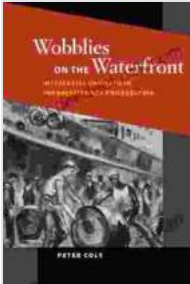


Interracial Unionism in Progressive Era Philadelphia: A Case Study of American Working-Class Solidarity



Wobblies on the Waterfront: Interracial Unionism in Progressive-Era Philadelphia (Working Class in American History) by Peter Cole

★★★★☆ 4.9 out of 5

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Text-to-Speech : Enabled
Screen Reader : Supported
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
Word Wise : Enabled
Print length : 227 pages



The Progressive Era in the United States (1890-1920) was a time of great social and economic change, marked by the rise of industrialization, the growth of cities, and the emergence of new social and political movements. One of the most significant developments of this era was the emergence of interracial unionism, as African American and immigrant workers joined forces to fight for better working conditions and economic justice.

Philadelphia was a major center of industrial activity during the Progressive Era, and it was also home to a large and diverse working class. African American workers, who had long faced discrimination and low wages, were particularly active in the labor movement, and they played a key role in the development of interracial unionism in the city.

One of the most successful examples of interracial unionism in Progressive Era Philadelphia was the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America (ACWA). Founded in 1914, the ACWA was a union that represented workers in the garment industry, which employed a large number of African American and immigrant workers. The ACWA was led by a group of progressive leaders who were committed to interracial solidarity, and they were able to build a strong and effective union that fought for the rights of all its members, regardless of race or ethnicity.

The ACWA's success was due in part to its ability to overcome the challenges of racism and discrimination. The union faced opposition from both white and African American workers who were skeptical of interracial cooperation, but the ACWA's leaders were able to build a strong sense of solidarity among its members. They did this by emphasizing the common interests of all workers, regardless of race, and by providing support and protection to African American workers who were facing discrimination.

The ACWA's success was also due to its ability to adapt to the changing economic conditions of the Progressive Era. The garment industry was undergoing a period of rapid change, and the ACWA was able to negotiate agreements with employers that protected the jobs and wages of its members. The union also played a role in improving the working conditions in the garment industry, and it helped to establish a minimum wage and a maximum workweek for workers.

The ACWA was not the only example of interracial unionism in Progressive Era Philadelphia. Other unions, such as the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union and the United Textile Workers of America, also made efforts to organize African American workers and to promote interracial

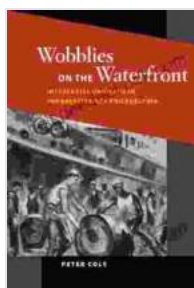
solidarity. These unions faced similar challenges, but they were also able to achieve significant successes.

The interracial unionism movement in Progressive Era Philadelphia was a significant development in the history of American labor. It demonstrated that working-class people of different races could unite to fight for their common interests, and it helped to lay the foundation for a more just and equitable society.

The history of interracial unionism in Progressive Era Philadelphia is a story of struggle and triumph. It is a story of working-class people of different races coming together to fight for their rights, and it is a story that is still relevant today. In a world that is still grappling with racism and inequality, the lessons of interracial unionism can help us to build a more just and equitable society.

Further Reading

- Interracial Unionism in Detroit, 1910-1930 by Kimberley L. Phillips
- Labor and the City in the Urban South: New Orleans during the Progressive Era, 1894-1918 by William H. Carrigan
- The Workers of Philadelphia, 1800-1890: Labor, Class, and Ethnicity in the Industrial Revolution by Bruce Laurie



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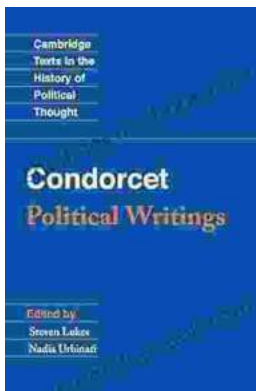
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