

National History Day Topic: Children for Hire: What's Wrong with This Picture?

Developed by: Priscilla Taylor

Date: November 7, 2013

Primary Source #1



Image Title: "[Addie Card], anemic little spinner in North Pownal Cotton Mill...Vermont."

Creator: Hine, Lewis Wickes, 1874-1940, photographer

Date Created/Published: 1910 August

Persistent URL: <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/ncl2004001719/PP/>

Introduction:

The National History Day 2014 Theme is: *Rights and Responsibilities in History*. The topic I chose for my Source Set, "Children for Hire: What's Wrong With This Picture?" fits this year's theme as it takes a historical look at the lack of rights and the workplace atrocities suffered by young children in the 19th and early 20th centuries. My source set will ultimately lead my students to research the timeline of legislation in the United States, both proposed and enacted, that would result in the protection of the rights of children. After introducing this source set to my classes by using an inquiry method, I plan to have my students discover that most of the photographs in the source set were taken by the same person. The students will research photographer Lewis Hines's work in New Jersey and will discover the local industries who employed young children, the local activists who struggled to make child labor atrocities known in New Jersey, and to look for evidence that describes how the issue of child labor was or was not resolved in our state. As a class, we will be reading the two print resources listed in my **Secondary Sources**: a nonfiction book that details how children organized themselves to "strike" back at their adult employers ([Kids on Strike](#)), and a historical fiction novel, [Counting on Grace](#), whose author used a Lewis Hine photograph as her inspiration and who was compelled to research the real identity of the young girl featured in Hine's photograph (see my **Primary Resource #1**: photograph of "Addie").

Guiding Historical Question

How were children affected by the industrialization of American cities?

Additional Primary Sources



Title: "Every one of these was working in the cotton mill at North Pormal [i.e., Pownal], Vt. and they were running a small force. Rosie Lapiare, 15 years; Jane Sylvester, 15 years; Runie[?] Cird, 12 years; R. Sylvester, 12 years; E. [H.?] Willett, 13 years; Nat. Sylvester, 13 years; John King, 14 years; Z. Lapear, 13 years. Standing on step. Clarence Noel 11 years old, David Noel 14 years old. Location: No[rth] Pownal, Vermont."

Creator: [Hine, Lewis Wickes, 1874-1940](#), photographer

Date Created/Published: 1910 August

Persistent URL: <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/ncl2004001721/PP/>



Title: "Employees' poster, Pocasset Mill. Location: Fall River, Massachusetts."

Creator: Hine, Lewis Wickes, 1874-1940, photographer

Date Created/Published: 1916 June 18

Persistent URL:

<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/ncl2004004342/PP/>



Title: "Rhea Quintin - 14 years old. Hand drawing in on Webb frame. Been at it about 3 months. Requires great deal of mental application and accuracy and good oversight. Takes over a year to learn. Seemed very young in certificate office. Miss Smith thought she was a little school girl coming for some other purpose. Location: Fall River, Massachusetts."

Creator: Hine, Lewis Wickes, 1874-1940, photographer

Date Created/Published: between June 12 and June 20, 1916

Persistent URL: <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/ncl2004002006/PP/>



Title: "Shots of the young workers going in to Ayer Mill, 6:30 to 7 A.M., Sept. 11, 1911. All work. Location: Lawrence, Massachusetts."

Creator: Hine, Lewis Wickes, 1874-1940, photographer

Date Created/Published: 1911 September 11

Persistent URL:

<http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/ncl2004002934/PP/>

ANOTHER FATAL ACCIDENT. Kirk Wight, about 14 years of age, a son of Mr James Wight, who lives on Warren street, was killed yesterday afternoon in the Prescott Mill, by falling through what is called the elevator. He fell about twelve feet, striking on his head, fracturing the skull badly. He survived the accident only about two hours. This is a most distressing accident, and one which will be severely felt by the afflicted parents. Just one week before a similar accident happened in the new Middlesex Mill. We trust that these two accidents will serve to make people more careful.

Title: "Another Fatal Accident"
 Undated Newspaper Clipping,
 Lowell, Massachusetts
Persistent URL:
<http://library.uml.edu/clh/All/np01.htm>

**CONSTITUTION OF THE
 Lowell Factory Girls Association.**

PREAMBLE.
 Whereas we, the undersigned, residents of Lowell, moved by a love of honest industry and the expectation of a fair and liberal recompense, have left our homes, our relatives and youthful associates, and come hither, and subjected ourselves to all the danger and inconvenience, which necessarily attend young and unprotected females, when among strangers, and in a strange land; and however humble the condition of Factory Girls, (as we are termed,) may seem, we firmly and fearlessly (though we trust with a modesty becoming our sex,) claim for ourselves, that love of moral and intellectual culture, that admiration of, and desire to attain and preserve pure, elevated and refined characters, a true reverence for the divine principle which bids us render to every one his due, a due appreciation of those great and cardinal principles of our government, of justice and humanity, which enjoins on us "to live and let live"—that chivalrous and honorable feeling, which with equal force, forbids us to invade others rights, or suffer others, upon any consideration, to invade ours; and at the same time, that utter abhorrence and detestation of whatever is mean, sordid, dishonorable or unjust—all of which, can alone, in our estimation, entitle us to be called the daughters of freemen, or of Republican America.

And, whereas, we believe that those who have preceded us have been, we know that ourselves are, and that our successors are liable to be, assailed in various ways by the wicked and unprincipled, and cheated out of just, legal and constitutional dues, by ungenerous, illiberal and avaricious capitalists,—and convinced that "union is power," and that as the unprincipled consult and advise, that they may the more easily decoy and seduce—and the capitalists that they may the more effectually defraud—we (being the weaker) claim it to be our undeniable right, to associate and concentrate our power, that we may the more successfully repel their equally base and iniquitous aggressions.

And, whereas, impressed with this belief, and conscious that our cause is a common one, and our conditions similar, we feel it our imperative duty to stand by each other through weak and woe; to administer to each others wants, to prevent each others backsliding—to comfort each other in sickness, and advise each other in health, to incite each other to the love and attainment of those excellences, which can alone constitute the perfection of female character—unadorned virtue, refined tastes and cultivated intellects—and in a word, do all that in us lies, to make each other worthy ourselves, our country and Creator.

Therefore, for the better attainment of those objects, we associate ourselves together, and mutually pledge to each other, a females irrefragable vow, to stand by, abide by, and be governed by the following

PROVISIONS.

ARTICLE 1st. It shall be denominated the **LOWELL FACTORY GIRLS' ASSOCIATION.**

ART. 2d. Any female of good moral character, and who works in any one of the Mills in this city, may become a member of this Association, by subscribing to this Constitution.

ART. 3d. The officers of the Association shall be, a President, Vice President, a Recording Secretary, a Corresponding Secretary, a Treasurer, a Collector, and a Prudential Committee, two of whom shall be selected from each Corporation in this city.

ART. 4th. The officers shall be chosen by the vote of the Association; that is, by the vote of a majority of the members present.

ART. 5th. The duties of the President, Vice President, Secretaries, Treasurer, and Collector, shall be the same as usually appertain to such officers. The duties of the Prudential Committee shall be to watch over the interests of the Association generally; to recommend to the Association, for their consideration and adoption, such By-Laws and measures as in their opinion the well-being of the Association may require; and also to ascertain the necessities of any of its members, and report the same, as soon as may be, to the Association. And whenever, in the opinion of the Committee, there are necessities so urgent as to require immediate relief, they shall forthwith report the same to the President, who shall immediately draw upon the Treasurer for the sum recommended, and which said the Committee shall forthwith apply to the relief of the necessitous.

ART. 6th. The Treasurer and Collector shall be subject to the supervision of the Prudential Committee, to whom they shall be accountable, and to whom they shall give such security for the faithful discharge of their duties, as the Committee shall require.

ART. 7th. All moneys shall be raised by vote of a majority of the Association, or of the members present, and shall be assessed equally on all the members.

ART. 8th. All the officers shall hold their office for the term of one year, with the privilege of resigning, and subject to be removed by vote of the Association, for good cause.

ART. 9th. The Association shall meet once in three months and may be convened oftener, if occasion require, by the President, upon a petition of twenty of the members first petitioning her for that purpose.

ART. 10th. It shall forever be the policy of the members of this Association, to bestow their patronage, so far as is practicable, upon such persons as befriend, but never upon such as oppose our cause.

ART. 11th. The Association shall have power to make all necessary By-Laws, which shall be consistent with these Provisions, and such By-Laws, when made, shall be binding upon all the members.

ART. 12th. Any member may dissolve her connection with the Association, by giving two weeks notice to the Recording Secretary; and any member shall be expelled from the Association by a vote of a majority of the members present, for any immoral conduct or behavior unbecoming respectable and virtuous females.

ART. 13th. This Constitution may be altered or amended at any time, by a vote of two thirds of the members present.

**Lowell Factory Girls Association -
 Constitution 1836
 University of Massachusetts Lowell**

Title: Lowell Factory Girls Association -
 Constitution 1836 (University of
 Massachusetts, Lowell)
Persistent URL:
<http://library.uml.edu/clh/All/doc01.htm>

BOSTON TRANSCRIPT
1834

Turnout in Lowell

We learn that extraordinary excitement was occasioned at Lowell, last week, by an announcement that the wages paid in some of the departments would be reduced 15 percent on the 1st of March. The reduction principally affected the female operatives, and they held several meetings, or caucuses, at which a young woman presided, who took an active part in persuading her associates to give notice that they should quit the mills, and to induce them to 'make a run' on the Lowell Bank and the Savings Bank, which they did. On Friday morning, the young woman referred to was dismissed, by the Agent...and on leaving the office...waved her calash in the air, as a signal to the others, who were watching from the windows, when they immediately 'struck' and assembled about her, in despite of the overseers.

"The number soon increased to nearly 800. A procession was formed, and they marched about the town, to the amusement of a mob of idlers and boys, and we are sorry to add, not altogether to the credit of Yankee girls....We are told that one of the leaders mounted a stump and made a flaming Mary Wollstonecraft speech on the rights of women and the iniquities of the 'monied aristocracy,' which produced a powerful effect on her auditors, and they determined to 'have their way if they died for it.'

Let oppression shrug her shoulders,
And a haughty tyrant frown,
And little upstart Ignorance,
In mockery look down.
Yet I value not the feeble threats
Of Tories in disguise,
While the flag of Independence
O'er our noble nation flies.

Song Lyrics Sung by Protesting Workers at Lowell

Oh! isn't it a pity, such a pretty girl as I
Should be sent to the factory to pine away and die?
Oh! I cannot be a slave, I will not be a slave,
For I'm so fond of liberty,
That I cannot be a slave

Persistent URL: <http://library.uml.edu/clh/All/bos.htm>

Secondary Sources

Bartoletti, Susan Campbell. Kids On Strike! Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1999.

"Lewis Hine Project," Mornings on Maple Street. Accessed 2 November 2013. Web.
<http://www.morningsonmaplestreet.com/lewishine.html>

"Mass. man searches for stories behind century-old child labor photos," Televised News Interview with Joseph Manning. September 25, 2012, CBS News, Web.
http://www.cbsnews.com/8301-18563_162-57519853/mass-man-searches-for-stories-behind-century-old-child-labor-photos/?tag=cbsnewsSectionContent.0

Winthrop, Elizabeth. Counting on Grace. New York: Random House, 2006.

Graphic Organizer:

SCIM-C Chart 1, Appendix 4 (large format 36 x 36 for group work): See next page.

Question:

Monitoring

Inferring

Contextualizing

Summarize

Source description

