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Silk Stockings and Socialism: Philadelphia's Radical Hosiery Workers from the Jazz Age to the New Deal

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and race antagonisms between Mexicans and Chinese, and "armed insurgents took revenge on the store-owners and merchants they viewed as most alien: the Chinese." (201) Soldiers and civilians committed unspeakable violence against Chinese men, women, and children, especially in northern Mexico where Chinese immigrants were more heavily concentrated. During the 1920s and 1930s, groups in northern states like Sonora and Sinaloa continued their crusade against the Chinese; between 1931 and 1933, these two states successfully harassed and expelled almost all of their Chinese.

Relying on impressive archival research based in multiple countries (Britain, Canada, Cuba, Mexico, Peru, Spain, and the United States), Young's hemispheric examination of Chinese immigration and each country's response more clearly illuminates the hopes that Chinese labourers carried with them, the hardships that many of them endured, and the strategies that so many Chinese devised in order to find new opportunities in the Americas. The transnational scale of the book is uneven at times – Peru largely drops out of the picture after Part I, and Part III is mostly concerned with the anti-Chinese campaigns that were integral to Mexico's revolutionary and postrevolutionary nation-building processes. For specialists working on Chinese migration in the Americas, much of the history may also be familiar. Yet Young has provided an essential synthesis of the multinational archival sources and the secondary literature about Chinese migration in the Americas, delicately balancing what could easily have been a story about overwhelming state power with the immigrants' perspectives and, importantly, the actual voices of the immigrants themselves. Ultimately, the book provides a compelling examination of how the open borders that defined the coolie era turned into the increasingly closed borders of the free labour capitalist world, and how Chinese labourers not only survived but forged new transnational diasporic communities through their clandestine migrations.

Julian Lim
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Sharon McConnell-Sidorick, *Silk Stockings and Socialism: Philadelphia's Radical Hosiery Workers from the Jazz Age to the New Deal* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press 2017)

In *Silk Stockings and Socialism,* Sharon McConnell-Sidorick examines the activism of hosiery workers during the 1920s and 1930s in the Kensington section of north-east Philadelphia; a mill-town with a long and significant history of labour activism in the US. Kensington was the birthplace of the Knights of Labor in 1869, and later in 1889 the American Federation of Full-Fashioned Hosiery Workers (AFFFHW). McConnell-Sidorick argues that 19th-century traditions of community-based activism and radicalism were carried over into the 20th century where a younger generation of hosiery workers, or "youth militants," were at the forefront of the founding of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO), New Deal programs, socialism, and labour feminism.

McConnell-Sidorick situates the story of Kensington hosiery workers in the context of the transatlantic movement of industry and traditions of workers' radicalism from England, Scotland, Ireland, and Germany. She uses oral histories, trade union records, the labour press, and studies conducted by social scientists in the 1930s to paint a rich picture of the community networks of support and traditions of resistance and radical craft unionism that emerged in Kensington. By

the 1920s what the author describes as a form of "working-class cosmopolitanism" existed in the community. African-Americans, however, comprised only a small percentage of Kensington's population, and were peripheral to the textile trades both in the community and nationally. She suggests that the textile unions of the 19th and early 20th centuries did not concern themselves with racist hiring practices, but does not explore this issue in depth. Gender occupies a prominent place in McConnell-Sidorick's analysis. Although women did not occupy the most skilled jobs in the trade, which were the purview of male workers, McConnell-Sidorick emphasizes the importance of women, including wage-earning wives and mothers, to the development of the trade. When hosiery women asserted themselves in the community, she suggests, they were continuing a tradition of "disorderly women" that can be traced back to the textile trades in England.

The hosiery industry in Kensington benefited from Jazz Age changes in fashion and popular culture. The hosiery industry expanded with the demand for sheer, form-fitting, more affordable, stockings. A new generation of young workers in the industry participated in the bourgeoning youth culture and its pursuit of commercial amusements. McConnell-Sidorick challenges the interpretations of the flapper as a frivolous party girl, who wore short dresses and purchased an array of consumer goods including cigarettes and cosmetics. From a reading of the local labour press, McConnell-Sidorick concludes that the modern working girl of the 1920s was also influenced by "a new sense of independence and rights, and an admiration for the female 'heroines' who gained prominence in sports, movies, and the media during the 1920s," sparked by the heroism of the suffragettes. (7) Hosiery workers of both sexes reconfigured into what the author describes as "youth militants," by fusing youth culture and radical politics to build a subculture that included dances and parties as well as picket lines and sit-down strikes, while forging a vision for social change. Participation in such pastimes and an interest in consumerism did not necessarily preclude the development of social consciousness. McConnell-Sidorick suggests that Kensington was ethnically diverse, but overwhelmingly white in the 1920s and that most young workers lived with their families. More analysis of ethnic differences in the freedom and independence granted to working wives and daughters might have highlighted any tensions and differences in what the author presents as a harmonious view of working-class community and family life.

The wave of repression that swept the US after World War I resulted in a series of strikes in the 1920s. A concerted effort was made by textile unionists to build a broad based cross-generational and cross-gender solidarity based on socialist internationalism as the union became not just an affiliation but an identity. According to McConnell-Sidorick women were some of the most visible "youth militants" in the 1920s as a form of labour feminism was forged based on the self-conscious participation of women. She states: "They not only demanded the right to unionize, equal pay, and participation in union leadership, but also fought for the rights of married women and mothers to hold jobs and for childcare – allowing women workers to have greater access to the workforce and their union." (105) Separate women-only meetings were organized by the union to help women workers gain more confidence and learn how to formulate their grievances, all of which the author argues contributed to the emergence of working-class feminism. McConnell-Sidorick's discussion of the activism of the women

hosiery workers is an important revision to the older historiography that constructed the 1920s as a time when women's struggle for social and political rights took a downturn. In doing so she bridges an important gap in the scholarship between suffrage-era women's movements and the later women's movement of the post-World War II era. In the late 1920s, the AFFFHW even adopted the iconic image of the youthful modern woman with union hosiery held in her raised arms against a cityscape background as constructions of working women merged with those of the Modern Girl.

According to McConnell-Sidorick, Kensington and its workers provided an alternative to the narrative of defeatism that usually surrounds the Depression. Hosiery workers expanded their organization and supported the labour movement throughout the country perpetuating the vision of social justice dating back to the 1920s and earlier. Adopting a strategy of "Thinking Globally, Acting Locally," (170) the union sponsored social and educational activities that included women and unified hosiery workers in the 1920s continued into the 1930s. In two detailed chapters, Chapters 5 and 6, McConnell-Sidorick presents a convincing argument that the massive scaffolding for the CIO has ties to the AFFFHW in terms of people, institution, and ideology. She further attributes workers' gains stemming from New Deal programs to the co-ordinated efforts of the hosiery workers at the local and national level. She finishes with the successful campaign by the union to organize Philadelphia's largest hosiery mill, the Apex, a takeover which was described similar to "the storming of the Bastille." (212)

Silk Stockings and Socialism has much to recommend to labour and working-class historians and to women's historians with its skillful weaving of the interrelationship of human rights, women's rights, and industrial unionism and the importance of a community-based approach in teasing out the threads of worker's activism, most notably among women in the 1920s and 1930s.

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Erik Loomis, *Empire of Timber: Labor Unions and the Pacific Northwest Forests* (New York: Cambridge University Press 2016)

Erik Loomis' book, *Empire of Timber*, examines the history of workers' environmental activism in the Pacific Northwest of the United States through five case studies of five different labour organizations. As Loomis points out, "examining how unions conceptualized nature to appeal to members or how unions articulated a specific environmental program that shaped resource usage are understudied questions in the environmental history of work." (8) *Empire of Timber* tackles this topic by looking at the Industrial Workers of the World's (IWW) organizing of Pacific Northwest logging camps, the Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumberman (a company union) during World War I, the International Woodworkers of America (IWA) from its formation in 1937, the more conservative United Brotherhood of Carpenters, and the experiences of tree planters or, as Loomis refers to them, "countercultural reforestation workers." (9) Much of *Empire of Timber* predates the modern environmental movement and illustrates the existence of a working-class environmentalism that has been understudied both in labour history and environmental history.

In Chapter 1, the author explores the early history of the IWW organizing in the region. Loomis connects the radical labour union's well-known actions to the demands that he frames as