compounded by the fragmentation of the community due to urban dispersal and decentralization occurring in the late nineteenth century.

At the turn of the century when urban dispersion and job pressure on the working class of Fall River reached its height, the city experienced a new flood of immigration. A flood which this time the community was unable to absorb and which fragmented it into isolated craft and ethnic groups, sub groups which undermined collective action and community cohesion. Between 1899 and 1905 operatives and owners in Fall River perceived that the "nationality of the operatives [had] undergone radical changes."⁵⁰ By radical changes both the workers and the owners meant the Portuguese and Poles. By 1900 the southern edge of Little Canada had become identified with the Portuguese. The English, Irish, and French Canadian workers, unable to socialize in the mill due to the excessive on the job pressures (low wages, piece time, and stretch outs) and residential dispersion into separate villages and ethnic

ghettos, did not look upon the new comers as fellow workers, but rather as threats to an increasingly unstable job market, and depressors of wages. They responded by closing off their community institutions and turning those institutions from class oriented to ethnic and craft oriented.⁵¹ They eliminated the informal socializing of the trade unions and discouraged gathering at the union hall. The Portuguese and Poles were characterized as wanting to live in poverty and work in unbearable conditions. As one operative stated, "Poles and Portuguese, who live in crowded tenements... will sleep and live and eat according to the needs of the employers."⁵² The new comers were dismissed as not being real workers, and being less than the English, Irish and French Canadian workers.⁵³

The decentralization of the urban setting and the structure and pressure of work weakened the community and its institutions so that under the pressures of immigration the community fragmented into ethnic and job subdivisions. Rather than integrate new members into the community, the community itself atomized.⁵⁴

III

Lynn in the twentieth century experienced a radical change in the nature of work and in the city's urban structure. This change affected the city much as the urban dispersal⁵ and excessive job demands affected the working class community in Fall River and the ability of the Fall River working class to affect collective action and community cohesion.

In the late 1920's Lynn's shoe industry began to decline. The General Electric plant located on the Southwestern edge of the city

replaced the old shoe shops as the major employer of Lynn workers. As the shoe shops closed down or moved out of the city, more and more of Lynn's Labor force looked to G. E. for employment. Most of these workers were the children of shoe workers or young shoe workers who had not spent many years in the shoe shops. Although many of these workers began working at G. E. on a temporary basis, when the shoe industry failed to recover, G. E. became for them a permanent source of employment.

The General Electric plant transformed the work pattern and ultimately the very community of the workers in Lynn. The G. E. workers eventually built a militant trade union movement, but that movement differed from the strong community-oriented labor movement and class solidarity of the shoe workers.

General Electric workers did not work together in small cooperating groups. They were isolated from the informal socializing of the shoe workers in the cafes and lunchrooms by the structure of the plant and the demands of the jobs.⁵⁵ Again and again workers who went to work for G. E. described the experience in terms of confinement and restriction. Work was Taylorized and the workers referred to working in the plant as, "like I was in prison."⁵⁶ With the exception of the depression layoffs, General Electric provided its employees with year-round work. Even during the depression the company called back employees through its own formal channels rather than relying on those informal contacts which had dominated the shoe industry and even G. E. before the 1930's⁵⁷ Workers after the first world war were required to pass through a series of personnel inspections starting at the top and ending

at the floor level with the foreman. The new worker at G. E. no longer owed his job to the community, his friends, his kin, or the union, but to the G. E. personnel office. The older shoeworkers' institutions used for job placement and security had no function at the modern G. E. plant.

The nature of the work at G. E. also discouraged the informality and comradeship which spilled over into off the job social activity. Taylorism brought time motion studies to the plant, and the workers, pressed with speedups and intense job pressures, saw their freedom to socialize and control the work process slowly eaten away. Through the stopwatch procedure G. E. had increased the intensity factor of labor to the extent that the laborer felt isolated from co-workers, and his or her labor debased.⁵⁸ One retired G. E. worker expressed the impact of Taylorism on the work when she said:

The most vicious thing they brought in G. E. was that motion time study. Now that was vicious! They had the Bateau system, and you could make a decent living on it, then they brought this motion time study in. The actual time to do the work was not timed, it was just the motions. You had something to do with the right hand and something to do with the left hand. The motions were timed, the actual working was not timed. Oh, it was vicious!⁵⁹

During the early twentieth century, electrical workers plugged into the activities of the shoe workers, but as the shoe industry died out, so did the shoe workers' institutions. The electrical workers became more and more isolated and alienated from the community and their work. The process was accentuated by the structure of V. A. and F. H. A. loans which discouraged the buying of city homes and encouraged the workers to look outside the city in the growing lower

and middle class suburbs. As the workers were required to commute greater and greater distances between home and work, the institutions which were dependent upon the integration of work, leisure, and home became more and more meaningless.⁶⁰

The elimination of the informal social structure of the community was not just a byproduct of the increased intensity of the work and the suburbanization of the work force, but it was also a victim of the General Electrical Corporation itself which in the late 1940's began an active campaign to eliminate the informal social structure of the workers and replace it with a General Electric dominated social structure. The United Electrical Workers Union, which held a strong influence over the work force, derived much of its support from the integration on the local community level of job concerns and attitudes and informal social interactions despite the slow process of suburbanization of the work force. The workers depended upon the union and the union grapevine and even more importantly they depended upon union friends and officials for information and world view. This institutional function of the working class community gave the union much of its strength and held the workers loyalty and solidarity.

Following the long and bitter strike in 1946 the company assigned Lemuel Boulware to analyze the failure of G. E. to cut short the strike. Boulware claimed that the failure of G. E. to break the strike was due to the strong support the workers found in "the community." Convinced that effective union and worker communication provided the basis for what Boulware saw as managerial

loss of control over the shop, the company took steps to remedy that loss. The company attempted to replace the many informal networks of communication and socializing with company controlled communication channels. G. E. activated every available resource from personal contact with each employee, and letters to the home, to advertisements, stories and articles in the local papers. G. E. consciously attempted to become an active force in the life of the worker after he left the job.

Although the U. E. leadership is correct in noting that other factors such as internal union raiding, and red baiting aided G. E. in their attempt to break down union solidarity, the G. E. campaign of Boulwarism, if it did not take a direct tool on the worker's solidarity reflected the importance of community support in working class solidarity and collective action.

Without strong supporting institutions, Lynn's working class community began to atomize. Slowly the job pressures and suburbanization of the work force took their toll on the community. Workers participated less and less in the social institutions of the community, and the worker began to look more and more outside the community for the fulfillment of his or her needs. By the 1970's both retired shoe and electrical workers felt a lack of class identity among the workers. The city did not appear the strong supportive community they had known.⁶¹

In both Lynn and Fall River the structure of work and the city affected working class cohesion and class solidarity. In both cities centralized institutions furthered class solidarity and facilitated

integration of new members into the work force. Class solidarity suffered in both cities as the work force lost its informal social contacts. The community institutions which acted as schools of class consciousness and class solidarity became victims themselves of the economic system. The excessive numbers of unskilled non-industrial workers who flooded Fall River during the turn of the century, competing with local workers for a dwindling number of jobs overwhelmed the city's working class institutions. The new immigrants themselves did not reject class solidarity or class consciousness as is evident from their strong support of the strike of 1905 despite the indifference towards them by the skilled workers. They were rejected by the skilled workers. The established working class closed off their institutions to the uninitiated and transformed them into self serving exclusive institutions to protect the already initiated members of the working class.

The Lynn shoe workers despite extensive job competition especially during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when the city's shoe industry was declining, maintained strong integrative institutions. The city's electrical workers had much greater difficulty maintaining strong class institutions. But in Fall River and in Lynn despite the weakening factors of work demands and urban dispersal, the work itself also drew workers together and put demands on them for collective action. In the case of the textile workers of Fall River that demand provided the basis for a new union movement which grew up in the 1930's.

The patterns which emerge in Lynn and Fall River have repeated themselves at different times and in different cities throughout industrial America. We see patterns similar to those of Lynn shoe workers among the miners in coal and hard rock mining communities. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in Pittsburgh and the other steel towns of the U.S. we can see many of the patterns similar to those of Fall River.

TABLE I

IMMIGRATION PATTERNS IN LYNN AND FALL RIVER 1885-1920

<u>Place of Birth</u>	<u>Lynn</u>					<u>Fall River</u>				
	<u>1885</u>	<u>1895</u>	<u>1905</u>	<u>1910</u>	<u>1920</u>	<u>1885</u>	<u>1895</u>	<u>1905</u>	<u>1910</u>	<u>1920</u>
Native Born	36009	46060	55070	61992	71290	28912	44683	59371	68421	78154
English	643	1479	1662	1920	1850	8751	12959	11394	10995	7968
Irish	4609	5374	5322	5153	4527	8720	8434	6107	5194	3201
Cana. (Fr.)	423	1035	1607	2369	2164	8219	11079	15780	15277	10734
Cana. (Br.)	393	3074	1872	7511	7382	208	846	591		
Portuguese	4	6	17	29	21	313	1707	7020	9365	5663
Scand.	96	606	1756	1399	1119					
German	138	260	328	305	219				234	135
Russian		87	1164	3880	3074		762	1366	2143	1661
Italian	45	102	814	1354	1943				1025	945
Polish	23	22	659		1391		109	418		2525
Greek			409	958	1685				103	149
<u>Total Population</u>	45867	62358	77042	89336	99148	56870	89203	105762	119295	120485

1
Joseph Cook, Outlines of Music Hall Lectures, Embracing Five Addresses on Factory Reform (Boston, 1871), 52.

2
Ibid.

3
John R. Commons, et al., History of Labor in the United States (New York); Selig Perlman, Theory of the Labor Movement (New York, 1928); Philip Taft, Organized Labor in American History (New York, 1964).

4
This traditional school assumes that the working class of America is unlike the working class in Europe in having no class consciousness. This argument stated in its least complimentary fashion usually boils down to the following circular argument: The American worker is not socialist because he has no class consciousness. We know he has no class consciousness because he is not socialist. See Daniel, "Marxian Socialism in the U.S.," in Conrad Egbert and Stow Person's Socialism and American Life (Princeton, 1952), 216-217; Daniel Bell, The End of Ideology (New York, 1960); and Dell Hartz and Louis Hartz, The Liberal Tradition in America (New York, 1955).

5
See Herbert Gutman, "Work, Culture, and Society in Industrializing America, 1816-1919," American Historical Review, 78 (June 1973), 531-588; See also Gutman's "Protestantism and the American Labor Movement: The Christian Spirit in the Gilded Ages," in Alfred Young, ed., Dissent (Dekalb, 1968), 139-174; and "The Worker's Search for Power; Labor in the Gilded Age," in H. Wayner Morgan, ed., The Gilded Age (New York, 1963), 38-68; Paul Faler, "Cultural Aspects of the Industrial Revolution: Lynn, Massachusetts, Shoemakers and Industrial Morality, 1826-1860," Labor History 13 (Summer 1974), 367-394.

6
The Irish immigrants in many cases did not come directly from the Irish countryside but moved first to the mills and mines of England, where they had a strong working class apprenticeship before emigrating to America. The individuals who received funds from trade unions in Lancashire, England, to come to America were in many cases Irish. Many of the trade union leaders in Fall River were Lancashire Irish. See the Annual Reports of the Bolton and Oldham Mule Spinners Union, Webb Collection, London School of Economics 1870-1900. The Jew who settled in New York City most often left not a plow, but a small shop or factory in Eastern Europe or Russia to come to America. The leather and shoe workers who came to Lynn, Massachusetts were often experienced shoe makers from urban areas before they came to America. See United States Congress,

Senate, Immigration Commission, Immigrants in Industry, 61st Congress, 2nd Sess. S. Doc. No. 633 (Washington, D.C., 1909-1910), Vols. 72, 74. The English operatives who flocked into Fall River during the second half of the 19th century were experienced mill workers from the mills of Oldham, Bolton, Blackburn and Manchester. The peasant immigrants who swelled the ranks of the industrial work force especially during the 19th century found more than just a factory door waiting for them. They also found a well established and often times self-disciplined working-class community which often taught the new immigrant much about his new world and the shop code.

The tendency of historians to find the roots of resistance to capital in the conflict between peasant cultures and the industrial order, although important in giving us understanding of the historical roots of the working class culture, has at times ignored the impact of the disciplined industrial worker in leading and often times organizing those same "pre-industrial peasants" into not only trade unions, but resistance to the employer. For many peasants the transition from the farm routine to the industrial one was not as difficult as these earlier studies would lead us to believe. The work routine of agricultural workers had its own discipline which could be transferred to the industrial climate without total disruption. The family which maintained the discipline in the field still maintained, especially in textiles a role in maintaining discipline in the mill. The fact that the employers searched out the French Canadian workers specifically because they appeared more docile than the militant Irish and English workers from Lancashire indicates this pattern. The employer often found the parents of these new workers as their allies in disciplining the younger generation of immigrant workers. This is not to say that the immigrants were less militant or anti-working class, only that their peasant background was not necessarily the only roots of their opposition to capital. See Philip Silvia, "The Spindle City: Labor, Politics and Religion in Fall River, Massachusetts 1870-1905," (unpublished dissertation, Fordham University, 1973) for a discussion of the adjustment of the French Canadians to the industrial world.

7

Clark Kerr and Abraham Siegel, "The International Propensity to Strike -- An International Comparison," in Arthur Kornhauser, Robert Dublin, and Arthur Ross, eds., International Conflict (New York, 1954) 195-196.

8

An earlier work by Warner and Low, although attempting to understand class militance through a community perspective, lost much of its importance as a pioneering work because of its oversimplification of the changing nature of the industrial system. William L. Warner and J.O. Low, The Social System of the Modern Factory (New Haven, 1947).

9

The formal unions which occupied the attention of the earlier labor historians will in this paper be but one of a series of class institutions which may or may not contribute to community cohesion and collective action.

10

See Table I for patterns of immigration into Lynn and Fall River.

11

See David Ward, Cities and Immigrants: a Geography of Change in Nineteenth Century America (New York, 1971) 91, for a discussion of the impact of the historical structure and development of industry and its relationship to centralization or dispersal of the manufacturing district.

12

See footnote 29 below.

13

The term "prison like" comes from a taped interview with retired electrical workers. They were referring partly (I assume) to the well-guarded fenced in G.E. plant. The old shoe shops were located conveniently near Lynn's downtown lunchrooms and cafes. Workers would often leave their shops and socialize outside or in the lunchrooms. The very structure of the G.E. plant reduced that freedom and informality. The plant gave the visual impression of a prison, and the supervised structure within discouraged the informality of the shoe shops thus leading to the expression: "in a prison."

14

Joseph Cook, Outlines of Music Hall Lectures, 9.

15

"Lasters Union Minutes," Vol 1, June 23, 1896, Lynn Lasters Union Papers, Baker Library, Harvard University.

16

Sample of names from the Dues List of the Lynn Lasters Union, 1894, 1908, 1910, 1920, 1922. Ethnicity determined by surname. Lynn Lasters Union Papers, Baker Library, Harvard University. See also Table I.

17

See Allen Dawley, "Artisan Response to the Factory System," (unpublished dissertation, Harvard University, 1971) for a detailed discussion of the Knights of St. Crispin in Lynn, their membership and social activity.

18

"Lynn Lasters Union, Receipt Book," Vol. 10; "Minutes of Lynn Lasters Union," Vol 1, Nov. 9, 1898; "Minutes of Benefit Association," June 1890-Nov. 1890. Lynn Lasters Union Papers. Taped interviews with retired Lynn shoe workers made by author at Lynn Union Hall, Dec. 1971. The sessions were made in groups and individual workers were often not identified, so that in many cases statements made in the interviews can only be referred to as "tape sessions." The tapes are available at the Lynn Historical Society.

19

Hunts Cafe, "Crispins Congress" was often used not only as an important social center, but as an informal job information center as well. Institutions such as Hunts and the local unions were both strong and integrative in Lynn during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. When new immigrants entered the city they often looked to local ethnic clubs and societies for aid and stability in the new industrial world, but these clubs had appeal only for the most recent immigrants. After a few years in the city most immigrants left the ethnic clubs and joined the more class-based organizations. See author's dissertation, "Continuity and Disruption: Working Class Community in Lynn and Fall River, Massachusetts 1880-1950" (Un. of Mich., 1974) cha. 3 for a more detailed discussion of working class institutions and ethnic clubs and societies. See also Bessie and Marie Van Vorst, The Woman Who Toils (New York, 1903) 207.

20

The seasonal nature of work in Lynn put a constant pressure on her work force to depend upon each other for job information. It was estimated that as much as 30% of the city's work force, mostly young workers, were compelled to look outside the city for work during the slack seasons. These workers in turn were dependent upon local class institutions to provide them with job information both inside and outside of the city. This rotation among jobs coupled with the close residential living area helped break down ethnic isolation. "Tape Sessions," the life histories of Mike Carrucho, Frank Cacicio, and Nick Pappus, three of the workers who participated in the tape sessions, bear out this pattern; see Table I and footnote 29 below.

21

William Betts, "Lynn, A City by the Sea," Outlook, 68 (May, 1901) 209. See also the papers of the Lynn Associated Charities, located at Lynn's Family Service of Greater Lynn; Papers of the Gregg House, located at Swedenborg School of Religion, Newton, Mass. for descriptions of the mixed ethnic community in the Brickyard. Lynn City Directories 1886-1905; State of Massachusetts, Massachusetts State Census, 1885, 1895 (Boston).

22

Author, "Labor, Capital, and Community," Labor History, 15, No. 3 (Summer, 1974) 400, 401.

23

"Tape Sessions" with retired shoe workers, Frank Cacicio.

24

Vincent Ferrini, No Smoke (Portland, 1941) 42; see also advertisements in Boot and Shoe Cutters Assembly 3662, Knights of Labor Official Report, 1904, 1905 (Lynn 1904, 1905); Calendar 7 (Nov., 1902); Law and Order Temperance Journal (Boston, Oct. 2, 1884) 8.

25

"Tape Sessions" with retired shoe workers.

26

Bessie Van Vorst and Marie Van Vorst, The Woman Who Toils, 207.

27

The Lynn Mutual Benefit Association, The Independent Order of Industry; and the United American Mechanics were also mostly working class organizations with last two having no middle class officers or trustee. See author's dissertation, 61, 62 for a more complete analysis of Lynn's working class organizations and their make up.

28

Author's dissertation, 63.

29

Author, "Labor, Capital, and Community," 397. As late as 1905 from a sample of 104 shoe workers, 51 or just under 50% were living within a half mile of central square, the major location of both the shoe shops and the social gathering spots. Eighty-four or just under 81% lived within a mile of central square. Sample from Lynn City Directory, 1905.

30

Robert Blauner, Alienation and Freedom (Chicago, 1968) 15-57.

31

See Georges Friedmann, The Anatomy of Work (New York, 1964) and Blauner, Alienation for a discussion of the importance of understanding one's role in the total production process for minimizing alienation.

32

The shoe workers were on piece time but with effective control over the machine speed and the number of batches they could handle. Piece time, with this control, rather than alienating the worker or stretching out his work, allowed him greater control over the pace and structure of the job. Like metal polishers shoe workers manipulated piece time so that when a worker completed a set of batches he would help others so that all would leave the shop together with common pay. "Tape sessions with retired shoe workers."

33

"Minutes Book, Lynn Lasters Benefit Association," Vol. 27, Sept. 10, 1894, Lynn Lasters Union Papers: Lynn Daily Bee, Sept. 27, Oct. 6, Oct. 9, 1890, Jan. 1, 1891; "Lynn Lasters Union, Treasurers Cash Book," Vol 3, 4, Sept. 5, 29, Oct. 13, 28, Nov. 25, Dec. 23, 1890; Jan. 20, Feb. 21, June 1, 1891, Lasters Union Papers.

34

The Union Worker (Lynn, Mass.) Jan. 9, 10, 31, 1924.

35

Blauner, Alienation, 58-86. It should be noted here that although Fall River textile workers fit Blauner's model of on-the-job alienation, there are significant off-the-job differences which can be related to the differences in the size of the work force and the urban environment. Blauner's study which revealed strong off-the-job community support for textile workers, deals with small relative to Fall River mills located in small mill towns and villages. Blauner looks at workers employed in mills of 130 workers while Fall River's mills employed 200 to 2,000 workers. Blauner's villages had one or two mills while Fall River had over a hundred mills.

36

In Lancashire the workers developed a series of social institutions which they used to protect the interests of their class and to circumvent the legal restrictions against trade unions. In the 1820's and 1830's when the restrictions were lifted, formal unions developed out of these informal social institutions. During the depressions and repressions of the 1840's and 1850's many of the formal unions collapsed, and the workers fell back on the old clubs and societies to keep the union spirit alive. When these workers migrated to Fall River they brought with them their formal and informal activity.

37

William Hale, "The Importance of Churches in a Manufacturing Town," Forum 18 (Sept. 1894 - Feb. 1895) 295. Jonathan Harrison, Certain Dangerous Tendencies in American Life (Boston, 1880) 163-164.

38

See author's dissertation, 194-196.

39

Trade unions were not the exclusive institution of the working class and their use here in the analysis is not to imply that labor history is only the study of unions and strikes. Unions were one among several working class associations which were central in the struggle between employers and employees. Workers had other associations which helped maintain class solidarity and integrated new members into the class, but it was the unions which were in the forefront of the battle between labor and capital. As such they received visual notice by the press and provided the historian with another view of the world of the worker that lay behind them.

40

"Testimony of Thomas O'Donnell" before the Senate Committee, Relations Between Labor and Capital, 1883, quoted in John Garaty, ed., Labor and Capital in the Gilded Age (Boston, 1968) 36; Gertrude Barnum, "The Story of a Fall River Mill Girl," The Independent 58 (Feb., 1905) 243.

41

"Testimony of J.G. Jackson," before the United States Industrial Commission, Vol. 17, 56 Congress, 2nd Sess., House Doc. No. 183 (Wash., D.C., 1901) 538. Emphasis mine.

42

Fall River Daily Herald, March 22, 1889.

43

Ibid., March 22, 1889; Feb. 28, 1884.

44

Tape sessions with retired garment workers, April 1973, quoted from Mary Felix; U.S. Dept. of Labor, Women and Children Wage Earners, 61 Congress, 2nd. Sess., Senate Doc. No. 645, Vol. 16, part 3 (Wash., D.C., 1909, 1910) 976; Herbert Lahn, The Cotton Mill Worker (New York, 1944) 280; "Testimony of Thoms O'Donnell, before the Senate Committee, "Relations Between Labor and Capital," 1883, quoted in John Garaty, ed., Labor and Capital, 33; "Report of Massachusetts Commission on Minimum Wage." Massachusetts House Doc. No. 1697 (Boston, 1912) 17.

45

Outside of the American Linen Mills, the French Canadians did not begin showing up on the pay roll records of the major Fall River mills until well into the 1880's. In 1886 the Fall River Iron Works Metacomet Mills had only 1% of its work French Canadian, looking only at the weavers in 1887 the Metacomet Mill still had only 8% of its work force French Canadian. But by 1896 46% of the Fall River Iron Works Mill #4 were French Canadians with the other mills following. When the French Canadians did move into the mills they were at first concentrated in the least skilled and lowest paying jobs. Jobs also with the highest variance from the mean, thus the least dependable weekly earnings. Sampled from the Fall River Iron Works, Metacomet Mill, 1886, 1887; Mill #4, 1896, 1902. Ethnicity based upon surname.

46

Johnathan Lincoln, City of the Dinner Pail (Boston, 1909) 59; Sylvia Lintner, "A Social History of Fall River," unpubl. dissertation (Radcliff, 1945) 72-81.

47

See author's dissertation, chapter, 9, "Conflict and Cohesion," for a more detailed discussion of this process of integration as manifest in a series of strikes from 1879-1894.

48

"Testimony of George McNeill," Industrial Commission, Vol. 7, 56 Congress, 2nd. Sess., House Doc. No. 183 (Wash., D.C., 1901) 567.

49

Fall River Daily Herald, Feb. 8, 11, 1884.

50

Donald Taft, Two Portuguese Communities (New York, 1923) 98.

51

The community which earlier, despite the antagonism between the English and Irish and French Canadians, had managed to transcend ethnic divisions and unite as members of a common working class. They had community institutions which brought them together. With the increase, dispersion and speed-ups these institutions became less and less active as integrating and unifying class institutions. The migration of the Portuguese put the final strain on the community. Racist and ethnic divisions emerged and the darker Portuguese were seen as outside the community. See David Montgomery, "The Shuttle and the Cross: Weavers and Artisans in the Kensington Riots of 1844," Journal of Social History, Vol. 5 (1972) for a discussion of the impact of class institutions in uniting the working class, and with the absence of these institutions the setting of the stage for ethnic clashes.

52

Quoted as the opinion of an operative in Fall River. Charities, Vol. 14 (Feb. 4, 1905).

53

During the strike of 1904-1905 this attitude of hostility and indifference toward the newly arrived immigrants manifested itself in several hostile and negative statements about the immigrants by union officials, and in the failure of the union to fully accept the support of non-union members. Fall River Daily Globe, Aug. 16, 17, 18; Sept. 1, 21; July 30, 1904. See also the author's dissertation, cha. 10, for a more complete discussion of this strike and the hostile attitudes of the English, Irish and French Canadian workers toward the new immigrants.

54

The division between ethnic groups in Fall River so totally disrupted the working-class community that in 1919 when the Portuguese organized the Doffers Union and went out on strike against the mills, union spinners went into the doffing room and did the doffers work to break the strike. During the nineteenth century strikes, the city's unions opened up the participation in the strike to all strikers, and the strike activity was conducted often through open meetings. By 1905 in reaction to the recent immigration, only union members were allowed to participate in strike decisions and activity. By 1908 the city's skilled workers left the conservative United Textile Workers in protest over the union's increasing recognition of unskilled and semi-skilled workers. The recent immigrants were left to the mercy of the companies. "Taped interview with Manuel Mellow, retired doffer and his wife," April, 1973. "Taped interview with Mary Felix and other retired garment workers who began in the textile mills;" Massachusetts Bureau of Labor Statistics, Massachusetts Labor Bulletin, No. 59 (Dec., 1908, 225; Robert Lahne, The Cotton Mill Worker, 7; Martin Segal, "The Case of the Fall River Textile Worker," Quarterly Journal of Economics (Aug., 1956) 466. The resulting breakdown between the Portuguese, English, Irish and French Canadian workers led to a dual union structure in Fall River by the 1930's. The Portuguese unionized independently from the old Fall River textile unions and joined the United Textile Workers. The major force behind this second union movement was the joint team of a Portuguese back tender, Mariano Bishop and an Irish weaver, Ed Doolan. When they went on strike in 1934, the older textile unions scabed to break the strike.

55

In 1903 General Electric began equipping its buildings with supervised lunchrooms, thus further breaking down the informal socializing among workers. Thirty-Fourth Annual Report of Massachusetts Bureau of Statistics of Labor, 1903, (Boston, 1904) 318.

56

"Tape sessions with retired electrical workers," available at Lynn Historical Society.

57

Ibid., "Tape sessions with retired shoe workers."

58

See George Friedmann, The Anatomy of Work; and David Montgomery, "Immigrant Workers and Scientific Management" paper presented at "Immigrants in Industry," Conference Eleutherian Mills Historical Library, Nov. 2, 1973; see also Professor Montgomery's forthcoming study on Workers' Control and Their Response to Scientific Management in general. The struggle against scientific management was not new at the Lynn G.E. plant. In the period between 1919 and 1920 there was continual struggle between the workers at G.E. and management over a finally successful effort to institute time-motion studies and other scientific management techniques on the floor. The workers complained that the new methods would debase their labor, and isolate them from their co-workers, The Union Leader (Lynn, Mass.) May 29, 1920; June 19, 1920. The use of scientific management in the G.E. plant in Lynn created a condition similar to that in the textile mills, with low piece-time rates, and continued speed-ups. The workers had less time on the job to socialize, and less feeling of control over their work.

59

"Tape sessions with retired electrical workers."

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Although these institutions were not purely functional and did have a cultural as well as job-specific roles, when the process of urban dispersion and suburbanization of the work force removed the worker of Lynn from the downtown institutions, it became harder and harder for these institutions to maintain themselves as informal socializing centers. See Daniel Luria, "Suburbanization, Ethnicity, and the Party Base: Spatial Aspects of the Decline of American Socialism," working paper No. 26; Elliott Sclar's Brandeis University Project, "Boston Studies in Urban Political Economy," for a discussion of the impact of urban dispersion on working-class political activity.

"Tape sessions with retired shoe workers and retired electrical workers." Oral history interviews with any retired person or persons are liable to produce a sense of loss of the "good old days" and must be used guardedly. What is interesting about the Lynn workers is that the "good old days" were a time when there was a strong sense of class and class cohesion. These workers are not reflecting back on a time in which everyone was equal, or when there was a cohesive deference society of all classes. The "good old days" were times in which there was a strong class struggle, and the workers stuck together. It is nostalgia for a time in which the work force demonstrated in their minds class consciousness.