Gendering Anarchy: Ideology and Hegemony in Gilded Age Chicago

By Marc Roy

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of

Master of Arts

Department of History
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A Thesis/Practicum submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of The University of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirement of the degree

OF

MASTER OF ARTS

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Abstract

The present work analyzes how gender functioned as a pivotal system of meaning in the operation of hegemony in Gilded Age Chicago. By focusing on the trial of eight anarchists in 1886 I explain how the middle and upper class and the anarchist movement perceived and deployed gendered conceptions in a contestation for social power. I use Marxist analyses of class, ideas of gender as presented by historians like Joan W. Scott, and explore how representation reflects experience and ideology. The result is a work that proves the importance of gender as an ideological system of ordering and as a site of power in Gilded Age Chicago and as a method of analysis to illuminate the operation of hegemony.
Introduction

In 2001, during the protest against the Free Trade Area of the Americas in Quebec City I was handed a newspaper with the headline, "Anarchists, You Only See Them When You Fear Them." It was from the Northeastern Federation of Anarcho-Communists. They were trying to counter a litany of stereotypes about anarchism that had been circulating in the weeks leading up to the protest. The headline is enlightening for two reasons. First, it tells the reader that anarchism has been plagued with misconceptions and stereotypes. The contemporary public will often juxtapose it with chaos and violence. Prejudiced narratives disseminated by the bourgeois press, politicians, and police officials have produced an archetype anarchist, which has functioned as a type of political bogeyman for over a century in North American society. Secondly, the term "Anarcho-Communist" suggests a fractured ideology that boasts a history of philosophical discussion and practical application. It would be an exercise in futility to try and encapsulate the various strains of anarchist philosophy and practice, but I believe that anarchism is above all a theory of ethics for personal transformation before societal transformation, with the ideal of liberty as its nuclei. The differences between the philosophies and tactics espoused by communist-anarchists, like Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman, or the syndicalism of Rudolph Rocker, or the individualism of Ezra Heywood to revolutionize society are significant, but they share an important ideological strand; that human nature, being fundamentally creative, spontaneous, and compassionate, requires 'true' liberty to flourish. Any hierarchical or authoritarian structure that inhibits this, according to anarchists, should be wrested and revolutionized. In his introduction to Daniel Guerín’s book Anarchism: From Theory to Practice, linguist and activist Noam Chomsky argues that "at every stage of
history our concern must be to dismantle those forms of authority and oppression that survive from an era when they might have been justified in terms of the need for security or survival or economic development, but that now contribute to – rather than alleviate – material and cultural deficit.”¹ Guerin and Chomsky present anarchism as an ever evolving radical ideology that resists stagnation and rigidity. As a philosophy of ethics and political action with a vibrant history of libertarian struggle, anarchism has influenced many of the most important social movements of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The labor, feminist, students, and artistic movements in the United States have all been influenced by anarchist agitation and thought. The revolutionary unionism of the Industrial Workers of the World, the Modern School Association, the New Left movement, and the feminist movement, all exemplified anarchist principles. More recently, the multiplicity of organizations and groups that form the ‘anti-globalization’ movement are a living example of the disparities and similarities within anarchist philosophy and practice. Decentralized organizational structures, direct action, anti-capitalism, self-defense, pacifism, individualism, and communitarianism, are all part of the mess of the movement. The mainstream newspapers, however, regularly reported on the violent tactics used by anarchists during the protest in Quebec City while leaving out any analysis of the breadth and history of anarchism.

Headlines read “Anarchy Rules,” “Anarchists Sew Mayhem,” and “Violence Mars Trade Summit.”² Portrayed as a group bent on violence or in the words of the National Post “orchestrated hooliganism,” they were immediately marginalized and used as a wedge to

divide the protest movement. While anarchists were childish, peaceful protestors were concerned adults. Those that clashed with police, threw back tear gas canisters, and destroyed corporate property were merely boys, while protestors that remained within the confines of lawful dissent were mature adults. Women were left out of the picture altogether. Anarchists were violent and therefore probably male. To be sure, many anarchists were engaged in violent activities but to stereotype them all shows the bias of the press and the construction of all anarchists as developmentally stunted harbingers of chaos. Needless to say, during the protest I learned valuable lessons about the operations of power, the state, the media, and gender.

Operating within popular narratives about emotional development, rationality, and adherence to normative structures, like the idea of lawful dissent, the mainstream press played on the prejudices of a middle and upper-class readership to marginalize radical dissenters. Converging during times of public resistance, many powerful politicians, businessmen, and media owners have disseminated critiques of radicalism since the middle of the nineteenth century. These critiques were supposed to be nothing more than commonsensical musings about the proper order of modern civilizations. Meant to mobilize the opinion of the middle and upper-class as well as the skilled strata of the working class, critiques that emphasized the importance of property ownership, the vote, and lawful dissent for the development of an orderly American civilization were quite successful in garnering support for anti-radical crusades in America since the Great Strike of 1877. As a result anarchism and other radical ideologies have been marginalized and remain misunderstood. Historical events like the Bolshevik revolution and the rise of state socialism have also overshadowed and in some ways engulfed the anarchist movement in

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the United States. Communist activists and intellectuals sought to subdue anarchist 
agitation and organization while they praised the Bolshevik Revolution as a realistic and 
practical road to Communism. Individuals and a number of organizations, however, have 
fought to reclaim anarchism as an important political philosophy and counter the 
stereotypes put forward by the Communist left and the capitalist right.

Within this historical contestation, the Haymarket Affair has occupied a crucial 
interpretative space. From the summer of 1886 to November 11, 1887, one of the most 
infamous court cases in American history was acted out in Chicago, Illinois. Eight 
anarchists stood trial for their alleged conspiratorial plot to bomb policemen on May 4th, 
1886, near Haymarket Square. By the trial’s end, four men were hanged, one committed 
suicide in his jail cell, two were sentenced to life imprisonment, and one to fifteen years. 
Generations of scholars have shown that their convictions sprang not from their guilt but 
rather from being characterized as representing everything antithetical to America. Before 
the anarchists were even indicted, the mainstream press, the pulpit, and a group of wealthy 
businessmen and politicians fervently called for their execution. Newspapers from Los 
Angeles to New York reported on the drama unfolding in Chicago. A growing mainstream 
press offered an audience of modern consumers highly sensationalized and distorted 
accounts of the anarchist movement. The middle and upper-class, as well as segments of 
the working class digested language and images of anarchists as unmanly jealous loafers, 
ignorant foreigners, or fanatical psychopaths. This iconography created a kind of mental 
map that helped structure public opinion. In 1887, George Schumm, an anarchist from St. 
Paul, Minnesota, aptly predicted that the mainstream press would present historians with 
ample evidence of the “deep barbarism that must have held sway among the American
people as late as the last quarter of the much-vaunted nineteenth century. Schumm explained in the pages of Liberty, an anarchist newspaper edited by Benjamin Tucker in Boston, “For downright cold-blooded brutality the treatment of August Spies and his noble comrades at the hands of the Anglo- and German-American bourgeois press is unexcelled, if not unexampled.” According to historian Paul Avrich a “fear of subversion seized the country, triggering a campaign of radical-baiting rarely if ever surpassed,” in the United States. Widespread fear led to mass curiosity. Following the anarchist drama through the bourgeois press and in the courtroom became a popular consumer vocation at the same time that reporters, editors, the authorities, and business leaders vilified and condemned anarchism as a social disease that required cleansing.

Socialists, anarchists and moderate labor organizations countered the bourgeois press and politicians during the trial and beyond. Lucy Parsons, widow of Albert Parsons who was one of the anarchists executed by the state of Illinois, embarked on a nation wide speaking tour to raise awareness about the trial, the innocence of the defendants, and the anarchist movement. A Defense and Amnesty Committee raised thousands of dollars for legal costs and disseminated numerous pamphlets explaining the bias of the court to thousands of Americans. The Knights of Labor published the autobiographies of all the anarchist defendants in their paper and the Chicago Socialistic Publishing Society compiled and published their speeches in court in 1886. In 1887 Lucy Parsons published Albert Parsons’ Anarchism: Its Philosophy and Scientific Basis as Defined by Some of Its Apostles, and in 1889 she published Life of Albert Parsons: With a Brief History of the Labor Movement in America, which contains the speeches and letters of Albert Parsons

5 Ibid. August Spies was one of the most influential anarchist organizers in Chicago during this time.
from his speaking tours in the United States. Nina Van Zandt published *August Spies’ Auto-Biography*, in 1887 and Dyer D. Lum, editor of *The Alarm*, the American language anarchist newspaper, compiled *A Concise History of the Great Trial of the Chicago Anarchists in 1886*, which was published by the Socialistic Publishing Society in 1887. These accounts attempted to counter the attacks from the press, disseminated the ‘true’ ideology of the movement, and proved the anarchists’ innocence.

Other book-length interpretations of the Haymarket and the anarchist movement upheld the actions of the state. The two most notable published sources are Captain Michael Schaack’s book *Anarchy and Anarchists: A History of the Red Terror and the Social Revolution in America and Europe*, and Geo N. McLean’s, *The Rise and Fall of Anarchy in America*. These two books explain the Haymarket as the tragic result of a group of godless, alien conspirators, who were not the voice of a true working-class movement, but of the ignorant and simple-minded lower classes who desired an easy answer to their troubles. The books also carry a messianic and millenarian message of suffering and deliverance, not for the anarchists but for the true American public, the rightful defenders of civilization and order. Schaack was the officer in charge of the police dragnet that swept Chicago’s radicals or as he called them, “ingrates to society,” into the hands of justice that would “purge and strengthen the social order.”7 Written in 1889, Schaack’s book is a polemical attack on the anarchist movement and a paean to the heroic activities of the police, especially Schaack himself. Dedicated to Judge Gary, who presided over the trial, and state prosecutor Julius S. Grinnell, the book’s primary purpose was to legitimize the

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trial and its outcome as well as to exploit and extend the curiosity of the public. The book not only contains a verbatim account of the trial but also a section dedicated to radical terrorism in Europe and in the words of historian Henry David, sensationalized “[s]tories of strange encounters with masked men, of mysterious meetings with fascinating ladies veiled in black, of anonymous notes and warnings which came in the nick of time, of astute ‘sleuthing’-in short, all the standard appurtenances of the detective thriller.” Such sensationalism distorted the social conditions behind the creation of the anarchist movement and the libertarian philosophy that was a cornerstone of anarchist thought. These authors argued that anarchists should be feared and marginalized. As fictional accounts of urban vice and crime rather than authoritative works about anarchism, these books helped solidify the archetype anarchist in the public imagination rather than reveal the truth.

Schaack’s book also provides an excellent example of the arrogance of the authorities and the fame that followed on the heels of those who participated in the capture and trial of the anarchists.

The history of the Haymarket was, and still is, a controversial and contestable terrain. To the forces of law and order the anarchists were bloodthirsty criminals. To socialist and anarchist activists they were ardent revolutionaries fighting the oppression of industrial capitalism. As a result, the Haymarket was commemorated differently by radicals and police throughout the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Shortly after the trial of the Chicago anarchists the Chicago Tribune campaigned successfully to have a statue erected in Haymarket Square in support of the police. The statue is of a noble, manly, police officer standing with one arm jutting forward as if to stop some invisible force.

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1 Smith, Urban Disorder, 131.
inscription on the pedestal is the command Captain William Ward shouted when police
were breaking up the Haymarket meeting; “In the name of the people of Illinois, I
command peace.” The statue remains an enduring symbol to the gendered ideology of
order exhibited by the business community, the bourgeois press, the politicians, and the
police of the Gilded Age. Throughout the future years the police who marched on the
Haymarket meeting came together to commemorate the event. In 1895 they marched under
a banner with “Veterans of the Haymarket Riot” written on it and in 1901 the police
officers incorporated themselves under the same name. Their celebrations included visits to
the site of the Haymarket bombing, re-enactments of pulling the alarm that was sounded
after the bomb had exploded, and telling personal stories about the affair. These events
continued into the 1960’s despite the fact that all those involved in the Haymarket were
deceased.

1 “Police Monument.” The picture was taken in the 1960’s when the statue was located at the North side of
Randolph Street in Chicago, Illinois. Picture is from Dramas of the Haymarket, an on-line project of the
Chicago Historical Society

10 Dramas of the Haymarket, courtesy of the Chicago Historical Society.
As a symbol of the repression of labor rebellion, the police monument has been a fitting site for the ire of those who identify with the history of anarchism and revolutionary politics. On May 4, 1903, the crest of the city and of the state was stolen from the statue. On the same day in 1927, a street car driver jumped the tracks and rammed the monument, knocking it from its pedestal. On the anniversary of the Haymarket in 1968, an unidentified person sullied it with black paint. The most dramatic events came during the next two years. On October 6, 1969, during demonstrations organized by Students for a Democratic Society (SDS), explosives were placed at the base of the statue, which upon explosion, blew out approximately one hundred windows nearby and hurled chunks of the statue into the expressway. On October 5th of the next year, the statue was blown up again by the Weatherman, a radical faction of SDS. In a statement relayed to one news outlet right after the explosion, the caller declared, "We just blew up the Haymarket Square Statue for the second year in a row to show our allegiance to our brothers in the New York prisons and our black brothers everywhere. This is another phase of our revolution to overthrow our racist and fascist society. Power to the people." Richard Daly, the mayor of Chicago, had the statue repaired both times and placed it under twenty-four hour police supervision. He eventually moved it to the Chicago Police Education and Training Division facility in 1976, where homages to those who fought anarchy are still made. The turbulent history of the police monument provides a unique glimpse into the symbolic power that the Haymarket Affair has retained in the contestation for social power. In turn, after the execution of the Haymarket defendants, their gravesite at Waldheim Cemetery in Chicago became a kind of hallowed ground for radicals and labor activists.

11 Quoted in The Dramas of the Haymarket, an online project of the Chicago Historical Society.
A monument dedicated to the dead anarchists was erected in the Cemetery on June 25th, 1893, which depicts a female figure representing Lady Justice placing a laurel wreath at the head of a fallen worker. Just as nineteenth century caricaturist Thomas Nast utilized the figure of Lady Justice to symbolize the purifying force of American law, anarchists thought it a fitting symbol for the struggle for labor’s emancipation. At the bottom of the pedestal are Augusts Spies’s words, “The day will come when our silence will be more powerful than the voices you are throttling today,” which he shouted seconds before he was executed. Spies’s words, like the monument, look to a future of struggle. Lizzie Holmes, a member of the Chicago anarchist movement, described her fallen comrades as revolutionists that realized the danger of their actions, but driven by the righteousness of their cause, “patiently” and “bravely” awaited it. “[They saw] a vision of society as it should be, thrown up against the sky of the future, and all [their] mighty energies [were] bent upon making it a reality.”

2. “Anarchists’ Monument at Waldheim.” Photo taken by the author.

Their legacy has been portrayed as a continuous struggle to impose a vision of social order antithetical to the reality of capitalism and oppressive state structures. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century figures like Lucy Parsons, popular anarchist activist and orator Emma Goldman, and William D. Haywood, leader of the Industrial Workers of the World, attended and spoke at commemoration ceremonies. The Haymarket monument at Waldheim and the police statue reveal an ongoing ideological and material conflict that has been conceptualized through gender. The extent to which gender informed ideas of order in the late nineteenth century was significant and labor historians interested in radicalism have yet to give it serious attention.

As described above, much of the known history of the Chicago anarchist movement tells the story of an event and a trial that deeply affected the American nation. It has been placed within the broader history of the American labor movement and its struggle for the eight hour day. Focusing on the political-economy of Gilded Age Chicago, analyses of the Haymarket Affair and the Chicago anarchist movement tend to be structured by historical materialism. This is not surprising considering the number of Marxist historians that have shaped the discipline of labor history. Class struggle is and remains crucial to our understanding of power, hierarchy, and exploitation, but subsuming all societal relationships and historical development to economic arrangement fails to adequately address other exploitative and oppressive relations. Social phenomena that are not entirely reducible to class, yet must be understood in relation to it, like gender, requires a turn to ideology and power to grasp the relationship between experience, abstraction, and agency.

The gendered hierarchies of the nineteenth century, which prescribed normative social roles for men and women, legitimimized certain forms of physical and psychological
oppression. This thesis will analyze how the press, periodicals, and the authorities legitimized the prosecution of labor radicals by constructing gendered images of anarchism in the public mind. These images instilled fear and contempt for radicals seeking to revolutionize American society. In turn, anarchists also constructed a gendered perception of the industrial capitalist system. As individuals who lived in a gendered world, anarchists often reflected the social hierarchies of their opponents. They were imbued with notions of manliness and femininity, which surfaced in their polemics and social relationships. Deconstructing the nuanced language anarchists used to counter their opponents and mobilize the masses also constitutes part of this thesis. Much like Carl Smith’s work, mine focuses on the descriptive language that demarcated class, gender, and race in the late nineteenth century. While Smith looks at the imaginative dimensions of urban disorder, I look at how disorder was gendered and how it operated within a contestation for hegemony.

Grappling with the importance of gender as a site of power enriches the study of resistance and reveals an activist oriented historical method that shares the humanism of Marx’s work but expands the revolution to ideological phenomena. While ideology consists of complex and often contradictory ideas, through historical analysis one can explain how some ideas were constructed as ‘truths.’ The language employed during the anarchists’ trial reveals that gender was a pivotal and fundamental system of meaning through which people were positioned into socially acceptable roles. Joan Scott, a theorist and historian of gender relations, argues that “gender is a constitutive element of social relationships based on perceived differences between the sexes,” and “a primary way of
signifying relationships of power.\textsuperscript{13} Historian Gail Bederman, explains that “gender - whether manhood or womanhood - is a historical, ideological [emphasis hers] process,” that is continual, dynamic and contestable.\textsuperscript{14} As a site of power, gender was increasingly contested throughout the second half of the nineteenth century. From the suffragettes and working class women forced outside the home by economic necessity, to the anti-capitalist radicalism of anarchists, the moral and economic world of middle and upper class American men was resisted. According to Michel Foucault, in order to gain a new understanding of power one must take “forms of resistance against different forms of power as a starting point. . .it consists in using this resistance. . .to bring to light [these] power relations, locate their position, find out their point of application and the methods used.”\textsuperscript{15} As a libertarian philosophy that challenged the oligarchy of industrial capitalism, anarchism provided a vision of society that threatened the corporative, or hierarchical, property based system that Chicago’s most powerful wanted to protect.

As a property owner a man was thought to be suited for life in a capitalist republic.\textsuperscript{16} At the same time, an increasingly competitive and oligarchic economic structure hardened class lines. In this context, ideas of gender were used along with ideas about race and class in a variety of constellations to reinforce the power of white middle and upper class men and to discredit labor radicals who fought systemic inequality. Extending their values into a new system of corporate stewardship, which Alan Trachtenberg has called

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item[14] Bederman, \emph{Manliness and Civilization}, 7.
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\end{footnotesize}
“the incorporation of America,” the middle class and the capitalist elite exerted a powerful influence over the American legal system.\(^{17}\) The mass dissemination of ideas that advocated the inclusiveness of the American social order masked this process.

Historian Nell Painter argues that many middle and upper-class citizens who advocated the ideology of social mobility and prosperity really “prized order, which would issue from a hierarchical arrangement in which the more able few would make decisions for everyone.”\(^{18}\) They emphasized an identity of interests in society, a mythology from the days before the Civil War, before the excesses and authoritarianism of industrial capital. It imagined a time when owners and producers operated in an artisanal culture where power was decentralized and both groups “claimed to be producers and deemed merchants, bankers, and speculators.”\(^{19}\) To the authors of magazines like *The Nation*, or editorials from the *New York Times*, or the *Chicago Daily News*, the United States was the first truly free and democratic nation. Working people, like the middle and upper class, were free to labor and climb the social ladder if they had the right character. This ideology created an arrogant elitism among factory owners and politicians, not to mention among the ranks of many skilled American workers, who considered their success a result of their character. When confronted with the realities of mass immigration and the necessity of unskilled labour for the accumulation of surplus value, many turned to nativist and moral arguments to explain the plight of the poor working class. The elite of American society asserted that labour militancy, radical ideologies, and the problems of mass unemployment were created by an uneducated alien influence rather than the structure of industrial capitalism. The poor

\(^{17}\) Alan Trachtenberg, *The Incorporation of America: Culture and Society in the Gilded Age*, (New York: Hill and Yang, 1982).

\(^{18}\) Painter, *Standing at Armageddon*, p.xxxix

\(^{19}\) Ibid., p.xxxix
were better off listening to their social superiors who would decide what was best for the nation.20

The trial of the Chicago anarchists reveals a struggle for the power to impose this social order. Disseminated through schools, the church, the home, the press, and the political system, this ideology became very powerful. According to T.J. Jackson Lears, "the hegemonic culture depends not on the brainwashing of 'the masses' but on the tendency of public discourse [and I would argue, material reality] to make some forms of experience readily available to consciousness while ignoring or suppressing others."21 Ideas of citizenship, property, and gender positioned people into social roles necessary for the continuation of a certain class system. This process, while not entirely based on state violence, relied on the threat of social consequences for those that stepped outside normative structures. The red scare that followed the Haymarket bombing is an example of the type of coercion that limited the discourses that one could use. Any hint that one sympathized with the anarchists meant social ostracism. This may help explain why a population who had not physically or directly experienced the Haymarket bombing so readily accepted the arguments of the press and prosecution during the trial. Frightened by the disorder of industrial America, many middle and upper class citizens desperately held on to their social values.

The International Working People's Association (IWPA) had preached their vision of a new social order in Chicago for three years by the time of the Haymarket bombing.

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Anarchists argued that the industrial capitalist system was turning people into "wage slaves." They argued that the economic system degraded men and forced them to live in poverty and desperation. The freedom to labor productively and receive the total benefits of that labor was the only way to ensure the full development of mankind. Individuals like Albert Parsons, a long time labor activist who helped found the Chicago Trades and Labor Council, and August Spies, the editor of Die Arbeiter-Zeitung (Worker's Newspaper) played leading roles in organizing the movement.

By May 1886 the IWPA had organized at least twenty-six groups in Chicago and had an active membership of about three thousand constituted of mostly German and Bohemian workers. The clubs functioned autonomously and carried out their own work of propaganda and signing up new members. The IWPA hosted dances, picnics, and helped organize the annual celebration of the Paris Commune, which drew thousands of people. Members lectured all over the city about the social and economic conditions of Chicago and the United States and sold socialist and anarchist literature. They also had control of the city's socialist press. Albert Parsons and Lizzie Holmes of the IWPA's American group edited The Alarm, August Spies and Michael Schwab edited Die Arbeiter-Zeitung, and its two weeklies Die Vorbote and Die Fackel, and various activists edited a Bohemian paper called Budoucnost. Armed organizations like the German Lehr-und-Wehr Verein and the Bohemian Sharpshooters were also loosely affiliated with the anarchists. These

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22 The anarchists considered themselves socialists, which was used to describe any class conscious wage laborer who was anti-capitalist and believed that social wealth should be divided equally and rationally. Anarchism differed from socialism in Chicago by its explicit rejection of the ballot, the need for revolutionary agitation, and the belief that violence would be an inevitable part of social change. According to Albert Parsons, it was in the early 1880's that the followers of the "Black International" in Chicago, began to refer to themselves as anarchists. "That name," Parsons states, "which was at first imputed to us a Ja dishonor, w. came to cherish with and to defend with pride. What's in a name? But names sometimes express ideas; and ideas are everything." quoted from Albert R. Parsons, The Autobiography of Albert R. Parsons, edited by Philip S. Foner, (New York: Humanities Press Inc., 1969), 43.
organizations marched in labor processions, provided security and performed armed drills at large gatherings. The sight of armed workingmen frightened business men and the authorities who felt that socialists were organizing to take the city. In a sense they were. The inevitability of a revolution was a fundamental belief of the anarchists. “Revolutions are no more made than earthquakes and cyclones,” argued Spies, “Revolutions are the effect of certain causes and conditions . . . [and] I do believe that the revolution is near at hand – in fact it is upon us.” The workers, according to Parsons, had “to take possession of the means of life – transform it into societary property for co-operative use – before the system of wage-robbery, with its poverty, misery and ignorance, can be abolished.” A certain amount of revolutionary violence would be unavoidable in this process according to the IWPA.

The fears of urban violence and disorder amongst the middle and upper-class citizenry played into the hands of the press and nativists. The Haymarket bombing seemed like a clarion call for working class revolt. Comprised mostly of German and Bohemian workers, the anarchist movement was susceptible to the attacks of American nativists who argued that “foreigners” only desired to undermine the strength of American institutions. On the eve of the anarchists’ execution, The Nation magazine, a voice piece for nativist thought, exclaimed that “it must not be forgotten that that these criminals are all but one foreigners and new arrivals,” and that their execution should serve as an example to other

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25 The Alarm, 18 October, 1886.
foreign radicals who would dare bring their ideas to America. The popularized Darwinism of late nineteenth-century America was used by the press to invoke the possibility of regression. Foreign radicals brought with them to America the vestiges of monarchy, class, and oppression. Nativists argued that the American state needed to respond to this threat with force.

Anarchists on the other hand argued that they were the true defenders of republican virtues. The class struggle was an American issue just as it was an issue in most of the world. Anarchists attempted to reconstruct the language used by their opponents to further their meaning of social order. Analyzing the language employed by the anarchists and the press, periodicals, and prosecution will help understand the complex and often contradictory ideological structures of the Gilded Age. Historians of the Haymarket have only begun to give the relationship between experience and ideology the attention it deserves.

The most well known accounts of the martyrs, their movement, and the Haymarket is Henry David’s *The History of the Haymarket Affair: A Study in the American Social- Revolutionary and Labor Movements*, and Paul Avrich’s *The Haymarket Tragedy*. The former is a political history of the leadership of the anarchist movement and an analysis of the trial. Although expressing sympathy for the doomed anarchists, David creates a narrative in which the anarchists, being psychologically inadequate and thus unable to cope with the existing social order, were driven to fanaticism. Avrich, on the other hand, avoids such psychological explanations and instead argues that anarchism was a rational and humanitarian response to oppressive conditions. His biographical method allows the reader a glimpse into the leader’s characters but he has been criticized for treading dangerously.

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26 *The Nation*, 10 November, 1887.
close to hagiography. Bruce Nelson’s *Beyond the Martyrs: A Social History of Chicago’s Anarchists, 1870-1900*, has been the only book length attempt at retrieving the social world of the anarchist movement. Nelson’s work is good social history and while this thesis follows his research, the work proposed here is both social and cultural history. Carl Smith has written a book on urban disorder titled *Urban Disorder and the Shape of Belief: The Great Chicago Fire, the Haymarket Bomb, and the Model Town of Pullman*, which has a cultural analysis of the Haymarket bombing and the trial. Smith explored how perceptions of an orderly civilization and the realities of urban disorder structured public thought, particularly that of the middle and upper-class. His work is the first to deconstruct some of the gendered language employed by anarchists and those that persecuted them.

The most recent historical work on the Haymarket is James Green’s *Death in the Haymarket: A Story of Chicago, the First Labor Movement and the Bombing that Divided Gilded Age America*. His work incorporates the social and cultural history of Nelson and Smith in a narrative that remains loyal to historical materialism. He, like many authors before him, places the Chicago anarchist movement and the reaction to the Haymarket bomb in the bigger context of class struggle during the latter half of the nineteenth century. Keeping the big picture in perspective is very important, but the grand narrative of class struggle pushes other phenomena to the side. Other writers like Dave Roediger and Franklin Rosemont have made significant contributions to the history and the legacy of the Chicago anarchist movement, especially with their *Haymarket Scrapbook*, as well as Phillip S. Foner who compiled the *Autobiographies of the Haymarket Martyrs*. There is even a collection of fictional accounts of the Haymarket like Frank Harris’ *The Bomb* or Martin Duberman’s *Haymarket: A Novel*. The most recent account of the Haymarket
bombing has reassessed the chemical evidence submitted by the state during the trial and
provided a contemporary chemical analysis of fragments of the Haymarket bomb. Ignoring
most of the facts about the legal conduct of trial, the bias of the press, the context of
American society, the influence of the business community, and the oppression of the red
scare, the authors of the article prove that there may be a connection between the
Haymarket bomb and the defendants.27

Many historians have let the Haymarket bomb narrate their accounts of the Chicago
anarchists and as a result have left out important cultural analyses about radical grass roots
community organizations. According to Bruce Nelson, the Haymarket tragedy “may be too
dramatic and too familiar. American historians have chosen to concentrate on the riot and
the affair as events. Obsessed with the judicial murder of the four convicted anarchists after
a rigged trial by a packed jury, they have ignored the movement behind those leaders and
outside the courtroom.”28 Nelson goes on to explain that the events inside the courtroom,
while dramatic, have structured the historical accounts of the Haymarket because the
“process under investigation was legal, not historical: neither judge, prosecutor, nor jury,
was interested in the origins or development of the political movement led by the martyrs,
only in the conviction and execution of the criminals”.29 This thesis, however, does not
really go “beyond the martyrs.” The leaders of the anarchist movement and their trial are
the best sources of information for a cultural analysis of anarchism in Chicago. The
nuanced iconography of anarchism that was propagated after the Haymarket bombing and

27 Timothy Messer-Kruse, James O. Eckert Jr., Pannee Burckel, Jeffrey Dunn, “The Haymarket Bomb:
28 Nelson, Beyond the Martyrs. 2.
29 Ibid., 3.
during the Chicago anarchists' trial provides a unique glimpse into the operation of ideological consent and coercion in the maintenance of class structures.

The amount of repression, brutality, and discriminatory iconography that followed the Haymarket bombing seems to prove the fragility of the hegemony of the white, protestant middle and upper-class. As Antonio Gramsci so rightly pointed out, ruling groups resort to force when their grip on society slips or when their power has not yet been established. Gramsci cited the "negative functions" of the law as one of the primary ways the state garnered consent. Class rule, however, was also engendered by promoting an inclusive model of socio-economic organization. The right to own property and the vote were the most cherished institutions of the middle and upper-class. Though often corrupted to suit their needs, they preached the virtues of these American institutions to the working classes. The public and the private, however, were patriarchal domains. The social order of nineteenth century American society necessarily implied the continued subordination of women and other men who resisted oppression. Gender and class acted on each other and thus any analysis of class domination must include an analysis of the ideological structures that supported it. As literary theorist Terry Eagleton states, hegemony is "carried in cultural, political, and economic forms – in non-discursive practices as well as in rhetorical utterances." The trial of the Chicago anarchists is both an example of the use of state violence and the use of language and iconography to suppress radicalism and impose a patriarchal class structure. Analyzing the uses of gender will reveal the connection between ideology and class.

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31 Eagleton, Ideology, 113.
Employing theory, whether Marxism or what has become to be known as post-modernism, can help reveal a history that may have been previously overlooked. When anarchists called wage laborers “wage-slaves,” they criticized the authoritarianism of industrial capitalism but also employing a gendered analysis of economic dependence and the servility of the working class. To be a man was to stand up to the system and speak out for the oppressed. The title “Gendering Anarchy” implies a relationship between my theoretical and political project and the historical evidence. As an active way of telling the reader that bias is always part of a historical project, the goal is to increase interest not dissuade it. It also describes how the middle and upper-class understood anarchism in the late nineteenth century and in turn, how the anarchists constructed their movement.

The first chapter looks at how the press used fear to cultivate an image of anarchism and anarchists as leaders of the under-class, of the slum, and as incendiaries bent on riot and destruction who were hoping to bring civilization into savagery. In the minds of the middle and upper class the slums were a place where passions ruled. Sexual promiscuity and criminality pervaded. Ironically, as much as the middle and upper class feared and were disgusted by the slums and places of vice, they eagerly sought them out. Arguably, this was a crucial process in the formation of a distinct middle and upper class identity. According to historian Stuart M. Blumin, a middle ‘class’ which knew itself to be a distinct social stratum, only fully came into being after the Civil War when “the widening differences between the worlds of manual and non-manual work, the expansion of middle-class suburbanization, and the resumption and expansion of social and economic class conflict that was phrased in class terms – contributed to the further articulation of the
The growing tenement districts of urban centers and the floating mass of migrant workers seemed to embody the physical and mental disorder the middle and upper-class feared. The mob represented the physical expression of the passion of these marginalized workers. As labor unrest became more pronounced and confrontational, the bourgeois press replaced the strike with the mob, the labor leader with the foreign conspirator, and radical women with the prostitute.

Middle and upper-class men thought that women could be either chaste and pure or sexually depraved. In the words of historian Ruth Rosen, women could be “madonnas or magdalens, Marys or Eves, angels or whores.” These categories were demarcated by class. Because of their lack of cultivation and education lower-class women were thought more likely to be taken by their passions and fall into vice. The large number of lower-class women working as prostitutes supposedly proved this. Men on the other hand were thought to possess a strong and potentially destructive sex drive that required control through manly self-restraint and rational thought. Because the slums coursed with passion, they symbolized the primitive nature of the lower-classes. It was place where men and women lacked sexual differentiation, which according to middle and upper-class culture signified the extent to which a civilization had developed.

The slums were also thought to be filthy and disease ridden places. Physical and psychological health became a major obsession of the middle and upper-class during industrialization. The body functioned as a microcosm of social life. An orderly and balanced regimen of food, morality, and labor, produced hardy republican citizens, and in

turn a disorderly social environment produced the prostitute, the criminal, and the anarchist.

The second chapter analyzes the mainstream reaction to the Haymarket bombing and the trial of the anarchists. In an effort to win the allegiance of the working-class the press and the state argued their ideas about manliness and productivity. True citizens understood the inclusive qualities of American institutions like a man’s right to own property and the right to vote. True men, according to the press, protected their families and rejected radicalism. True men used reason. By analyzing middle and upper-class ideals of property, marriage, and the home the process by which the American public digested a gendered language of citizenship can be revealed.

The third chapter explains how the anarchists turned the state’s argument on its head. Portraying themselves as the defenders of virtue and prosperity and the industrial capitalist system as exploitative and corrupt was a tactic used to appeal to the manliness of working men. Anarchists argued that government agents and the capitalist elite were bestial. They preyed on the weak to reap profits. The factory system, according to the anarchists, dragged children from their homes and forced woman out to prostitute themselves. Only anarchism could save society from the clutches of wealthy oppressors. Only they delivered the truth to the working classes. They emphasized the use of force, especially the use of dynamite, in self-defense and to instill a sense of combative manliness in the working class.
Chapter 1

Foreign Radicals, the Rise of the Great Unwashed, and the Civilized Body

The urban environments of the late nineteenth century were places of stark contrasts. The centripetal forces of industrialization drew hundreds of thousands of immigrants into cities like New York and Chicago. Settlement into ethnic enclaves created neighborhoods that were divided by race and class, by religion and politics. As class lines hardened, many unfortunate immigrant laborers were forced into shabby housing and polluted tenement districts, while the rich nestled into tree lined avenues with gated mansions. Making sense of such rapidly developing landscapes was left to writers and reformers who provided a medium between the classes. Reporters catering to businessmen, politicians, and professionals, sought out the wretched and ruined, the seductive and repulsive spaces of the city in order to satisfy a bourgeoning middle and upper-class obsession with the lower orders. Seeking out and describing the 'low' places and classes of the city was part of identity formation. By searching for the downtrodden the bourgeoisie also found themselves. During a period of such massive social change the middle and upper-classes, which were at the locus of economic, political, and cultural power, cultivated an identity of American citizenry, which was necessarily exclusionary. An analysis of language and imagery used by the bourgeois press reveals a system of meaning, a hierarchical ordering, in which the lumpenproletariat and 'the mob' occupy a pivotal psychological space. According to Karl Marx the lumpenproletariat was a melee of individuals caught in the margins of industrialization and urban development.

Alongside decayed roués with dubious mean of subsistence and of dubious origins, alongside ruined and adventurous offshoots of the bourgeoisie, were vagabonds, discharged jailbirds, escaped galley slaves, swindlers, mountebanks, lazzaroni,
pickpockets, tricksters, gamblers, *masquereaus*, brothel-keepers, porters, literati, organ-grinders, ragpickers, knife-grinders, tinkers, beggars, - in short, the whole indefinite, disintegrated mass thrown hither and thither, which the French call *la bohème*.  

Although marginal to the world of material production the “vagabond,” the “swindlers,” the “knife-grinders,” and the “literati,” were products of the industrializing world and according to cultural theorists Peter Stallybrass and Allon White, occupied an important imaginary space as the object of “disgust and fascination.” As the social ‘other,’ the *lumpenproletariat* was everything the American citizen was not. While the ‘other’ was dirty, lazy, drunk, rebellious, ignorant, and foreign, the American citizen was clean, industrious, sober, law abiding, native, and religious. Essentially, the American citizen embodied civilized order while the *lumpenproletariat* embodied social disorder.  

Historians Paul Boyer and Carl Smith have analyzed how the disorderly acted as an ideological framework in which modern development was understood and judged. Looking at the Great Chicago Fire of 1871, which razed the city in flames, the Haymarket Bomb, and the town of Pullman, Illinois, Smith argues that “defining whether and in what way this or that event was disorderly, disastrous, and potentially catastrophic was an act of power in a struggle in which different people tried to enforce their often disputed vision of social order as the one that was most normal, proper and correct.” The abusive language and physical coercion employed by the press and the state during the Haymarket Affair functioned as a type of psychological colonialism within this contestation. As labor radicals, anarchists were positioned as part of the *lumpenproletariat*. According to historian Paul Boyer, “Urban disorder was familiar enough from the antebellum period, but in the

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Gilded Age it took on a more menacing aura as a direct expression of labor unrest.\textsuperscript{3}

Strikes, rebellion, and radical workers’ organizations, were not understood as the legitimate expression of working class discontent, but the result of mob rule, drunkenness, and the sharp tongues of foreign agitators. When the middle and upper classes imagined revolution they fantasized about the rise of the slum and the \textit{lumpenproletariat}. For this reason the fear of the lower classes is of crucial importance to understand fears of anarchism.

According to historian Paul Boyer, as the middle and upper classes moved into suburbs or withdrew into “urban enclaves” insulated by their wealth, the slums, saloons, sweatshops, and streets, assumed a menacing character.\textsuperscript{5} Images of the city as a den of seduction, crime, and destitution were popularized in the middle and late nineteenth century by sensational newspapers, crime magazines, and dime novels. In 1850, author George G. Foster published \textit{New York by Gas Light: With Here and There a Streak of Sunshine}, who purported to lay bare the “festivities of prostitution, the orgies of pauperism, the haunts of theft and murder, the scenes of drunkenness and beastly debauch and all the sad realities and all the sad realities that go to make up the lower stratum – the underground story – of life in New York!”\textsuperscript{6} Packard’s \textit{Monthly}, a popular magazine of the late 1860’s, published a story about the proprietor of a brothel that continued this kind of “moral muckraking” and Anthony Comstock, the creator of the Comstock Laws that prohibited the publication of obscenity, wrote \textit{Traps for the Young} in 1883, which told stories of the dangers of saloons, pool halls, “low theatres, and rumholes.”\textsuperscript{7} The city became a ‘dark

\textsuperscript{5} Ibid., 127.
\textsuperscript{7} Boyer, \textit{Urban Masses}, 127.
continent' to be explored and explained and as the physical distance between the classes increased, explanations were mediated by the popular press. Free from the surveillance of the 'respectable' classes the slums induced fear and fantasy, which were based in daily experience and the sensationalism of a customer hungry press.\(^8\)

The prostitute occupied a pivotal position within bourgeois conceptual frameworks about the slums and urban disorder. Increasingly obsessed by daily regimentations that would ensure health and stamina, prostitutes posed a direct threat to the middle and upper-class. The prevalent ideology regarding psychological and physical health in late nineteenth century America emphasized order and balance within the individual and society at large. Disease and depravity were thought to spawn from remedial human acts in both spheres.\(^9\)

As the population grew, urban and moral disorder, embodied by the *lumpenproletariat*, the slum, and the prostitute increasingly haunted the minds of the middle and upper-classes. According to historian Ruth Rosen, "The visible association of brothels with lower-class neighborhoods and customers . . . . and the association of sexual indulgence with weakened health and ambition, provided one rationalization for poverty, unemployment, and disease among the poor."\(^{10}\) Historian Mary Ryan explains that verbs used in late nineteenth century popular literature to describe the interaction between prostitutes and men "evoked images of physical contamination. The prostitute infested, polluted, defiled, repelled, and sickened."\(^{11}\) Similarly, Peter Stallybrass and Allon White argue that "in the bourgeois imagination the slums opened (particularly at night) to let forth the thief, the murderer, the

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\(^{10}\) Rosen, *The Lost Sisterhood*, 7.

prostitute and the germs – the ‘mad dogs’ which could ‘destroy mankind’.” As the above quotes show, nineteenth century medical knowledge helped structure reactions to and depictions of the social other and social order in American society.

Crucial to this framework was the idea of filth as contagion. In Chicago’s slums, filth was not only a material reality but also a metaphor for immorality. Just as a contagion infected “the virgin purity of the blood by a detestable impregnation,” the prostitute carried the contagion of the slums to the purity of the middle and upper-classes. An article in the Chicago Daily News titled “Glimpses of Low Life” described the slums as “dens of misery and disease.” They were “the abiding places of ignorance, shiftlessness, drunkenness, and misfortune.” Stallybrass and White analyze the associations of bourgeois culture with cleanliness or what they term the “civilized body” and the poor with filth, disease, and bestiality. In the slums, where the female prostitute sold her services, passions ruled, individuals were filthy, animalistic, and immoral. Amongst the middle and upper class, patriarchy and reason prevailed. Proper dress, demeanor and the use of soap was part of a daily regiment that separated the civilized order of the middle and upper-class from the disorder of the slums. This ideological context helped shape the reaction to anarchism in the late nineteenth century.

In an article in the Chicago Herald, printed after the explosion at Haymarket Square, titled “Down With the Rag,” exclaimed that “[n]ever again will the red flag be flaunted by Anarchists in the streets of Chicago, and never again will the Lake Front be given over of a summer Sunday afternoon to the unwashed admirers of Fielden, Dusey, Parsons and the like to the exclusion of clean and well-behaved people who wish to get a

12 Stallybrass and White, The Politics and Poetics, 133.
13 Rosenberg, Explaining Epidemics, 99.
whiff of Lake Michigan’s pure atmosphere.” Caricaturist Thomas Nast continuously portrayed anarchists as dirty and unkempt wild men in the pages of Harper's Weekly. In the June 5 edition, a Nast image captioned “The Hardest Blow Yet to the Anarchists. Deprived of a Privilege of Which They Were Never Known to Avail Themselves,” portrayed an anarchist standing outside a Laundromat from which he is locked out.

The press was using “a metaphoric language in which filth stands in for the slum dweller,” and the anarchist. If cleanliness and health signified civilized order then being locked out of the laundry also functioned as a metaphor for dirt, disease, and disorder. The press made sure its readers understood that anarchists oozed mayhem. In an effort to incite the poor and destitute to violence, anarchists “breathed” murder and

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15 Chicago Herald, 8 May, 1886.
16 Stallybrass and White, The Politics and Poetics, 133.
destruction." The necessary corollary in this type of reasoning was that anarchists were also in a state of mental disorder.

The Nation magazine printed an article titled “The Anarchist Disease,” which described labor strikes as an “epidemic” driven by a “mental craze.” An article in The Atlantic Monthly argued that anarchists were “perverted creatures,” who had gone “insane with the insanity produced by unbalanced speculation upon defective intelligence, upon anemic brains.” Anarchists sometimes “frothed at the mouth,” when they gave “free vent to their vaporings [sic].” Just as some “dreadful infection” from the slums could “rear its ghastly head” and disperse the “seeds of pestilence” throughout the city, anarchists could unleash the “incendiary” passions of the downtrodden. If they were allowed to “germinate,” anarchists could rally “their dupes to lust after riot and massacre.”

Descriptive language of dirt, disease, and insanity was intertwined with labor revolt and the possibility of revolution. The vehicle for the rise of this unwashed mass was the mob.

The fear of a large underclass that could violently erupt at any moment went back to the early 1870’s. According to Carl Smith, the literature that emerged as a response to the Chicago’s Great Fire of 1871, revealed a dichotomous relationship with the city. In the minds of Chicago’s leading citizens, the city represented the courageous, industrious, and noble spirit of its middle and upper-class citizens, but also the potential for revolt and disorder. “The most alarming effect of the fire was . . . that it awakened a large underclass

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18 The Nation, 2 September, 1886.
to follow its own base nature in ways that threatened the 'better' elements in the city.'

Images of mob violence pervaded American thought and structured the reaction to working class revolt. The mob was the product of passion and polemics. As early as 1877, when masses of workingmen across the nation walked off the job, burned property and clashed with federal troops, Albert Parsons, then a labor activist with the Workingmen’s Party, was isolated as the main antagonist. Alan Pinkerton, the head of the infamous Pinkerton Detective Agency, in his book *Strikers, Communists, Tramps and Detectives*, stated that:

> Chicago... has drawn to her a floating population both vicious and unruly. Among this unhealthy element the genuine order of communists has given their the most trouble, and her citizens the greatest dread... It was this class, and no other, that precipitated riot and bloodshed in Chicago, and it is a notable fact in connection with these communists, that their viciousness and desperation were largely caused by the rantings of a young American communist named Parsons.

Pinkerton’s “vicious” and “unruly” population was Marx’s *lumpenproletariat*. Positioning labor radicals and working class rebellion within this imaginative space effectively marginalized forms of protest that threatened the middle and upper-class. By blaming individual ‘incendiaries’ for the mounting volatility between labour and capital, most notably the uprising of 1877 and the push for the eight hour day in 1886, various spokesmen for property and position argued that character not class, determined social conditions. Understanding working class conflict as the manifestation of economic distress and hostility to a system that was stacked against laborers would undermine fundamental republican ideals of autonomy, responsibility, and social mobility. According to historian T.J. Jackson Lears, the “evasion” of class struggle was a “half-conscious” form of self-

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24 In response to wage cuts during the depression of the mid-1870’s, railroad workers walked off the job precipitating what has become known as the “Great Strike” of 1877.
deception, which masked material reality with the ideal of the self-made man. Anarchists
and labor radicals like Parsons were trying to unveil this very contradiction.

By the time the workers’ movement for the eight-hour day had reached its pinnacle
on May 1, 1886, the anarchists of International Working People’s Association (IWPA), a
revolutionary workers’ organization, were widely known radical labor activists. They were
demonized by the press, businessmen, politicians, and the police and respected by their
fellow activists. Powerful capitalists like Cyrus McCormick and Marshall Field and police
officials like John Bonfield regarded anarchists like Albert Parsons as enemies to American
civilization. When the terms socialism, communism or anarchism appeared in the press
during the 1880’s, they were accompanied by headlines like “Prepared for Revolution,”
“Preaching Destruction,” “Anarchists Inciting to Murder,” and “Dynamite Reformers,” to
take only a few examples. According to these press reports, anarchists wanted nothing
more than destruction and bloodshed.

Reporting on the clash between locked out workers and scabs at the McCormick
Reaper Works on May 3, 1886, where the police killed at least two unarmed workers, the
New York Times reported that the clash was between “a mob of 7,000 or 8,000 Anarchist
workmen and tramps, maddened [emphasis mine] with free beer and free speech and a
squad of police.” The blame fell on the anarchists who incited the crowd to riot with
“incendiary speeches and bad beer.” Even the anarchist newspaper Liberty, which
desperately wanted to separate itself from the Chicago anarchists, carried articles

26 T. J. Jackson Lears, No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture 1880-
28 Ibid., 4 May, 1886.
denouncing the IWPA. Under the pen name X, one writer described the Chicago anarchists as “savages” and “bloody mobbists” who “sail under Anarchist colors” all the while committing murder and arson. In the same vein, the “mob,” according to the Washington Post, was composed of men, women, and children who acted “like insane people.” The article described an attack on a saloon, where “barrels of liquid were rolled out, the heads driven in and the rioters reveled in the liquid. Bottles of whisky, wine and beer were consumed, and then the work of demolishing the fixtures was proceeded with.” By insinuating that rioters were drunks and insane, and that the working class, once under the influence of alcohol, would turn into a “maddened horde,” the press played on middle and upper-class fears of the lumpenproletariat, labor rebellion, and urban disorder.

In a typical portrayal of radicalism, drunkenness, and mob rule, an illustration published in Puck magazine in 1887, depicts a crowd of anarchists packed into a hall, drunk and in frenzy. In the cartoon, some men are passed out while others are standing on their feet yelling with wild eyed passion. The one woman in the audience is portrayed as a grotesque figure, fist clenched and apelike. The main speaker is hairy, unkempt, and waving a flag, probably red or black in color. The image conveys a scene of unrestrained passion. Under the influence of alcohol the lower classes are prone to the ‘ravings’ of anarchists, whose future society would be grotesque and chaotic. It fuses drunkenness with labor radicalism and contrasts the lowbrow disorderly culture of the working masses with the respectable and orderly culture of the middle and upper-class. The bourgeois press

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29 Liberty espoused individualist or philosophical anarchism, which differed from the communistic anarchism of the IWPA. The fundamental differences were about property ownership and the use of violence. While individualist anarchists advocated that a limited amount of private property was justifiable, that human life was sacred, and that society would evolve, the IWPA believed in co-operative ownership, the inevitability of violence in class systems, and revolution.

31 Washington Post, 6 May, 1886.
printed an array of articles that conveyed a similar message. The *Los Angeles Times* carried an article about a fundraiser organized by Joann Most and the New York branch of the IWPA with the subtitle

"Socialists Indulge in a Big Demonstration, Followed by a Pandemonium of Beer and Brutality." 

The *New York Times* reporting on the same event stated, "Anarchy was engaged in its own dear past-time, the guzzling of beer and the wagging of tongues."

It needs to be pointed out that drinking and the saloon occupied an important role in working class culture and in Chicago’s neighborhoods. The transformation of the economy from craft production to the factory system compelled an increasing number of workers to flee the drudgery of the workplace into the barrooms. For those workers who lived in the tenement districts “[p]ublic toilets, food, warmth, clean water, meeting space, check cashing services, newspapers – often otherwise unavailable to workers in the late

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32 *Los Angeles Times*, 13 June, 1887.
33 *New York Times*, 13 June, 1887.
nineteenth century city—could be found free of charge in the saloon”. According to historian Roy Rosenzweig the saloon was also the logical place for a headquarters during a strike, which for the public at large associated saloons with the “disruptive” and “tough” socialistic element in society. The many Law and Order Leagues that were formed in cities like Chicago after the strikes of 1877 considered the potential for disorder that might be stewing in working class saloons a dangerous threat. Claiming that temperance was the best preventative against violence, police closed barrooms during strikes. During the Eight Hour movement of 1886 and after the Haymarket, saloons catering to radical labor organizations were frequently raided. The IWPA held most of its meetings in the back rooms of saloons and beer halls. By 1886 the police had information on 10 halls and 29 saloons that had small halls or rear rooms where radicals met to organize. Captain Michael Schaack was convinced that these saloon keepers “shouted louder than anyone else for Anarchy,” and that “they made significant contributions to the movement.” Using saloons as meeting places offered the press an opportunity to discredit anarchists as disgruntled drunks and gave middle class reformers another reason to advocate temperance as a solution to revolution. Schaack and the editors of major newspapers argued that a drunken mob inflamed by “free speech” would pose a direct threat to social order.

In Standing at Armageddon: The United States, 1877-1919, Nell Irving Painter argues that periodicals aimed at the wealthy and well-educated used inflammatory imagery

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35 There were divisions among the working class between those that abstained from liquor and the barroom who considered themselves “respectable” and those who frequented the saloon to consume alcohol and other areas in the urban environment considered to be “rough” places. Also see Perry R. Duis, *The Saloon: Public Drinking in Chicago and Boston, 1880-1920*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1999), 179.


to construct a certain interpretation of labor uprisings as a threat to “civilization.” The most powerful was the emblem of the Paris Commune of 1871. The often bloody confrontations between working men and women and the forces of “order” during the strike of 1877 reminded many commentators of the workers uprising in Paris. The notable presence of women during the strike was particularly offensive to the middle-class respectability of some. According to Painter, newspapers often described these women as “petroleuses,” a term used by anti-communard journalists to describe the Frenchwomen who defended the commune of 1871 by building barricades and setting fires. An article in the *Baltimore Sun* about the strike of 1877 declared that “the singular part of the disturbances is the very active part taken by the women, who are the wives and mothers of the firemen. They look famished and wild, and declare for starvation rather than have their people work for the reduced wages. Better to starve outright, they say, than to die by slow starvation.” Another commentator referred to them as an “unsexed mob” of “incendiaries” and as the “Amazonian army.” According to historian Meredith Tax, women who dared enter the world of the labor movement crossed dangerous social

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38 The American press followed the Paris Commune of 1871 closely. The Third French Republic filled the political vacuum left by the defeat of Napoleon III by Prussia and the fall of his government. The new French government, however, fled to Versailles under the threat of advancing Prussian troops, which had surrounded and besieged Paris. The people of Paris proclaimed the Commune. The people’s government instituted revolutionary reforms like; separation of church and state, the support of free, secular, public education for girls as well as boys, vacant lodgings requisitioned for the homeless, trade unions allowed to take over abandoned workshops and set up cooperatives, and employers forbidden to deduct penalties from workers’ wages. American elites, however, overlooked these reforms and focused on the violence. The communards burned and destroyed monuments of the empire and massacred more than thirty priests. The forces of order, after breaking through the communard barricades, responded by executing the 1,100 survivors ending the seventy-three-day life of the Commune. 870 government troops lost their lives but 20,000 to 25,000 Parisians lost their lives in the fighting and in the fires started by the Communards and government troops. Although the forces of order were responsible for most of the bloodshed the reputation for violent iconoclasm and incendiarism fell on the communards. After all, they had murdered priests and destroyed monuments of “civilization.” This account taken from, Painter, *Standing at Armageddon*, 18-20.


boundaries. "Any woman who was an active trade unionist in 1880 had to be willing to risk being jailed, being called an ‘unsexed female incendiary’ or prostitute, and being an outcast in much of society." Historian Judith Walkowitz argues that the appearance of women who spoke at demonstrations, on street corners, in meeting halls, and during strikes, was thought to lower the "standard of womanhood."

To Captain Michael Schaack of the Chicago police, women radicals were some of the most offensive. In his sensationalized account of the rise and fall of anarchism in Chicago called, Anarchy and Anarchists: A History of the Red Terror and the Social Revolution in America and Europe, he declared that the socialistic meetings he claims to have infiltrated contained "a lot of crazy women." In his opinion they were the "most hideous-looking females that could possibly be found," and were more bloodthirsty than their male counterparts. Schaack described these meetings as "war dances" that catalyzed a fanaticism in the "squaws" who "went wild" when violent denunciations of the police were made. The presence of women at these meetings proved their savageness to people like Schaack. Because women were guided by passions, they were racialized as Native American who the press continually condemned as savages. Red Ruin, another fictionalized account of Haymarket, emphasized the danger that unruly women could create. Because of their impulsiveness and irrationality, women radicals could be more dangerous than men once they became "aroused." Lucy Parsons bore the brunt of this author’s diatribe. Justice had "wiped out" her husband and now, declared the author, "she wants to get a whack at

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41 Tax, The Rising of the Women, 42.
43 Schaack, Anarchy and Anarchists, 208-209.
44 Ibid., 207
justice with a can of nitro-glycerine and a detonating fuse." Her speeches were often described as "ravings," and her audiences were socialists and anarchists who engaged in "warlike talk" and "shouted themselves hoarse whenever revolution and bombs were mentioned." Portrayed as a savage anarchist, Parsons became a particularly coveted exhibition commodity after the Haymarket bombing. On March 8, 1887 Parsons was arrested in Columbus, Ohio, where she faced a parade of spectators who came to see the "she-anarchist." In a letter to the editor of the *Columbus Sunday Times*, Lucy described her experience:

"None of my friends were permitted to see me all the time I was incarcerated ... But every loafing detective and ward bummer in the city, every disreputable male brute who wished to come and lean against the iron grating of the dark, hot, little sweat box I was locked in could do so." This sexual imagery of "male brutes" gazing into a "hot," "little sweat box," must not have been lost to the women readers of the *Columbus Sunday Times*. As a woman she was subjected to the male gaze and humiliated when gangs of three to ten men entered her cell where, in her words, they would leer at her like she was "a wild beast belonging to a menagerie." Some spectators laughed and asked how she liked being locked up.

Anarchism had become a headline court case and main protagonists were put on display for consumption. The use of words like "savage" and "barbarism" within the contending discourses explained above was a product of the popularized Darwinism of the nineteenth century, which espoused a racial hierarchy of societies.

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49 Ibid.
According to this system of thought, so called “savage” societies contained aggressive, emotional, and unrestrained people who lacked sexual difference. Industrially advanced civilization on the other hand was inhabited by delicate, spiritual, and maternal women and manly, self-restrained, industrious, men. Advanced civilizations exhibited a high degree of sexual differentiation, that is, according to Bederman, they had “evolved the most perfect manliness and womanliness.”

Socialists and anarchists, who advocated mass action and contained a notable presence of women, were portrayed as the savage despoilers of the city, as the harbingers of barbarism. In an article titled “What Anarchy Means,” printed in *The Advance and Labor Leaf* in 1887, Lucy Parsons, mocked the press coverage the movement has received.

“. . . after reading insinuations from the pulpit, assertions from the press, and “criticisms” from professional critics, to the average reader an avowed anarchistic society must be composed of beings somewhat resembling the human family, who holds orgies, which they designate as meetings; having been compelled to come in contact with the human race enough (just enough) to learn a few words of their language.”

Parsons was well aware that the language used to connect anarchism and sexual passions with the degradation of civilization was deliberate. The supposed passions of working-class culture and the slums were a continual source of anxiety for the middle and upper class. To be driven by passions symbolized the inability to reason and restrain, as well as the lack of education and cultivation, which were pivotal qualities for the advancement of civilization. By publicly asserting herself, Parsons supposedly lost her gendered propriety. Women who dared defy social norms and act in the public sphere were often portrayed as “large, coarse,
and matronly" or "sexually impure." They were no longer aspiring "ladies" but "fallen" women. The job of protecting women from the masculinized public realm and the concomitant fall from respectability was taken up by a burgeoning middle class moral reform movement in the 1880's.

The charity organization movement sought to police the urban poor and uplift them to a middle class morality defined by sexual purity, honesty, thrift, sobriety, independence, and respect for the virtue of honest labor and the home. Historian Paul Boyer explains that the ideology of the charity organization movement was structured by the belief that the source of poverty lay in the "moral deficiencies" and "character flaws" of the individual and that only a diverse and coordinated effort by charity societies could encourage the poor to recognize and correct their morality. The rise of socialists and anarchists who preached their own solutions to urban poverty probably added a sense of urgency to the project of middle class reformers. A large part of the problem was that the slum, saloon, and the city streets were outside the civilizing forces of the middle and upper class. The fear was that anarchists had filled the void. If the anarchists were no better than savages then they lacked the qualities necessary for American citizenship. Essentially, the middle and upper class feared that anarchist agitation would contaminate the poor working masses. To force women and wage laborers to join the anarchist ranks, according to the popular press, was un-American. According to commentators only "savages" or ignorant foreigners would try to undermine the right of a man to labor and accumulate property.

55 Ibid., 142.
As early as 1885, *The Washington Post* warned its readers of the perils posed by foreign revolutionary agitators to the average laborer:

The pestilent foreign agitators, who come here with their wild and impracticable theories to revolutionize the existing order of things, have done more than all other causes to rob honest labor of the sympathy, confidence and legislative consideration to which it is entitled: and the sooner they are disowned and repudiated as aliens to American ideas the sooner will the rights and relations of labor be determined.\(^56\)

The "honest laborer" was supposed to understand that political reform was the American way to change society. The author of this article knew that if anarchists were repudiated as "aliens" that the public would be much more sympathetic to the repressive measures taken by the police during labor revolt. By arguing that anarchists wanted to take the property of industrious American workingmen, the press was implying that the very thing that symbolized manhood, namely the ability to protect and provide for one's dependents, was being threatened. The duty of a true American workingman was to protect civilization from this threat. Anarchists were, according to these commentators, less than men, they were beasts, products of degraded civilizations. During the State's closing statements of the trial, Assistant State's Attorney George C. Ingham, stated to the jury that "the great question which you are to decide is whether the law of this State is strong enough to protect itself or whether it is to trampled upon by these eight men, but of one whom is a native of this soil."\(^57\)

That the anarchist movement was comprised of Germans and Bohemians made their persecution acceptable. Even the *Saturday Evening Review* acknowledged the use of nativism to legitimize state violence.

It is a useful fiction in the States that disturbances of this nature are exclusively the work of foreigners – of Poles, Bohemians, and Germans. There is a good deal to be


\(^{57}\) *Chicago Daily News*, 14 August, 1886.
said for the maintenance of legends of this kind. When it is taken for granted that Socialist rioters are and must be foreigners, the police and, when they are called in, the militia may be able to use their fire arms with a better will.58

The press portrayed the bombing at Haymarket Square as the inevitable result of mixing “imported radicalism” and dynamite to further the repression of anarchists and their supporters. Thomas Nast’s caricatures of the anarchists illustrated this message to the public and contrasted the virtues of American law and the dangers of radicalism. In an illustration for the June 5 edition of Harper’s Weekly in 1886, Nast caricatured Johann Most, the notorious anarchist who published “incendiary” articles about the use of dynamite and violent class warfare in America, as a developmentally stunted lunatic. The caption reads; “LIBERTY (to go if you if you do not like the institutions of our republic) OR (commit murder and you will be punished with) DEATH.” In the picture Most looks as though he possesses simian qualities. His body and face are dark, unwashed, and scruffy. Holding a flag with the statement “anarchist war” printed on it, Most waves a gun in the air while a bomb sits between his feet, which are trampling the American flag. Under the watch of police officers, Most must choose between a steamship journey back to Europe or the hangman.

In the September 4, 1886 edition of Harper’s carried another Nast illustration titled “Liberty is not Anarchy,” which depicts Lady Liberty crushing the anarchists on trial with one hand and holding a sword with “U.S” engraved on it. The gendered imagery is hard to miss. The contrast produced by the chaste and pure figure of Lady Liberty crushing, “savage,” “ignorant,” and “foreign” anarchists is stark. It is a vindication of American law and a way to symbolize the feminization of radical working class activists. Historian Mary

58 Saturday Review, 8 May, 1886.
Ryan has argued that symbolic icons like Lady Liberty served as conduits for male concerns. The businessmen of Chicago, States Attorney Grinnell, Judge Joseph E. Gary, and Captain Michael Schaack, were examples of men who proclaimed themselves to be protectors of civilization and the virtues of “pure” American ideals like liberty. While they

wielded Lady Justice the anarchists were crushed by her, thus symbolizing their weakness and lack of manliness.

An image by Thomas Nast titled “Advice to So-Called American Socialists: You Had Better Not Attack This Club,” portrays a hairy and unkempt man, with a “Bloody Red Flag” in hand being chastised by an American police man garnishing a club that has “U.S.” printed on it and who carries a gun behind his back. The signs in the background read "Mob Law in London. Attacks on Clubs. Pall Mall. Piccadilly. Incapacity of the Police Authorities." The sign on the left reads, "'Let us do as they did in London!' by order of the Socialist, Chicago." The message is quite clear. Any attempt to bring the “mob rule” of the old world to American shores will be met with the force of American law.

The fear of “foreign agitators,” especially of anarchists, was rooted in the social upheaval of a rapidly growing, industrial city. From the years 1860 to 1890 Chicago’s population doubled every ten years: from 109,260 in 1860, to 298,000 in 1870, to 503,185 in 1880, and to 1,099,850 in 1890. Chicago was a predominately immigrant city with Germans comprising about 33.4% percent of the population in 1884. The anarchist movement in Chicago was mainly German and susceptible to nativist attacks against foreigners. German institutions exerted a powerful influence over the political environment of Chicago. Through cultural institutions like the Turnverein (gymnastic societies), artisanal societies, lyceums, and the Lehr-und-Wehr Verein (Educational and Defense Society) Germans positioned themselves at the forefront of the union, socialist, and anarchist movements. Working through and building from their ethnic institutions, German working class activists built social networks to form their fellow workers into a cohesive

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59 Nelson, Beyond the Martyrs, 15, 17.
and purposeful class, one they hoped would eventually bring about a social revolution. As David Montgomery states, "[c]lass consciousness was more than the unmediated product of daily experience. It was also a project."60 Because of the political and economic influence of Chicago’s German community newspaper articles were often contradictory. Some praised "the intelligent and enlightened German" and at the same time condemned the "European outlaws...who come here with their crude notions of human rights, and their caste hatred, and who would overturn our whole social and political fabric."61 Germans were considered to belong to a more industrious stock than Irish or Asians and on average, ably conformed to ‘American’ ways.62 After the Haymarket bombing Benjamin Tucker wrote in Liberty that “to be a German was to be looked upon with suspicion, and to be a

61 Los Angeles Times, 25 May, 1887.
62 See Jacobson, Barbarian Virtues for an analysis of the social stigmas attached to different European ethnic groups.
Pole or Bohemian is to be afraid to show one’s head.” Even in the heat of repression, there remained a racial hierarchy.

Anti-immigrant sentiments were powerful enough so that August Spies began his autobiography with a statement that conveyed his contempt for a court of law that had sentenced him to death, and to highlight the biased pretenses on which he was charged.

“Barbarians, savages, illiterate, ignorant Anarchists from Central Europe, men who cannot comprehend the spirit of our free American institutions,’ – of these I am one. My Name is August Vincent Theodore Spies. . .” Imported radicalism became a clarion call for American nativists during the latter half of the nineteenth century. A typical harangue in the New York Times described anarchists as “disciples of disorder and plotters against the well-being of society. . .whose grievances with the constituted state of things were brought with them,” to the United States. After the anarchists were convicted the Chicago Daily News declared that the verdict sounded a “note of warning to every foreign socialist, revolutionist, nihilist, communist, and anarchist seeking these shores that he must leave his incendiary thoughts behind him – that American law will not tolerate any divided authority over the lives, property, and happiness of the American people.” An editorial in Harper New Monthly Magazine declared that the bombing was perpetrated by Poles and Bohemians whose small communities supplied “some of the worst elements of our population.” The Haymarket bombing, continued the author, “was perpetrated by the most worthless of men, who are pests everywhere, and whose presence in this country American

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generosity had tolerated." John Higham argues that anti-radicalism, already much a part of nativist lexicon, was revived during this period of labor unrest and anti-radicalism increasingly became synonymous with anti-immigrant. Because of the intense reaction of the public, the Haymarket Affair, according to Higham, “was to go down as the most important single incident in late nineteenth century nativism.”

The association of anarchism with the slum, the saloon, disease, riotousness, and foreign ideologies provides a microcosm to study the fears of the middle and upper class in a city undergoing rapid social change. Industrialization and immigration changed the landscape of America. Urban environments became places of contrasting ideals and a site in the struggle for hegemony. The middle and upper-class fought for their property and vision of social order, which they believed was threatened by the poor urban masses and the wiles of anarchists. Gender was a kind of yard stick they used to judge the advancement of civilization. Anarchists, just as the slum dweller and the prostitute, were driven by passions, and lacked the qualities necessary for a middle and upper-class social order. According to the press, they were bent on violence and desired nothing more than to reduce civilization to a primitive state. The middle and upper class argued that American working men desired the opportunity to labor and accumulate property while the anarchist wanted to take what others had. Anarchists were thought to be imbued with old world class hatred and ignorant of the freedom of American institutions. They were the prophets of the slum dweller and the harbingers of barbarism. The press, the state, and business owners thought

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it their duty, as defenders of American institutions, to protect the United States from this threat.
8. “Red Flag or the Anarchists of Chicago.” Haymarket Affair Digital Collection, ICHi – 31343. Courtesy of the Chicago Historical Society. This was the common portrayal of anarchists. Under the red flag, hairy, unkempt, foreign anarchists were conspiring to take the city of Chicago by force. It made for exciting reading and publishers of literature like this took advantage.

9. “An Illustrated Fable.” The Haymarket Affair Digital Collection, ICHi – 31342. Courtesy of the Chicago Historical Society. The text at the bottom of the picture reads: A trumpeter bravely leading on the soldiers, was captured by the enemy [Lady Justice]. He cried out to his captor: “Pray spare me, and do not take my life without cause or without injury. I have not slain a single man of your troop. I have no arms, and nothing but this one brass trumpet.” “That is the very reason why you should be put to death,” he said [Lady Justice], “for while you do not fight, your loud trumpet stirs up all the other soldiers to battle.” He who incites strife is as guilty as they who strive. — Aesop. The figure caught by Lady Justice is hairy and wild looking. He is wearing a shirt that says “Anarchist Agitator.”
Chapter 2

The Chicago Show Trial: Manliness Saves Civilization

The red scare that followed the Haymarket bombing summoned fears that went back to the Chicago Fire of 1871. Fear of the “dangerous classes” was more pronounced in Chicago then in any other place. The bomb, according to Chicago journalist Brand Whitlock, unleashed “one of the strangest frenzies of fear that ever distracted a whole community.”1 Historian Paul Avrich explains that the bombing triggered a “nationwide convulsion of deep-rooted and violent prejudice.”2 It occurred during a time of great uneasiness in the United States and Chicago in particular. The massive push for the eight hour day, which involved hundreds of strikes across the nation, was a different era of labor revolt. It was organized, mainly peaceful, and reformatory. It was a time when the wealth and political power of capitalist elites had become apparent and was challenged by millions of Americans in various political movements. The bombing gave these elites a chance to repress the labor movement by heightening the fears of the middle class and frightening the working class into submission. While the physical and legal coercion of the red scare and the trial that followed has been well documented by historians, the gendered social order sought after by the middle and upper-class has yet to be given the same detail. The part played by the bourgeois press within this contestation for hegemony was crucial.

Carl Smith aptly points out that a few hundred workers and police officers witnessed the bombing itself, while information about the event was available to everyone else through the press.3 Historians of the Haymarket Affair and the anarchist movement

1 Brand Whitlock, Forty Years of It, (New York: Appleton-Century, 1914), 73, quoted in Green, Death in the Haymarket, 199.
2 Avrich, Haymarket Tragedy, 215.
3 Smith, Urban Disorder, 130.
like Smith, Avrich, Henry David, Bruce Nelson, and James Green have shown that the press convicted the anarchists before they were even indicted. According to The Chicago Herald, it was the “inflammatory harangue” of the anarchists that “incited the bomb throwing and riot.”\(^4\) The Chicago Tribune stated that anarchists were “murderous confederates” involved in a “communist conspiracy” to “destroy property, overthrow the law, and inaugurate an era of destruction and anarchy.”\(^5\) The New York Times declared that the “villainous teachings of the Anarchists bore bloody fruit in Chicago.” The papers called them “ungrateful hyenas,” “serpents,” “assassins,” and “cutthroats.” An article in the Tribune, argued that the “Anarchist leaders ‘advised and encouraged’ the crime perpetrated on Desplaines street they [sic] stand in the same position as the bomb-thrower, and under the laws of this State are subject to the punishment of death on the gallows.”\(^6\) The Chicago Daily News featured an article titled “A Hanging in Prospect: Spies Said by Lawyers to be Bound for the Gallows.”\(^7\) Given the hostile atmosphere it hardly seems coincidental that the anarchists on trial were convicted. Once again, August Spies was singled out as one of the main antagonists. The Daily News ranted that the:

Anarchist and incendiary editor of the Arbeiter-Zeitung – who was the first one to address the meeting at Desplaines and Randolph streets; who occupied the wagon from which it is charged the dynamite bomb was thrown which did such bloody work last night; who was one of the speakers at the mob meeting on the prairie near McCormick’s Monday afternoon; whose words inflamed the mob until it was ready to burn down the great factory...\(^8\)

The messages from the press characterized August Spies as the emblematic foreign conspirator. He was, according to the Daily News, a representative “of a class of rioters

\(^4\) Chicago Herald, 6 May, 1886.
\(^5\) Chicago Tribune, 6 May, 1886.
\(^6\) Chicago Tribune, 6 May, 1886.
\(^7\) Chicago Daily News, 6 May, 1886.
\(^8\) Ibid., 5 May, 1886.
and incendiaries whose power menaces at all times law, order, and prosperity.” The solution to any future confrontation with a foreign communist mob was “cold lead.” The battle was not between capital and labor according to the Daily News but “between law abiding citizens and irreverent desecrators of the most sacred rights of citizenhood,” who should be crushed by a campaign “tempered by the mercy of absolute justice.” To be an American citizen was to exist within and be part of the American legal apparatus that defined proper participation as a male or female citizen in the United States. The press was reassuring the public that the anarchists would be caught and convicted and any “mob” lead by “incendiaries” would face the swift justice of American law. The social order of the American republic was thought to be under siege and the press used fear to engender consent for the repression of radicals.

The hatred ran deepest in Chicago. The day after the bombing the police raided all gathering spots of the IWPA. August Spies, Michael Schwab, Adolph Fisher, and all other staff were arrested at their office, which was subsequently gutted by the authorities. According to historian Bruce Nelson, “the police followed the State’s Attorney Julius Grinnell’s advice to ‘[m]ake the raids first and look up the law afterwards!’” One contemporary described police Captain Michael Schaack’s fervor to seek out anarchist plots as delusional:

He saw more anarchists than vast hell could hold. Bombs, dynamite, daggers, and pistols seemed ever before him; in the end, there was no society, however innocent or even laudable, among the foreign-born population that was not to his mind engaged in deviltry. The labor unions, he knew were composed solely of anarchists, the Turner societies met to plan treason, stratagems, and spoils; the literary guilds contrived murder; the Sunday schools taught destruction. Every man that spoke

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9 Ibid., 6 May, 1886.
10 Ibid.
11 Nelson, Beyond the Martyrs, 190.
broken English and went out o’nights was a fearsome creature whose secret purpose was to blow up the Board of Trade or loot Marshall Field’s store.\textsuperscript{12}

Amusing as the above summary seems it also reflects the fanaticism that the authorities, propelled by the business community, exercised in their witch hunt for anarchists. The dramatic tone is also a point of interest. The “anarchist conspiracy” fit nicely in a growing literature of urban vice, crime, and for Schaack, international intrigue. The battle between the evil of anarchy and the American forces of order became a hot seller after the Haymarket. More to the point, this summary explains the fear, nativism, and paranoia that enveloped the city of Chicago after the Haymarket bombing.

\textbf{10.} "The manly protector of civilization, Michael Schaack." Originally printed in Schaack’s book \textit{Anarchy and Anarchists.}

Three hundred Chicago citizens who held power and property, such as Marshall Field, Philip D. Amour, and George M. Pullman, garnered their resources and raised $100,000 to fund the red scare. Spurred on by the business community and the state, Inspector John Bonfield, and Captain Schaack, increased their efforts to unveil the supposed anarchist plot to start an armed uprising in Chicago. All constitutional rights were

\textsuperscript{12} Quoted in Ibid., 193.
suspended. Mayor Harrison issued a proclamation that outlawed all public gatherings under
the penalty of incarceration. The public was fed a constant barrage of misinformation from
the press who detailed every action of Schaack and his crusade to crush radicalism. Stashes
of bombs and ammunitions were said to be found daily, and the evidence needed to prove
that a great plot had been uncovered was virtually assured. Articles in the press read
“Police Continue to Find Dynamite and Inflammatory Literature,” “An Infernal Machine
Found,” and “An Anarchist’s Version of the Plot to Kill the Police.” By the time their
trial began, the anarchists found themselves amidst a public filled with rage and seeking
revenge.

The trial of the anarchists became a theatre, a spectacle, which according to Paul
Avrich “at times resembled a comic opera.” It was, explains Avrich, “unsurpassed in
dramatic intensity in the city’s legal history.” The trial was attended by large crowds of
people seeking a glimpse of the men on trial. These “curiosity seekers,” according to the
Daily News, made every detail a matter of interest. They were enthralled with the “great
drama” unfolding in the courtroom. The New York Times regularly reported on the “crush
of spectators” in the courtroom. In an article printed in Century magazine in 1893, Judge
Gary recalled that upon the jury’s verdict “the civilized world had been fixed for weeks,
and now that world awaited their verdict with painful anxiety.” “[T]he immense court-
room,” Gary continued, which was “much too large for the easy and orderly conduct of an
exciting trial - was constantly crowded.”

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14 Avrich, Haymarket Tragedy, 263.
15 Ibid., 260.
17 Joseph E. Gary, “The Chicago Anarchists of 1886: The Crime, the Trial, and the Punishment, by the Judge
Who Presided at the Trial,” The Century Magazine, April, 1893.
attended the trial with her mother and later stated that given the information about the anarchists in the press she was expected to see “a rare collection of stupid, vicious and criminal looking men.” Instead she was surprised to find that “many of them had intelligent, kindly and good faces.”

The Daily News made constant references to the number of ladies in attendance at the trial. The trial was a genuine sensation, a popular consumer activity, and a theatre in which gender roles were acted out and enforced.

The public, both in and out of the courtroom, consumed one sided explanations about the principles of anarchy and the principles of American civilization. The press kept up their sensationalized coverage throughout the trial. Headlines like “Proving the Conspiracy,” “Piling on Evidence,” “Fielden Urged Murder,” “Spies Stirred up Strife,” “That Diabolical Plot,” assured the public that a great conspiracy had been thwarted and

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18 Nina Van Zandt, quoted in the Chicago Herald, 4 February, 1887.
that the anarchists were sure to hang. During his address to the anarchists on October 9th, 1886, when they were sentenced to death, Judge Gary expounded that

the people of this country love their institutions, love their homes, their property. They will never consent that by violence and murder, those institutions shall be broken down, their houses despoiled, and their property destroyed. And the People are strong enough to protect and sustain their institutions, and to punish all offenders against their laws.

In his closing remarks, State’s attorney Julius S. Grinnell exclaimed:

Law is on trial. Anarchy is on trial. These men have been selected, picked out by the grand jury and indicted because they were leaders. They are no more guilty than the thousands who follow them. Gentlemen of the jury; convict these men, make examples of them, hang them and you save our institutions, our society.

The trial was portrayed as an unfolding battle between the vile forces of anarchy and those that sought to protect the liberty enshrined in American institutions like the right to own property. Forging an identity that revolved around defending American civilization was a way to show the public how true men embraced the responsibilities of citizenship. Gary and Grinnell insinuated that the Haymarket defendants were traitors to the American ideal of manhood while portraying themselves as stewards to the poor working classes.

Gary believed “not least among the hardships of the of the peaceable, frugal and laborious poor, it is, to endure the tyranny of mobs, who with lawless force, dictate to them under penalty of peril to limb and life, where when and upon what terms, they may earn a livelihood for themselves and their families.”

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21 Quoted in Albert Parsons, “Notes Taken During the 1886 Trial,” Parsons Papers.
22 Smith, Urban Disorder, 155.
Middle and upper-class Americans believed that the accumulation of property and self-discipline were cornerstones of the republic. The press argued that anarchists lacked the manly qualities necessary to accumulate property, which was the source of all their grievances. An editorial printed on May 1, 1886, in the *Chicago Mail* titled “Brand the Curs” singled Parsons and Spies out as the architects of strikes and riots, that were meant to coerce “the laborious poor” into their plot to foment anarchy.

There are two dangerous ruffians at large in this city; two sneaking cowards who are trying to create trouble. One of them is named Parsons. The other is named Spies. Should trouble come they would be the first to skulk away from the scene of danger, the first to attempt to shield their worthless carcasses from harm, the first to shirk responsibility.

These two fellows have been at work fomenting disorder for the last ten years. They should have been driven out of the city long ago. They would not be tolerated in any other community on earth.

Parsons and Spies have been engaged for the past six months in perfecting arrangements for precipitating a riot today. They have taken advantage of the excitement attending the eight-hour movement to bring about a series of strikes and to work injury to capital and honest labor in every possible way. They have no love for the eight-hour movement, and are doing all they can to hamper it and prevent its success. These fellows do not want any reasonable concessions. They are out for riot and plunder. They haven’t got one honest aim nor one honorable end in view.

Mark them today. Keep them in view. Hold them personally responsible for any trouble that occurs. Make an example of them if trouble does occur.24

The above quote aptly summarizes the stereotypes associated with anarchism and illuminates how ideas of manliness structured the social environment of Chicago.

Anarchists like Parsons and Spies were mere “ruffians” who “shirked responsibility.” Unlike the “honest” laborer who fought for “reasonable concessions,” Parsons and Spies conspired to “riot and plunder.” The author of the editorial is implying that Parsons and Spies lack the manly virtues of honesty, rationality, and honor. Anarchists “skulked” while

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the manly laborer embraced the responsibility of work. "Honest” laborers sought reform while anarchists plotted riot. According to the *New York Times*:

The American workingman . . . . knows that he has a stake in the order of society equal to that of the capitalist. He is not held down by any despotic power, but is himself a part of the power that determines the condition of things. Those who are industrious and energetic are constantly acquiring property, so that their personal interests are threatened by the schemes of anarchists.25

Even Benjamin Tucker, editor of *Liberty*, a popular anarchist newspaper, characterized the anarchists of Chicago as criminals and despots. In an article titled “The Beast of Communism,” Tucker argues that anarchism “has been usurped, in the face of all logic and consistency, by a party of Communists who believe in a tyranny worse than any that now exists, who deny the laborer the individual possession of his product. . .”26 Tucker was responding to a supposed ring of German members of the IWPA of New York who were setting fire to their property after insuring it for more than it was worth. As a result of the “incendiary” theories of these pseudo-anarchists, according to Tucker, innocent people lost their lives during one of these fires. “I should hang my head in shame,” stated Tucker, “at having to confess that too many of them [communist-anarchists] are not only robbers, but incendiaries and murderers.”27 In a similar fashion the *Daily News* stated that the common anarchist was a “man who believes he has not enough for one and that you have enough for two, and that if you refuse to divide peaceably he will blow you in to [sic] eternity and take all.”28 American manliness was enshrined in the property a man owned. It was a symbol of toil and productivity and if the person was a family man, it symbolized his ability to care for those who were dependent upon him. Both Tucker and the Chicago

27 Ibid.
anarchists were engaged in the creation of an oppositional ideology, which sought to help laborers see themselves as creative producers. Tucker and the mainstream press, however, argued that the Chicago anarchists posed a direct threat to productivity. The attacks of the press amounted to an attack on the manliness of the Chicago anarchists.

Middle class critics, employers, politicians and the police wanted labor agitators subdued and "respectable," "industrious" workers on their side. This Thomas Nast illustration printed in the May 15 edition of *Harper's Weekly: Journal of Civilization* portrays an honest workingman carrying a portly labor "agitator" on his back. Titled "Too Heavy a Load for the Trades Unions: The Competent Workman Must Support the Incompetent," the piece supports the "honest" workingman and the trades unions who operate within American institutions and portrays the labor agitator as an incompetent taskmaster who cannot support himself.

![Image](12. "Too Heavy a Load." Haymarket Affair Digital Collection, ICHi - 31341. Courtesy of the Chicago Historical Society)

Forced to bear the responsibilities of family life and the threats of labor agitators, the American workingman bore the brunt of a battle between two factions. In the cartoon below the hairy,
devious looking anarchist threatens the worker with violence if he should decide to labor under an employer, while the gentlemanly employer must replace the worker if he decides not to labor. The working man, the defender and provider for those that were dependent on him, according to this Nast cartoon, was forced into a catch twenty-two by anarchist agitation. The cartoon was meant to engender sympathy from readers who understood that manliness meant laboring and providing for one's family.

As shown above anarchists were characterized as loafers, who shirked their manly duties as husbands and fathers to "breathe murder and destruction" against those that were better off economically.29 Despite their alleged compassion for the working class, argued the prosecution, the anarchists' plan was to dupe honest laborers into damnation by leading them away from their manly duties of toil and paternalism. Honest laborers had nothing to gain from listening to these wild incendiaries, who according to the press, "hated law and order" and really desired to "burn and kill."30 The honest workingman, according to middle

30 Washington Post, 8 July, 1885.
and upper class culture, was virtuous and civilized. He understood his historic role as
patriarch of the family and guardian of American values. The elite considered it their duty
to direct laborers to the righteous path and protect civilization from this threat. In his 1893
article in the Century, Judge Gary argued that the main reason he sanctioned the execution
of the anarchists was:

_to show the laboring people, of whom the anarchists claimed to be the especial
friends, that the claim was a sham and a pretense, adopted only as a means to bring
manual laborers into their own ranks; and that the counsel and advice of the
anarchists, if followed by the working-men, would expose them to the danger of
becoming, in law, murderers [emphasis his]._”  

The courtroom became a theatrical stage in which the middle and upper class could act out
and reinforce their gendered vision of social order.

The language and rhetoric used by the press and prosecution during the trial
illuminates the struggle of the Anglo-American middle and upper-class to create a
historical bloc and become the dominant power. Not only was it necessary for ruling
groups in society to emphasize and legitimate their cultural power during this time period
but they also had to show state power. This is not to say that a particular ruling class was
omniscient and capable of bending an entire society to its will, but through their combined
and often heterogeneous actions the middle and upper-class were able to sustain faith in a
common set of beliefs that solidified their class position. The most important ideal in this
ideological fabric was the myth of the self-made man. The press and the prosecution vied
for the allegiance of working men by portraying how a true American working man should
act. At the same time working men were shown the consequences for participating in an
oppositional movement. Ironically, it was the centripetal forces of the industrial capitalist

system that spawned the conditions and the movements that the middle and upper class feared.

Property ownership, profit, and competition embodied the manly values of republican citizenship. Here lay the contradiction. The press and the prosecution protected the very system that was destroying the ability for many Americans to own property. This hypocrisy, according to historian T.J. Jackson Lears, was rooted in “bourgeois morality.” He argues that at the center of this belief system was the autonomous individual, “whose only moral master was himself.” Instead of addressing the reality of class stratification, many workers, businessmen, and social commentators turned to moral arguments about character. Those who did not succeed in American society were somehow morally ill equipped to own property and become worthy American citizens. These morals were supposed to be learned in the household.

The mythologized household of the early nineteenth century was supposed to be a haven from the competitive world of a manly market-driven society. Although fathers ruled over households the home was ultimately a place where women, as wives, mothers, and companions, fostered virtues of tenderness, care, and love. As the methods of material production changed, from localized artisanal production and subsistence farming to commercialized production for the market, women in Victorian families became the guardians of republican virtues. The will to become independent, both economically and politically, which meant freedom from the imposition of the will of another and the ability to protect their dependents, evidenced a man’s ability to participate in the polity.

According to The Nation “the United States is a republic of men, each of whom is supposed

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32 Lears, No Place of Grace, 12.
33 See Rotundo, American Manhood for a broader discussion of manliness in American society.
to stand on his own feet and provide for his own household." Women were supposed to provide a nurturing yet stern environment that would churn out young men capable of competing in a capitalist economy and assisting in the governance of the republic. In turn wives were denied the right to own the value of their domestic labor, paid significantly less than men if they were wage earners and could not vote. They were denied what was necessary to signify independence and full citizenship, yet they were given the responsibility of forging a new male American citizenry.

The act of marriage, according to historians Nancy Cott and Hendrick Hartog, subsumed the personage of the wife to that of the husband. The husband took all responsibility for the care of his wife and represented her in public life. This ideal remained embedded in American society for quite some time. Many advocates of this marital orthodoxy argued that this state of matrimony was merely a reflection of natural law as laid out in the Bible. Women were naturally designed to be companions for their husbands and unsuited for public life. According historian, Nancy Cott, the “spirit of business and public life . . . appeared to diverge from that of the home chiefly because the two spheres were the separate domains of the sexes.”

The perception of the household as the psychological epicenter of middle-class America was only possible because of the perceived differences of the sexes in the world of production. Women were sheltered from the aggressive, competitive world of the marketplace, because they were dependent on their husbands economically, and thus were supposed to be bastions of selflessness and love. Although the home was supposed to be a

34 "The Church and the Laborer," The Nation, 20 May, 1886.
“redemptive counterpart to the world,” Cott argues it was also “in the world.”

By preparing men for the competitiveness of the American economy the forces producing social distress were inevitably reproduced. In the psyche of the average middle and upper-class citizen, however, the ideal household contained a dutiful, hardworking man, who provided sustenance for his wife and children, governed the home justly, and was looked upon as a full citizen by his peers and children; and a devoted, selfless woman and mother, who created a sanctuary amidst aggression and competition. As already explained this gendered differentiation symbolized civilization. Even The Manufacturer and Builder Magazine declared that “home building, not simply the aggregate of a family, but a place to house it, is the best conservator of morality and public safety. The home is the not the favorite resort of vice and lawlessness, and the home owner is seldom, if ever, an anarchist. All his interests lie in the other direction.” Home owners, were property owners, and thus understood the home as a place to conserve the morals of American civilization.

As the foundation of republican virtues the household occupied a place of real importance in the United States. The fear that anarchism sought to abolish private property meant that the household, the foundation of a man’s social being, would be destroyed. The North American Review, argued this very point. “Chaos, according to Mr. Spies, must be had recourse to before anything desirable can be obtained. All that modern civilization has taught us, all we hold most dear, - religion, science, family, marriage, and our laws, - must be destroyed in order that a return should be had to primitive simplicity as a basis for a new beginning.” In the same journal, Richard T. Ely, argued that anarchists preached the

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37 Ibid., 98.
38 Lears, No Place of Grace, 15-16.
39 Manufacturer and Builder Magazine, November, 1889, 246.
remedy of "gunpowder, petroleum, and dynamite, and their cry is 'Away with religion, away with the family, away with the state.'"41 The "honest laborer," according to the Washington Post, endeavored "to earn the means wherewith he may properly care for his wife and children," while the anarchists had a "deliberate determination to work incalculable mischief."42

The threat of anarchy to the institutions of marriage and the household became plausible when Nina Van Zandt, an upper class debutante, became convinced of the innocence of the defendants and developed a relationship with August Spies. Van Zandt was invited to the trial by Judge Gary who was a friend of the family. To show his manliness Gary invited many attractive and respectable young ladies to sit beside him on the bench, which he decorated with flowers. The Daily News reported that Gary would enter the courtroom and sit down "in the midst of the body guard of pretty girls."43 After the trial the Tribune recalled that "... the busy court-room was daily graced with the appearance of a bevy of young ladies, to whom Judge Gary extended every courtesy."44

Samuel P. McConnell, a spectator during the trial, later commented on Gary's conduct.

I never was in the courtroom during the trial when Judge Gary did not have on the bench, sitting with him, 3 to 5 women. He seemed to treat the affair as a Roman holiday and so did the women, and the thumbs were all down from the start. One day my wife sat on the bench and Gary showed her a puzzle.45

It could be argued that these ladies symbolized feminine virtues like chastity, domesticity, and innocence. By protecting these young ladies from the craven desires of the anarchists, Judge Gary not only emphasized his own manliness but also showed the audience that

42 Washington Post, 8 July, 1885.
43 Chicago Daily News, 12 August, 1886.
44 Chicago Tribune, 15 January, 1887.
civilization itself, which depended on middle and upper class ideals of manliness and respectable femininity, was being defended.\textsuperscript{46} Even though the courtroom was awash with manly posturing and guarded by men like Judge Gary, Nina was still "lured" into the anarchist trap, which made Spies and his cohorts much more of a threat. "And the active leaders," according to Gary, "were men who fascinated, apparently, those with whom they came into contact. To some extent they imbued their counsel with the notion that they had been engaged in a worthy cause. . . Men and women of a high order of intelligence, of pure lives, amiable in their own dispositions, seemed under a spell to them."\textsuperscript{47} Gary described the anarchist defendants as "men of intelligence" and the press reported that Spies' dress and demeanor was cultivated and respectable throughout the trial.\textsuperscript{48} That all the defendants were capable, thoughtful, and maybe even respectable men, made them all the more threatening in the eyes of their opponents.

What could be worse to the "defenders of civilization" than a respectable anarchist, one that could gain the affection of a "respectable" young lady? This would subvert the social values cherished by the middle class and contradict the arguments of the press and prosecution. The answer concocted by the prosecution: Spies was an imposter. He feigned respectability to gain sympathy and acquire power over women. According to \textit{The Chicago Tribune}, his attractiveness and well mannered behavior gave him great influence over "half-educated women," which he would inculcate with "the theories of anarchy and teach them the doctrines of free love."\textsuperscript{49} \textit{The Chicago Tribune} commented that Van Zandt was "an unfortunate, deluded girl, carried away by that romantic morbidness and craving for the

\textsuperscript{46} Smith, \textit{Urban Disorder}, 162.
\textsuperscript{48} \textit{Address by Judge Joseph E. Gary}, 9 October, 1886, Haymarket Affair Digital Collection, Chicago Historical Society.
\textsuperscript{49} \textit{Chicago Tribune}, 24 January, 1887.
abnormal which seems to be one of the crazes of the present time,” while Spies was
“coarse,” “unmanly” and “bestial.” According to the Tribune, if “he possessed a tithe of
pure-minded and lofty-hearted manhood, he would never have consented to blight her
life.” If Spies was dispossessed of “pure-minded” manhood, he was void of the manly
restraint to control his sexual desires. He was, according to the press, “playing the part of a
craven.”

Van Zandt, however, was not a foreign, working-class anarchist. She was an upper
class respectable young “lady” who, according to the press, had become an “endangered”
woman. Historian Mary Ryan argues that women’s entrance into the “public sphere” during
the nineteenth century was interpreted in gendered terms. Social commentators, reformers,
and the press categorized public women into two categories demarcated by class, the
dangerous and the endangered. The latter were “ladies” of the middle and upper classes
who through dress and demeanor symbolized feminine respectability. Ryan explains,
“women’s social status had largely been circumscribed by the spaces and relations of the
household. In farmhouses, artisans’ shops, and small, face-to-face communities, most
women were under the close surveillance of fathers, husbands and patriarchs. Now, the city
streets offered women new attractions, new freedoms, and a veil of anonymity under which
to pursue them.” By the 1870s a host of semi-public spaces were constructed where urban
residents could interact with strangers in a semi-regulated atmosphere. Public parks,
shopping districts, and “sanitized public amusements,” made up a social geography of the
city that was supposed to be cordoned and controlled. During the anarchists’ trial the

50 Ibid., 19 January, 21 January, 1887.
51 Ibid.
52 Ibid., 19 January, 1887.
53 Ryan, Women in Public, 62-63.
courtroom became one of these places. Arguably, role play became much more important as women increasingly left the confines of the home. The transgressive nature of the cityscape meant that women would be exposed to the immoral while relatively free of the patriarchal and guiding hands of men. Then the need to enforce and legitimize middle and upper class social values became imperative. If the true men of the city abandoned their duty as guardians of civilization then everyone would be vulnerable to the wiles of the anarchists.

For her part Van Zandt railed against her treatment by the press. In the introduction of Spies' autobiography she levels a statement that poignantly reveals gender relations in America during this time and deserves to be quoted at length.

As my parents were favorable to our union, it was an affair that concerned no more nor less than two persons. But a mob of newspaper men, respectable roués many of them, howled and raved when our proposed marriage became known. Had I committed every crime denominated in our criminal code those “chivalrous gallant American gentlemen” could not have vilified and denounced me more than they did. Had I been “some obscure, foreign girl” not a word would have been said in condemnation of the marriage. But an American girl from “respectable ancestry and standing” following the voice of her heart – which course alone I hold to be moral – instead of the sound of dollars! “That’s unprecedented, scandalous – the girl must be silly! Must have read trash novels!” Had I married an old invalid with great riches these “moral” gentlemen who assail me now would have lauded me to the skies, and many of my Christian sisters and brethren would have said to their sons and daughters: “Very commendable! A very sensible girl!” And those who new me personally: “I have always thought her so sweet!” I prefer the censure of these of these “moral” people. . .to their approval.

By stepping outside of a “respectable” social role, Van Zandt was characterized as a woman taken by passions. She was guided by “trash novels” rather than reason. She was a “silly” girl and not a mature “lady.” According to the Daily News, Nina lacked “the one quality that makes the sex [women] alluring – that is the charm of personality, of

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54 Ibid., 63.
55 August Spies, August Spies' Auto-Biography, (Chicago: Nina Van Zandt, 1887), p.x
distinction.\textsuperscript{56} Sheriff Matson described Van Zandt’s relationship with Spies as a “silly infatuation . . . of a self-willed and romantic young woman, who cannot possibly comprehend the position in which she seems anxious to place herself.”\textsuperscript{57} The \textit{New York Times} called her “foolish” and charged that her actions had produced “a sensation in society circles and is the topic of the hour among all classes.” Van Zandt had been disinherited from a large amount of money by her aunt as a result of her actions, which had caused quite a stir amongst the propertied. Van Zandt’s statement in Spies’ autobiography highlighted the callousness of the men and women of social standing who surrounded her. They were a “mob” of newspaper men, and “respectable roués,” not “gentlemen.” Insulting their manliness was a rebuke for the insults to Spies’ manliness and Van Zandt’s womanhood. Captain Black, the anarchists’ attorney defined her as “a noble-spirited woman” because she resisted public disapproval to marry Spies.\textsuperscript{58}

Within this unfolding drama the press proclaimed a hero. Sheriff Matson, the warden of the prison, fought to thwart the marriage of Van Zandt and Spies. Since Van Zandt’s parents approved the marriage, Sheriff Matson thought it his responsibility to save her from “never ending shame and disgrace.”\textsuperscript{59} Matson thought that he was saving a “young lady” from her own “folly.”\textsuperscript{60} In an article for the \textit{Chicago Tribune}, when asked his thoughts on the wedding, Matson responded, “[t]he ceremony is off because I will not permit it to be performed.” His wish was for the entire incident to be extinguished from public view and “the parties relegated to the oblivion to which they belong.”\textsuperscript{61} The article

\textsuperscript{56} \textit{Chicago Daily News}, 17 January, 1887.
\textsuperscript{57} Ibid., 19 January, 1887.
\textsuperscript{58} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{59} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{60} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{61} \textit{Chicago Tribune}, 20 January, 1887.
went on to report that as the Sheriff was talking he was shuffling through a "big bundle of letters" related to the "Spies-Van Zandt Affair," as it was called in the press, and his stewardship regarding the matter. "Without exception," the reporter claimed, all of the letters "lauded the course he had taken," along with the "hundreds of other visitors" that congratulated him. According to the reporter, most of the sheriff's admirers were the prominent businessmen and professionals of the city. Commentators expected Matson to live up to his manly duty as a protector of civic virtue and prevent the marriage from taking place. In response to Sheriff Matson's order, Spies retorted in libertarian defiance:

\[\text{...this refusal to permit the ceremony makes little difference. It is only a mere ceremony, an empty formality, and will not change our relations in the least. The young lady has too liberal ideas to be affected by the despotic order much more}\]

\[\text{62 Ibid.}\]
than I myself am, and, with her acquiescence, remember, we will waive all ceremonies, and when the time comes, will live as husband and wife.63

The Tribune responded to this quote by stating that if Spies had his way, he would “abolish marriage and break up the home,” at which time he would inaugurate a “lustful” socialist society of promiscuous prostitution and corrupt a “plurality of women.”64 The Tribune quoted Nina Van Zandt’s mother as saying; “I would rather see my daughter lying dead before me than living in such terms with any man... My daughter has been foolish, and imprudent, and all that, but she is a good girl and nothing but the regular form of civil marriage has ever entered our heads. If that is the kind of man Spies is I am glad we found it out in time.”65 The Chicago Herald printed an article titled “Spies as a Man,” in which the author argued that Spies’ “crimes have been heinous, but they have not been more pronounced in their way than his egregious vanity and scoundrelly impudence have been in theirs. There may be pity for the deluded and perhaps irresponsible woman who has become involved with this monster. There can be nothing but abhorrence for him.”66 By dismissing one of the most important institutions of Christian civilization and the American republic, Spies and Van Zandt, offended the middle class propriety of the press and many of Chicago’s citizens. Marriage was not only a contract between two people but, according to the Tribune, was “also a contract between those two parties and society at large, and the latter is sufficiently interested to have the right and the duty to prevent the sanction of any marriage contract which, by the very impossibility of its being executed, becomes a

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63 Ibid.
64 Ibid., 21 January, 1887.
65 Ibid., 20 January, 1887. It remains unknown whether Van Zandt’s parents officially agreed to the marriage if it was to proceed outside normative conventions.
66 Chicago Herald, 24 January, 1887.
mockery and a reproach.\textsuperscript{67} Despite public pressure and the support of Chicago’s middle
class citizenry Sheriff Matson could not prevent the marriage from taking place. Van Zandt
and Spies were married by proxy and a lustful socialist society never emerged.\textsuperscript{68}

That Nina Van Zandt’s marriage to August Spies became a genuine sensation
during the Anarchists’ trial is beyond a doubt. The marriage was, in a sense, another text on
which the middle and upper class could write their vision of social order. As a pillar of the
American republic marriage was a precursor to the nuclear family, which enforced gender
roles and power structures that were deeply embedded in middle and upper-class culture.
The household was a site of property and paternalism. It was the place where men
maintained their patriarchal authority and their rights to full citizenship. It was a crucial
location for the reproduction of the social forces of capitalism and the moral attitudes that
engendered consent to such forces. That an anarchist could possibly threaten the institution
appalled many Chicago citizens. Individuals like Judge Gary and the bourgeois press
believed their duty was to guide America down the ‘respectable’ path during a time of
social upheaval. Working men were in danger and an example was needed for them to
follow. Gary probably injured this message, however, through his flamboyance and
obvious disregard for ‘respectability’ during the trial. The defendants understood these
blaring moral contradictions and set an entirely different example for working men to
follow. As already stated, the trial was a kind of theatrical stage where the state and the
anarchists advocated their version of societal development and social order.

\textsuperscript{67} Chicago Tribune, 18 January, 1887.
\textsuperscript{68} Henry Spies accepted the vows for his brother August Spies, in a ceremony that took place outside of the
prison on January 29, 1887.
The picture of Spies was hanging in Nina Van Zandt's home. The way he is looking to the sun and the flag that sits around his neck as a handkerchief suggests a sort of heroism and manliness. Van Zandt looks like a dignified 'lady.'
The protector of middle and upper-class virtues, Sheriff Canute Matson.

17. The self-proclaimed defender of the working man, Judge Joseph E. Gary.
Chapter 3
From Servility to Revolution

The Chicago anarchist movement emerged during a time of heightened class struggle in America. 610,000 workers had struck by the end of 1886 as compared to 258,000 the year before. Of particular importance was the level of coordination exhibited by workers. At its peak, on May 1, 1886, 350,000 laborers participated in a nation wide general strike for the eight hour day. Chicago witnessed the most energetic and militant labor rebellions of the strike. According to historian James Green, at least 40,000 laborers left their jobs, but as it was impossible to keep count, it could have been as many as 60,000.

Unlike the strikes in other cities, where a few trades took the lead, the upheaval in Chicago reverberated through scores of shops and factories, construction sites and packinghouses; it emptied the huge lumberyards of workers, clogged the harbor with lake vessels and stranded trains in the huge railyards of the nation’s transportation hub. The general strike even sucked in thousands of immigrant factory operatives and common laborers. . .

The rapid development of Chicago’s industry, the massive divisions of wealth, corrupt political machines, the brutality of the police, and the energy and organizational work put in by the International Working People’s Association and their affiliate organizations, like the Central Labor Union, were crucial in the creation of such a rebellious atmosphere.

Historian James Green argues that anarchist leadership in the eight hour campaign and the IWPA’s work organizing the unskilled and engendering a sense of militancy in the ranks of the working class in Chicago succeeded in galvanizing the ire of large segments of the immigrant population, many of whom were at one time skilled workers, who were now forced into the ranks of unskilled ‘wage slavery.’

\[1\] Green, *Death in the Haymarket*, 146.

\[2\] Ibid.
slave economy to a wage based economy, anarchists used the term ‘wage slavery’ to reflect the concentration of wealth and property into a few hands that dictated the terms upon which a laboring man was to earn a livelihood, and to call upon laborers to act like free men and resist servility to another.3

As discussed in the previous chapter, the middle and upper-class believed that a laborer’s best course of action was to maintain his rightful place in the current social order as an apprentice under the tutelage of a good employer. An industrious character, argued the bourgeois press, assured that one could climb the social ladder in American society. The way to avoid the descent to anarchy and to uplift the manual laborer was, according to The Nation magazine, through “the increase of his own knowledge, and self-control, and sagacity, and self-respect – or, in other words, from the improvement in his own character.”4 Essentially workers were to be incorporated in the new industrial order where they would learn to become respectable republican citizens. As the factory system grew and ownership of property was concentrated in fewer hands and the social mobility of old was significantly eroded. Many middle and upper-class Americans ignored this process. T. J. Jackson Lears argues, the “common pattern of culture involved a denial of the conflicts in modern capitalist society [and] an affirmation of continuing harmony and progress.”5 This argument illuminates how pervasive bourgeois ideals of character and social mobility were, as well as a delusional belief in the master-apprentice relationship of craft production in the midst of hardening class lines.

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3 This term appears constantly in IWPA publications, especially in its newspapers, The Alarm and the Arbeiter Zeitung.
5 Lears, No Place of Grace. 17.
Being a skilled worker signaled the mastery of a trade and the mastery of oneself. It meant the development and cultivation of republican citizenship and civic responsibility. Ascendancy through the hierarchy of craft production assured the attainment of these qualities. This created a tradition of social mobility in which apprentices would one day supposedly become master craftsmen and enforced the legitimacy of artisanal production. Economic competition and industrialization undermined this tradition and signaled a decline in economic, political, and social status for the small producer. As workers lost their economic independence and their power as skilled workers diminished on the shop floor many began to question the legitimacy of industrial capitalism and their masters.

A new class of entrepreneurial master craftsmen constructed its own narrative of manliness and republican citizenship to suit the growth of a new economic environment in which commercial, financial, and technological innovation as well as individual acquisitiveness became the new mantra for the progress of the trades. While espousing the need to build character suitable for a competitive market economy they created an economic environment that stifled the supposed potentialities of this ideal character. Entrepreneurial master craftsmen in trades such as clothing, shoes, cigarmaking, and furniture, dissected the production process into its simplest procedures, lowered piece rates, subcontracted work, and hired various kinds of underpaid workers to perform as much of the labor as possible. This was possible in Chicago because of a population that doubled every ten years, which created an immense pool of surplus labour. Chicago’s population grew by 69% during the decade 1870-1880 to 503,185 people, most of whom were

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7 Wilentz, *Chants Democratic*, 42.
8 Ibid., 35-42, 119-129.
immigrants. Manufacturing firms grew accordingly. In 1880, 3,518 firms in Chicago employed 79,391 workers. By 1890 9,977 firms employed 210,366 workers.\(^9\)

For a skilled worker to become a cog in a factory line was an emasculating experience. In Spies' autobiography he recounted his experience with American laborers when he first arrived in the country: "The factory, the ignominious regulations, the surveillance, the spy system, the servility and lack of manhood among the workers and the arrogant arbitrary behavior of the boss and his associates—all this made an impression upon me that I have never been able to divest myself of."\(^{10}\) The dissolution of the trades was a radicalizing process not only because of its material consequences but also because it stripped workingmen of their "manhood." Anarchists like Spies were sensitive to this erosion of economic independence and manliness. Spies believed that to be a citizen was to be a historical actor, free from the social and economic coercion of other people. During his first years in Chicago he owned his own upholstering business and in his autobiography he boasts that he "would most likely have succeeded in becoming a respectable business man," had he "been possessed of that unscrupulous egotism which characterizes the successful business man."\(^{11}\) Spies believed that for a true man, hard work was not a means by which to gain personal wealth but to make a proper and just contribution to society. Capitalism had, according to anarchists like Spies, exploited the wageworker, expropriated the surplus value created by his labour, and left others out to starve and compete for low wages.\(^{12}\)

\(^9\) Nelson, Beyond the Martyrs, 11.
\(^{11}\) Ibid., 67.
According to Spies, “the system of wages is the root of the present social inequities,” and that “through the introduction of machinery” working men have been “deprived of the opportunity to toil.” Albert Parsons asserted that the “capitalistic system of labor had divided the people into classes,” it had “created masters and slaves, rulers and ruled, robbers and robbed.” This forced men and women into poverty and degradation.

Samuel Fielden, an anarchist orator and one of the defendants, argued in court that:

It has been said that it was inflammatory for me to say that the present social system degraded men until they became mere animals. Go through this city into the low lodging houses where men are huddled together in the smallest possible space, living in an infernal atmosphere of death and disease, and I will ask you to draw your silks and broadcloths close to you when these men pass you. Do you think that these men deliberately, with a full knowledge of what they are doing, choose to become that class of animals? Not one of them. They are products of conditions, of certain environments in which they were born, and which they have impelled them resistlessly [sic] into what they are.

The first chapter explained the fear and fascination of the slum and the lumpenproletariat harbored by the middle and upper-class of American cities. Even anarchists were horrified at the “infernal atmosphere” in the disease ridden slums, where men were “degraded” into animals. Anarchists, however, argued that the slum was a product of capitalist development, while the middle and upper-class argued that it was a product of inferior moral fiber. According to Spies:

Rapine and pillage are the order of a certain class of gentlemen who find this mode of earning a livelihood easier and preferable to honest labor... I say that the preservation of such an order is criminal—is murderous. It means the preservation of the systematic destruction of children and women in factories. It means the preservation of enforced idleness of large armies of men, and their degradation. It means the preservation of intemperance, and sexual as well as intellectual prostitution. It means the preservation of misery, want and servility on the one

13 Spies, "Address of August Spies," The Accused, the Accusers, 15.
14 Lucy Parsons, Life of Albert Parsons with a Brief History of the Labor Movement in America, (Chicago: Lucy E. Parsons, 1889), 66, 67.
15 Samuel Fielden, "Address of Samuel Fielden," The Accused, the Accusers, 55.
hand, and the dangerous accumulation of spoils, idleness, voluptuousness and tyranny on the other. It means the preservation of vice in every form.\footnote{Spies, “Address of August Spies,” \textit{The Accused, the Accusers}, 12.}

The dichotomy between the “enforced idleness” of an “army of men” reduced to a type of barbarism and the “idleness” of the rich produced by the “dangerous accumulation of spoils” is an important ideological point. The effect of productiveness on the human character was a central feature in the anarchists’ ideology.

According to \textit{The Alarm}, “Men work because they cannot hold their physical and mental energies still without causing themselves pain.”\footnote{“The Useless Classes,” \textit{The Alarm}, 1 November, 1884.} Idleness could lead to “voluptuousness and tyranny” or vice and misery under a capitalist economy. Idleness, according to anarchists, was normally a characteristic of the rich. Capitalism, according to Spies, “is that school of economics which teaches how one can live upon the labor (i.e., property) of others; Socialism teaches how all may possess property, and further teaches that very man must work honestly for his own living.”\footnote{Spies, “Address of August Spies,” \textit{The Accused the Accusers}, 19.} An article printed in \textit{The Alarm} stated that “under a free system no man dare stand still when his idleness jeopardized the rights of others or tended to produce a scarcity.”\footnote{\textit{Alarm}, December 13, 1884.} Anarchists emphasized that productive labor was a conduit between nature and social relationships. It determined the character and wealth of the population. The anarchists’ concerns were also shared by middle class reformers, political economists, and radical philosophers like Karl Marx.\footnote{For more information see Anson Rabinbach, \textit{The Human Motor: Energy, Fatigue, and the Origins of Modernity}, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992).} According to Parsons, as capitalism eradicated working people from the “productive process,” the propertyless would become “pauperized” and “driven to ‘crime,’ vagabondage,
prostitution, suicide, starvation, and general depravity.” The true wealth of society, both moral and economical, was embodied in labour, while the “propertied,” according to the IWPA’s Pittsburgh Manifesto, upheld “the present disorder of exploitation.” The answer was the “destruction of the existing class rule, by all means, i.e., by energetic, relentless, revolutionary and international action.” Anarchism, according to Haymarket defendant Adolph Fischer, “wants to do away with the now existing social disorder,” and “aims at the establishment of the real – the natural – order.” This was no easy task. The anarchists understood they would have to overcome centuries of ideological manipulation to mould the working class into a revolutionary force.

Under the hierarchies of a monarchy or a capitalist economy workers were duped into subservience from an early age. “Being raised in ignorance,” according to Fischer, “they suspect no wrong, but believe that the form of society under which they live is the natural order of things and are too easily dominated by the ruling classes.” The anarchists hoped to instill a sense of revolutionary manhood into the proletariat of Chicago and throughout the United States. According to Parsons, to be a socialist meant rejecting wage-slavery and to summon the courage to “dare and do,” to challenge a system that “doomed” working men and their families to “misery, hunger, and death.” “The law-abiding citizen,” argued Parsons, “if he is called upon to do something under a law that enslaves him, is an uncomplaining slave to the power that governs him.” The sensible laboring man to which the state and the press made its appeals was, according to the anarchists, “A

23 Ibid., 42.
25 Ibid., 77-78.
27 Albert Parsons, “Address of Albert Parsons,” *The Accused, the Accusers*, 155-156.
fellow who lets his wife and children starve to death in order to please his boss; a coward who crawls timidly into a corner when men are needed; a ragamuffin who kisses the rod that struck him.\(^{28}\) While those that resisted domination were acting as independent men, those that remained subservient were acting as 'slaves.' According to *The Alarm*, when Parsons visited a group of strikers in Lemont, Illinois, and was called upon to speak, he argued for the necessity of organized resistance, to which some of the men objected. One of the objectors spoke up and said, "We are assembled here to consider what to do. We have got the military in our town; we are under intimidation. We want the military to leave our town and leave us alone and let us alone. If we organize now it will be the means of losing our bread forever, and probably our lives besides." Another man said, "We can't organize. The bosses would break it up; they did it before. It would not be allowed. They would starve us out and break it up." To which Parsons responded, "Then you are slaves." The article continues stating that "the men hung their heads, and with tears in their eyes several of them replied: 'Alas, sir it is too true.'" After realizing their weakness as men they vowed to continue the struggle until they received fair wages, which was a symbol of manly resistance and independence.\(^{29}\) Regardless of the authenticity of the dialogue recorded by *The Alarm*, it reflects the anarchists' conviction that any man who refused to organize amidst exploitation was no man at all, but a slave. The call to manly action reverberated through the anarchists' writings, especially when they grappled with the reality of the plight of children in the industrial order.

An article in the *Arbeiter-Zeitung* described how the "heroes of the [police] clubs," dispersed a crowd of young working girls, "many of whom had scarcely outgrown their


\(^{29}\) Parsons, *Life of Albert Parsons*, 85.
baby shoes. Whose blood does not rush quicker through the veins when he hears of this atrocity of the minions of the law? He who is a man show it these days. Men, to the front!" Samuel Fielden believed that a “civilization that will not and cannot support a widow so that she will not have to turn out her children to such temptations as that [the lure of wage slavery] is not worth respecting, and the man who will not try to change it is no man.” According to Lucy Parsons the upper class “determines what kind of houses (if any at all) the producing class shall live in, the quantity and quality of food they shall place upon their table, the kind of raiment they shall wear, and whether the child of the proletariat shall in tender years enter the school house or the factory.” Child labor outraged Lucy Parsons. A mother of two, she understood the plight of women and children in the industrial system of Chicago.

When we witness day by day the tired maiden wearing away her young life amid the dismal din of the factory wheels, we are tempted to say, here, indeed, the system of wage slavery must press heaviest. Yet it is not so. For the deep, dark, damnable oppressions of capitalism are felt more keenly by the young and innocent, than the more mature in years.

In her speeches and writings she called upon workingmen to fulfill their historic role as revolutionaries and overthrow the existing order. In an article for *The Alarm* titled “The Factory Child,” Lucy cried out to workingmen to “annihilate the hell-born system” that “binds [children] down to drudgery and death.” Lucy believed that men would provide the “brave hearts” and “strong arms” to accomplish this feat:

Men! Producers of the world’s wealth; press on to the front; unfurl the banner of revolution, fling her to the breeze, and let her folds stream out the incoming breeze

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30 *Arbeiter-Zeitung*, 4 May, 1886.
31 Fielden, “Address of Samuel Fielden,” *The Accused, the Accusers*, 58.
32 *Alarm*, 8 August, 1885.
33 Ibid., 19 September, 1885.
which whispers Liberty, Fraternity, Equality. Rescue yourself and little ones from the deep, dark, damnable throes of capitalism. Be men! Dare and do.  

In the above description the revolution is a maternal force, which under the control and manipulation of men, can give birth to Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality. Lucy’s gendered conceptualization subordinated women to men. In the revolutionary process, just as in the home, men were producers and women were mothers. As a purifying force under the guidance of working men, “the revolution” was given a feminine identity, much like Lady Justice. Albert Parsons was just as passionate as his wife was about the realities of child labor. In his address to the court Parsons explained that when anarchists “see little children huddling around the factory gates, the poor little things whose bones are not yet hard; when we see them clutched from the hearthstone, taken from the family altar, carried to the bastiles [sic] of labor. . . . then it stirs us up and we speak out.” Anarchists were the manly protectors of the family and society not the prosecution or the “class of gentlemen” that supported them. According to Spies not only the employing class was to blame for the wretched condition of the working class but also “those Christian hypocrites who have made of the religion of Jesus a cloak for iniquity and of the church an auction-place for the sale of virtue and manly-honor.” The anarchists argued that their opponents were the ones who really desired to break up the family and create disorder. Capitalism enforced idleness, which forced men into criminality, women into sexual degradation, and society into depravity.

The anarchist defendants used the prostitute as a symbol of economic tyranny and used imagery of sexual violence to describe the agents of capital. In their speeches and

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34 Ibid., 19 September, 1885.
35 Parsons, “Address of Albert Parsons,” The Accused, the Accusers, 102.
36 Alarm, 31 December, 1887.
autobiographies many of the defendants discuss their encounters with the plight of women who had “fallen” to prostitution. Michael Schwab recounted his first encounter with “one of those unfortunate girls,” who in his eyes, “was already doomed.” She was working “11 to 12 hours a day,” he explained, and then had to “solicit customers for lust, to banish starvation from herself and mother!” Samuel Fielden believed the life of a prostitute to be a “life of shame” that was forced on unfortunate women by the capitalist system. The pages of The Alarm often carried stories that exposed the predatory order of the propertied classes. One article that was printed in late 1884 exposed the sexual violation of a teenage working girl at the Chicago Avenue Police Station by the official in charge. The writer’s vivid portrayal of rape, argues Carl Smith, was a metaphor for the violation of the working class by their industrial oppressors. The piece was meant to show the hypocrisy and vileness of those who championed themselves as the defenders of morality, law, and order.

Help there was none in this great Christian city, and the virgin violated in the sanctuary of law, semi-conscious, half-dead, memory a blank from that fatal Tuesday night, was duly receipted for at the county jail, there to wait until it was the grand jury’s pleasure to throw her into the local hopper, and after that the state’s attorney is to let the upper and nether millstones of law do the work. In the jail the abuse she had burdened became known. In its lifeless, superheated air her bruised and mangled body lost power of resistance, and succumbed to the effects of the shock it had sustained.

The anarchists understood that the jail was simply one of the coercive institutions used by those at the helm of the state to break the will of people who dared to question and resist authority. As the story progresses we find that the authorities who come to her aid offer no solace or sympathy but opiates to shroud her memories “from her consciousness.” As stated above, female bodies were often the site used for male concerns. The anarchists were

38 Fielden, “Address of Samuel Fielden,” The Accused, the Accusers, 57.
39 Alarm, 13 December, 1884.
40 Ibid.
defending her virtue, and condemning the state’s “dishonorable” treatment of the “charming” sixteen year old “beauty.”41 She was a virgin before her rape and her young age made her a perfect symbol of the qualities manly citizens should protect. Innocence and purity were being defiled by the very people who preached the virtues of law and civilization.

Anarchists and class conscious wage laborers were the manly saviors of society, while their enemies were “social vampires.”42 As an image that evoked sexuality and violence, the vampire was a useful symbol in the war of words. August Spies declared in court that anarchists had jeopardized their “lives to save society from the fiend—the fiend who has grasped her by the throat; who sucks her life blood, who devours her children,” and that only they “would heal her bleeding wounds” and “from the misery you [capitalists and their supporters] have brought upon her...”43 The Arbeiter Zeitung described capitalists as “robbers” who maintained their privileged position through “bloody orgies.”44

Spies’s “Revenge Circular,” which he wrote after witnessing striking workers shot by the Chicago police, evoked the workers’ manly duty to rise in armed defense against their violators. “If you are men,” Spies begins, “if you are the sons of your grand sires, who have shed their blood to free you, then you will rise in your might, Hercules, and destroy the hideous monster that seeks to destroy you. To arms we call you, to arms!” The gendered implications of the image of Hercules, a muscular colossus, to represent the proletariat, are quite obvious. This image was used during the French Revolution to signify the force and unity of the people. According to historian Lynn Hunt, the killing of the

41 Ibid.
42 Alarm, 2 May, 1885.
44 Arbeiter Zeitung, 4 May, 1886.
Hydra, which over the centuries has embodied all types of evil, was Hercules' most famous victory. This classical allegory was used by anarchists such as August Spies and Michael Schwab to describe labor's struggle against capital. In Schwab's autobiography he describes the evolution of the proletariat through conflict and struggle from a child like state to the colossal and overtly manly figure of Hercules.

Man learns by failures. A little baby who commences to stand on his feet, tumbles down many and many a time, before his limbs gain sufficient strength to walk...In all these fights, in striking, boycotting, going into politics, yes, even in street riots the young Hercules collects strength to throttle the serpent - the capitalistic system.45

Schwab's belief that development occurred through conflict was shared by many German labor activists. The ideals embodied in organizations like the Turnverein probably helped shape Spies' and Schwab's conception of historical action and the meanings of political consciousness and free citizenship.

In America, the Turnereine were known as hotbeds of German republican politics. Like in Germany, the Turnerverein essentially functioned as a school whose purpose was the "cultivation of rational training, both intellectual and physical, in order that the members may become energetic, patriotic citizens of the Republic, who could and would represent and protect common human liberty by word and deed."46 To accomplish this feat gymnastic exercise were regularly held, singing societies and musical sections were established and "mental gymnastics" were taught and practiced through lectures, debates, and the use of a library.47 By 1876, the national Turnerbund had a membership of fourteen thousand in 185 clubs. These Turner clubs consisted of "revolutionary communists,

47 Ibid.
atheists, pantheists, ardent nationalists, sober, middle-of-the-road reformers, and cosmopolites who championed the universal brotherhood of man regardless of race, creed, class, or nationality."\(^{48}\) It may be assumed that a majority of the members were artisans or skilled workers from various trades. The *Turnverein* was a male preserve that championed the cultivation of manliness and republican citizenship. August Spies was a member of the *Amerikanisch Turner Bund* (the national organization of *Turnverein*) and according to Paul Avrich, kept himself in "prime physical condition."\(^{49}\) Part of this culture, according to Brian E. Vick, was a faith that conflict would eventually give way to harmony and peace but that conflict was necessary. Internal political conflict within a public sphere of free individuals would help "mold the patriotic citizen willing to take up arms and defend the fatherland in good ancient republican fashion," just as warfare should not be sought but also not avoided for it would "temper the politically active moral fiber of citizens and nation in return."\(^{50}\)

One of the main beliefs of the anarchists was that workers should arm themselves for the conflicts produced by capitalism. "The great class conflict now gathering throughout the world," wrote Parsons, "is created by our social system of industrial slavery," and the proletarian army would compelled to inaugurate the social revolution. Liberty, Parsons continued, "is a growth, it is also a birth, and while it is yet to be, it is also about to be born. Its birth will come through travail and pain, through bloodshed and violence. It cannot be prevented."\(^{51}\) Although the laboring masses faced armed militias and the police, science had given them a weapon that would equalize forces. According to *The

\(^{48}\) Ibid., 151.
\(^{49}\) Avrich, *Haymarket Tragedy*, 123.
*Alarm*, “Anarchists are of the opinion that the bayonet and gattling gun will cut but a sorry path in the social revolution. The whole method of warfare has been revolutionized by the latter-day discoveries of science.” The author argued that “one man armed with a dynamite bomb is equal to one regiment of militia, when it is used at the right time and place.”52 The *Alarm* and the *Arbeiter-Zeitung* are full of articles calling on the working class to learn the methods of scientific warfare and protect itself from the police. Lucy Parsons’ most famous, or notorious, piece of writing, titled “A Word to Tramps,” ends with a call to action, “each of you hungry tramps who read these lines, avail yourself of those little methods of warfare Science has placed in the hands of the poor man, and you will become a power in this or any other land. *Learn the use of explosives!*”53 Paul Avrich argues that anarchists’ saw dynamite “as a great equalizing force, enabling ordinary workmen to stand up against armies, militias, and police.”54 By empowering men who felt their social power had been robbed, “bomb talking” played an important psychological role in the anarchist movement. According to James Green, anarchists like Spies and Parsons “valued dynamite because its potential power promised to instill a sense of courageous manhood in workers intimidated by the police and the militia.”55 By the time of the Haymarket bombing the American Group of IWPA had organized an armed section and anarchist controlled Central Labor Union (CLU) had adopted a resolution to meet force with force. The Metal Workers and the International Carpenters and Joiners unions, both affiliates of the CLU, already had armed sections which met regularly to drill. The membership of the North Side and North-

53 *Alarm*, 4 October, 1884.
54 Avrich, *Haymarket Tragedy*, 166.
55 Green, *Death in the Haymarket*, 141.
West Side Groups of the IWPA overlapped with the largest armed working men’s group in Chicago, the *Lehr-und-Wehr Verein.*

Essentially the *Lehr-Und-Wehr Verein* (Educational and Defense Society) sought to revitalize manly republican ideals through the mastery of armed self-defense. Presented as a civic organization the *Verein* was a workers’ militia that served to protect workers from organization like the First Regiment of the Illinois State Guard, which was formed in 1874 and equipped by Chicago’s city administration. The Society’s charter stated that The Society’s duty is to develop mental and physical qualifications of their members, and thus enable them to exercise their duty as good citizens, that a member should get acquainted with the law and political economy and practice military and gymnastic drilling.

The Society mimicked the German *Turnverein* (gymnastic society) and its emphasis on the importance on physical fitness, intellectual pursuits, and citizenship. Any “able bodied” working man of “good repute,” who declared his intention to become a citizen of the United States could become a member. The member’s practiced drills that were similar to the militia and federal troops. They even wore uniforms reminiscent of the volunteer militia of Chicago before and during the Civil War. They held balls and picnics to raise money for uniforms and arms, during which the *Lehr-und-Wehr Verein* performed their drills and sang fighting songs that instilled a “suitable festive military mood” in the audience. Despite the use of militant language and displays of armed force during parades, the organization never entered into a violent confrontation with the police or militia. According to historian Christine Heiss, “The essential function of the association for the labor movement seems to

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59 *Vorbote*, 1 March, 1879, as quoted in Heiss, “German Radicals in Industrial America,” in Keil and Jentz, *German Workers*, 213.
have been psychological: its military appearance at the head of parades of socialist unions and clubs gave the workers a feeling of strength and self-confidence. The association was a site of masculine regeneration where men who were dependent on wages could act independently and assert their rights as citizens, not subjects.

Notions of citizenship pervaded anarchist thought. Anarchists argued that arming the working classes was a right enshrined in the Constitution. In his speech in court, Albert Parsons, declared that the prosecution was:

> guilty of the precise thing of which they accuse me. They say that I am an Anarchist and refuse to respect the law. . . They are the real Anarchists in this case, while we stand upon the constitution of the United States. . . We stand upon the right of free speech, of free press, of public assemblage, unmolested and undisturbed. We stand upon the constitutional right of self-defense, and we defy the prosecution to rob the people of America of these dearly bought rights.

By arguing that capitalists and the prosecution were the “real anarchists,” Parsons was arguing that the defendants were the true stewards of order and that the prosecution was “robbing” American citizens, or in other words American men, of their rights. This willingness to cite the constitution and proclaim themselves the defenders of American rights was a way to downplay their ‘foreignness’ and legitimate their movement to working men and the public at large.

Michael Schwab declared to the court-room that the “outrage that Socialism, Communism, and Anarchism are the creed of foreigners, is a big mistake. There are more Socialists of American birth in this country than foreigners, and that is much, if we

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60 Heiss, “German Radicals in Industrial America,” in Keil and Jentz, German Workers, 214.
61 Parsons, “Address of Albert Parsons,” The Accused, the Accusers, 104.
62 As briefly discussed in Chapter Two, women were often subsumed to the personages of men. If the woman was a wife, her husband would represent her in public life, if she was a daughter, her father would act as her spokesperson.
consider that nearly half of all industrial workingmen are not native Americans.” Like her husband Lucy Parsons demanded to be treated as an American and a lady. Parsons used her racial heritage to fight the argument that anarchism was a foreign ideology. On October 16th, 1886, in Jersey City, Lucy addressed a crowd of supporters stating that:

I am an anarchist from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet, and I am proud of it. They make the argument that we are foreigners. Well, my ancestors on my mother’s side greeted the white man as he first planted his on the newly-discovered continent, and met Cortez when he marched against Montezuma.

Parsons vehemently rejected any insinuation that she was not a true “American.” At a commemoration for the Chicago anarchists organized by the Socialist League and held in London, she made sure the audience knew she was authentically American.

I am one whose ancestors are indigenous to the soil of America. When Columbus first came in sight of the Western Continent, my father’s ancestors were there to give them a native greeting. When the conquering hosts of Cortez moved upon Mexico, my mother’s ancestors were there to repel the invader; so that I represent the genuine American. I am one of whose gospel is that of one of the promoters of the Declaration of Independence—Thomas Paine. His motto was “the World is my country, and to do good my religion.”

Both Lucy and Albert Parsons probably felt, like many labor activists, that the birth of America was a libertarian revolution that had been corrupted by the greed of industrial capitalism. “The existing economic system,” according to Albert Parsons, “has placed on the market for sale man’s natural rights,” like the “right to liberty and the pursuit of happiness.” According to historian Bruce Nelson, anarchists believed that workers were international citizens and should exercise their power against a system that was usurping their right to pursue life without hardship. The anarchists, in a sense, were arguing for the

64 New York Times, October 17, 1886.
65 Alarm, December 8, 1888.
66 Ibid., 160.
revitalization of the manly qualities that had established the American Republic. Even the IWPA’s manifesto began by quoting Thomas Jefferson:

But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them (the people) under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty to throw off such government and provide new guards for their future security.’

This thought of Thomas Jefferson, was the justification of armed resistance of our forefathers, which gave birth to our republic, and do not the necessities of our present time compel us to re-assert their declaration.67

To engage in armed resistance was to re-assert the revolution of their “forefathers.” To fight against a system that was despotic and reduced men and their families to “wage slaves” was to be a man.

The anarchists tried to turn their opponents’ arguments against them. By arguing that anarchism was the natural outgrowth of capitalist inequalities and exploitation they were challenging the legitimacy of the system that people like Judge Gary were trying to protect. The maintenance of such inequalities, argued anarchists like Spies and Parsons, relied on state coercion. The ideals of the American republic, which were enshrined in the Constitution, were being trampled. The anarchists were true defenders of man’s natural rights, the right to live independently and to have unfettered access to the means of life. Instead of ensuring that men could acquire property and support their dependants the current system was turning them into dependants, into “wage slaves.” Anarchists fought for an egalitarian system where each had an equal share in the wealth of society. They attempted to galvanize the energy of the masses by instilling a sense of revolutionary manhood. By emphasizing the depravity of the industrial capitalist system and those that defended it, and telling workers to arm themselves for the impending revolution, they

67 “To The Workingmen of America,” Alarm, 4 October, 1884.
hoped to create a new order based on "natural" rights. Under anarchy, men would engage in productive labor, which was a fundamental exercise for the proper development of the mind and body. This cause, according the anarchists, was an American cause, because it was an international working class movement.

Despite their attempt to legitimize their movement the power of the state and the media prevailed. On August 20, 1886, August Spies, Albert Parsons, Samuel Fielden, Adolph Fisher, George Engel, Michael Schwab, and Louis Lingg were convicted of first degree murder, while Oscar Neebe was sentenced to 15 years in prison. The Daily News carried the headline, “They Hang” with a sub heading that read “Business Men Freely Express Their Satisfaction at the Result of the Trial.” The crowd outside the courtroom apparently let out cheer when they heard the news. In the October of 1886, Lucy Parsons set out on a speaking tour across the United States to save the defendants, especially her husband who she loved “dearer than life itself.” “We are weak, tired, and oppressed,” stated Parsons, “but not discouraged or disheartened. It is a day of struggle. Our cause is worth fighting for and worth dying for.” Her speaking tour and fund raising defense campaign drew the attention of the authorities and the press wherever she traveled. She kept the trial in the public’s mind and awakened many people to the plight of the anarchists. Despite Lucy’s dedication and the concerted attempt of many friends, labor organizations, and prominent public figures like William Dean Howells and Henry Demarest Lloyd, the anarchists were to be hanged until dead.

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Conclusion

On November 11th, 1887, Lucy Parsons spent the morning in a jail cell while her husband was judicially murdered by the state of Illinois. Public fear of anarchism and radicalism of any sort reached a pitched frenzy in Chicago after the Haymarket bombing. Albert Parsons along with seven of his comrades were arrested and convicted for the murder of one police officer killed by the blast. Albert Parsons and August Spies were singled out as the main protagonists in what has become known as the Haymarket Affair. The charges against the anarchists were murder, conspiracy, riot, and unlawful assembly. Lucy Parsons, Albert’s wife, was also well known by this time as an anarchist orator and agitator who, according to the press, preached “anarchy like Louise Michel.”¹ Lucy had been agitating all over the United States since her husband gave himself over to the court on June 21st, 1886 and was widely known amongst Chicago’s authorities. Described by the public press as a woman that could be “enraged to madness” and who could fight like a “tigress” against assailants, the Chicago police paid close attention to her on the morning of November 11th.² An article in the Chicago Tribune emphasized that the police were “on the ragged edge of expectancy all the time she was there” for fear “that a large-sized bomb might be concealed within the heavy folds of her black dress.”³

Three hundred and fifty police officers were stationed in the area around the jail and Courthouse, anticipating the “black she anarchist” and others of that ilk. Instead of violent confrontation, however, the police encountered the frightened friends and families of the condemned anarchists. Lucy, her two children, Lulu and Albert Jr., and Lizzie Holmes,

¹ New York Times, 6 May, 1886.
² New York Times, 10 March, 1887.
³ Chicago Tribune, 11 November, 1887.
were among them. Lucy tried to get through the police lines so that her children could see their father for the last time, a wish that the authorities had agreed to the night before. Denied admittance by the police at every turn she became panicked and tried to push her way through the police lines surrounding the jail. A patrol wagon was beckoned and the police arrested Lucy, her children, and Lizzie Holmes who explained their treatment to a reporter for the *Chicago Tribune* the next night.

The paper said we were treated with politeness and permitted to remain in the jail office. It is not so. We were locked up in separate cells, stripped to the skin by the matron, and thoroughly searched. That was where Mrs. Parsons was when her husband was executed. Instead of being surrounded by loving friends she was caged in a filthy cell, insulted and degraded until her great heart was broken.  

Asked by a reporter from the *Tribune* whether she had been violent in her demands, Parsons responded with a firm no, stating that she only wanted her children to see their father. Parsons was a dedicated and militant anarchist but as the above story shows she was also a wife and mother. Despite the sympathy of the *Tribune* reporter the police and the public showed Albert and Lucy no mercy.

The deaths of Albert Parsons, August Spies, George Engel, Adolph Fisher, and the suicide of Louis Lingg gave to the American labor movement its first martyrs. Even the *Chicago Herald* stated that their funeral procession had “perhaps no parallel in history.”

Four men, executed for a crime, put to death as murderers by the most shameful death known to modern society, were peacefully entombed in the same community in which they met their death, with more honors than have been accorded to some of the greatest heroes and benefactors of the race.

Despite their “criminality” and the “shameful” way they were put to death, 200,000 people lined the streets during the procession. It was the largest funeral Chicago had ever seen.

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4 *Chicago Tribune*, 12 November, 1887.
5 Ibid.
6 *Chicago Herald*, 14 November, 1887.
Joseph R. Buchanan, one of Albert Parsons' pallbearers recalled that he marched through three miles of crowded streets, and "upon every one of the thousands of faces," he saw "a look of sorrow." It would have been hard to tell, however, how many people were actually mourning and how many were there as spectators. The anarchists' funeral was the last act of a drama that had gripped the city and the nation. Many people were probably there to witness another spectacle. Regardless of their motivation the sheer number of people in attendance proves the popularity and importance of the trial.

While the press exulted that law had triumphed over anarchy, the labor and radical movements adopted the anarchists as martyrs. In an article for *Free Society*, Lizzie Holmes, former assistant editor of *The Alarm*, wrote, "Our comrades are as yet among the vanquished; it depends on us to rescue their names from obloquy, and to keep bright the cause for which they died." The "martyr" is a symbolic expression of a political ideal. Holmes understood that claiming the memory of the martyrs and their cause required a struggle over language and the interpretation of history. This struggle began with their trial, conviction, and execution and has continued for one hundred and nineteen years. The anarchists' supporters portrayed the deceased anarchists as devout humanitarians and ardent revolutionists. Gender structured these characterizations.

William Perkins Black, the lead council for the defense during the trial, declared in his eulogy at their funeral that the crowd was "by the bodies of men who were sublime in their self-sacrifice, and for whom the gibbet assumed the glory of a cross." They were, according to Black, men of love and gentle instinct, men whose honor resounded even in the face of death. "They moved to their appointed death slow-paced and strong — no

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faltering, no trembling, no turning back . . . . To such men death had, and could have, no terrors, and their execution, which was self-immolation, could have no touch of shame."⁹ They were the manliest of men in the eyes of their friends and admirers. Even Benjamin Tucker, who disdained the militancy of the IWPA, declared that "all of us, I am certain, will from this time forth face the struggle before us with stouter hearts and firmer tread for the examples that have been set us by our murdered comrades."¹⁰ Lizzie Holmes, in an ode to the martyrdom of the defendants, described Spies as having "a power few men of any age have wielded. Men came and went at his bidding; thought new thoughts or unlearned old ones under his influence; women worshipped him and commenced to think because he expected it of them."¹¹ A poem printed in The Alarm about Albert Parsons declared him an "emblem of manhood's grandeur." He was, according to the author, "Manhood's martyr, firm, defiant, bold."¹² The anarchists were given an immaculate veneer. They were true revolutionaries and true men. In his Prison Memoirs of an Anarchist, Alexander Berkman often recalled the heroism of the Haymarket martyrs and his own desire to lie dead beside them. The example set by the Chicago anarchists deeply affected Berkman. The manliness of 'the revolutionary’ coursed through his very being. "Could anything be nobler to die for a grand, a sublime Cause?’” asked Berkman. "Why, the very life of a true revolutionist has no other purpose, no significance whatever, save to sacrifice it on the altar of the beloved People. It is to be a man, a complete MAN [emphasis his].”¹³

¹⁰ Benjamin Tucker, Liberty, 19 November, 1887.
¹¹ Free Society, 6 November, 1898, quoted in Avrich, Haymarket Tragedy, 123.
¹² Lydia Platt Richards, "Albert Parsons," Alarm, 3 December, 1887.
Due to the hard work of friends and admirers, a day after the anarchists’ monument was unveiled at Waldheim Cemetery, Governor John P. Altgeld, pardoned Michael Schwab, Samuel Fielden and Oscar Neebe. His pardon message remains a testament to the anarchists’ innocence and the cruelty of the court. Altgeld said of Judge Gary’s article in the *Century Magazine* that “although written nearly six years after the trial, is yet full of venom.” According to Altgeld, Gary’s “ferocity of subserviency is without a parallel in all history, even Jeffries in England, contented himself with hanging his victims, and did not stoop to berate them after death.”

Judge Gary was not the only prominent citizen to pour infective upon anarchism after the Haymarket, nor was the *Century Magazine* the only periodical to continue the stereotypes. Equating anarchy with terrorism and violence remained embedded in the American psyche. This situation was made worse by half-baked psychological and anthropological studies that sought to prove anarchism a result of mental underdevelopment and depravity. The studies of Italian criminologist Cesare Lombroso are the most notable. In a two-part article for a Chicago journal titled *The Monist*, Lombroso categorized anarchists as part of a hereditary criminal type distinguished by cranial deformities, facial abnormalities (like Johann Most’s disfigurement, which was from an operation), skin discoloration, and other physiognomic markers. The racial implications of Lombroso’s analysis are hard to miss. The new influxes of immigration from southern and eastern Europe, particularly Italians, Russians, and Jews, changed the ‘complexion’ of the anarchist movement in America.

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Anarchism was a thought to be a vestige of an old world ideology. The fact that many anarchists were foreigners made their persecution easier for the middle and upper class. It was continually pointed out that only one of the defendants was native to American soil. The press castigated every foreign ideologue and instilled hatred and fear into the minds of the American citizenry of every un-American foreign radical. By 1903, the fear of “foreign radicals” had become so pronounced amongst the elite and middle class of American society that Theodore Roosevelt believed American society should “war with relentless efficiency not only against anarchists, but against all active and passive sympathizers with anarchists.” During the December 3, 1901 session of Congress, Roosevelt argued that “all who are known to be believers in anarchistic principles or members of anarchist societies,” should be excluded from American citizenship.¹⁶ According to Roosevelt a literacy test should be imposed on all new immigrants so as to assess the “capacity to appreciate American institutions and act sanely as American citizens.” This would “decrease the sum of ignorance so potent in producing the envy, suspicion, malignant passion, and hatred of order out of which anarchist sentiment inevitably springs.”¹⁷ By tracing the roots of such prejudice, the class dynamics, which are always legitimized by moral regimes, of late nineteenth and early twentieth century America can be illuminated.

As an ideological symbol of civilization and as a tool to subdue class struggle, the American legal system was used to coerce and engender consent amongst the population to adhere to the ideals of middle and upper class property owners. Lear's rightly points out that

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“consent and force nearly always coexist, though one or the other predominates.” During the Haymarket force prevailed. The consent garnered after the bomb and during the trial rested on the gun, the club, the jail, unemployment, and social ostracism. Some people, however, did fundamentally believe in the messages propagated by the press, police, and prosecution, about proper participation in the American polity. “To achieve cultural hegemony,” Lears argues, “the leaders of a historical bloc must develop a world view that appeals to a wide range of other groups within the society, and they must be able to claim with some plausibility that their particular interests are those of society at large.” When the press argued that reform, the ballot, and the tutelage of a good employer, were the best resource a laborer could count on to change his situation, they were appealing to middle and upper class ideals about labor and the reformist politics held by many skilled workers in the ranks of the movement. Although many activists felt class hatred and desired deep social change, when the Haymarket bomb exploded and the red terror swept Chicago, many labor activists quickly turned to middle and upper class rhetoric about the slightly flawed yet ultimately righteous qualities of American institutions and the manly rationality of the American worker.

During the late nineteenth century gender was a pivotal ideological structure that helped the middle and upper class retain their grip on property and power. Although not reducible to class, gender must be understood in relation to the struggles that ensued between working people and the captains of industry. Each group had specific beliefs about labor and productivity, manliness and femininity, disorder and order. When confronted with the supposed reality of a violent and depraved anarchist society, Chicago’s middle and

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18 Lears, Problems and Possibilities, 568.
19 Lears, Problems and Possibilities, 571.
20 See Avrich, Haymarket Tragedy, 219-220; and Smith, Urban Disorder, 135.
upper class tightly recoiled into a patriarchal, individualistic, and hierarchical system of order. Portraying anarchists as "ragged, unwashed, long-haired, wild-eyed fiend, armed with smoking revolver and bomb" was used to instill fear into the public but also revealed a system of morality in which gender played a significant role.\(^{21}\)

According to the middle and upper class, a true man used reason and self-restraint to cultivate the proper character for the accumulation of property. Sobriety, cleanliness, industriousness and propriety signified the manly use of rationality and the ability to participate in a patriarchal corporative society. Women on the other hand, were supposed to remain docile and fulfill their roles as wives and mothers. They guarded the morality of the home and thus the republic. The middle and upper class argued that anarchism would create disorder, that the 'craven' desires of anarchists and their followers amongst the lumpenproletariat would pollute the purity of this sexual differentiation. Women who dared resist normative gender roles and acted publicly were charged with masculinity, lunacy, or prostitution. Public women were fallen women in the eyes of much of the middle and upper class. Men who organized or participated in labor rebellion were riotous drunks who were jealous of the thrift of their social superiors. Anarchists were the same as slum dwellers; they were foreign "savages" who desired riot, plunder, the destruction of the nuclear family and the institution of marriage. Their passion symbolized their lack of sexual differentiation, which in turn proved their barbarity. The press and prosecution used fear and propaganda to divide the workers' movement and garner enough consent from Chicago's citizens during the Haymarket to ensure that the reproduction of the social relationships necessary for capitalist production would continue.

The anarchists tried to fight back by proclaiming themselves the manly defenders of the family and rights embodied in the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence. Anarchism was order, while the industrial capitalist system reduced working people to a state of depravity. Workers labored honestly while capitalists robbed them. The agents of capital, like the police and Pinkertons, engaged in "bloody orgies," while the capitalist system was a blood sucking "fiend." The police raped virgins while anarchists defended their virtue. The anarchists sought to instill a sense of militancy, of manly independence into the working class by encouraging them to arm, practice drills, and show their force. Laboring men who cowered when confronted by authorities and did nothing to resist their subservience were "slaves" while socialists and anarchists were true men. Anarchists, just as their opponents, reflected a gendered system of meaning, one that also garnered some consent amongst the working class, particularly those skilled workers that were being sweated and unskilled immigrant laborers. Hegemony is not a static system and ruling groups can never engender total consent. It is "a society in constant process, where the creation of counterhegemonies remains a live option."22 The anarchist movement was rapidly growing and their revolutionary politics offered working people a way to overthrow their oppressors. The police, prosecution, press, and the middle and upper class wanted to crush the anarchist movement and the broader labor movement before this occurred.

Although this paper is an exercise in cultural history, of the reading of tropes and texts, we must not forget that the persecution of the anarchist leadership resulted from a nation wide class struggle that was to change American society. Between 1881 and 1905 there nearly 37,000 strikes, many of which were violent, involving seven million workers. The Haymarket bombing, which resulted in the immediate death of one police officer and

22 Lears, Problems and Possibilities, 571.
seven others who later died of their wounds, most of which were from gunfire fired by other police officers, seemed like a clarion call for revolution. Wealthy businessmen and their middle class and upper-class cohorts attempted to use this opportunity to crush the labor movement and through their repression murdered four innocent men, pushed another to suicide, and imprisoned three others. They legitimized their actions through the cultural narratives discussed in this paper.

According to historian, William Preston Jr., the Haymarket bombing, the execution and imprisonment of the anarchists broke the movement. Anarchism after the Haymarket, argues Preston, was reduced to “Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman, a small colony outside Tacoma, a dying Johann Most, a crazed assassin of McKinley, a few Italian anarchist clustered as contributors and subscribers around Galleani and the Cronaca Sovversiva, anarchist literature, and a few individualistic Tolstyan.”23 This assessment could not be more mistaken. The legacy of the anarchists condemned for the Haymarket bombing was not stopped by their murder. This implies that the social conditions and ideas that produced the anarchist movement somehow died with the deaths of these anarchists. Although the radical movement in America did witness a setback for a short period of time there was actually a flourishing of radical agitation throughout America during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Preston’s argument ignores the variety of anarchist publications and activists in America after Haymarket. Benjamin Tucker published the anarchist newspaper Liberty until 1908, Moses Harman published Lucifer, the Light Bearer until 1907, and the Firebrand and Free Society were popular anarchist newspapers in the 1890’s, Lucy Parsons was a dedicated and fiery anarchist orator and writer who edited The Liberator, Voltairine de Cleyre, Joseph Labadie, and Lizzie Holmes,

23 Preston Jr., Aliens and Dissenters, 26.
are just a few more examples of active anarchists in the United States after Haymarket. The ideology of the Chicago anarchists evolved into what has become known as the “Chicago idea” of revolutionary action. Characterized by a fusion of labor organization and revolutionary agitation, the “Chicago Idea” gained popularity amongst a variety of radical groups. The ideology and culture of the Industrial Workers of the World is an example of the radical culture the Chicago anarchists helped to build and inspire. The Haymarket was a pivotal point in the life William D. Haywood, a prominent leader of the Industrial Workers of the World, as well as for thousands of others. Even today the importance of Haymarket can shape political debate.

After a lull, which lasted from the Second World War to the sixties, labor activists in Chicago revived the radical heritage of the Chicago anarchists on May 4th, 1969, when Packinghouse union activist Les Orear, labor historian Bill Adleman, and Bill Garvey, the Midwest editor of Steel Labor, organized a public ceremony to commemorate the martyred anarchists. In a re-enactment of the anarchists’ protest meeting held on May 4th, 1886, near Haymarket Square, historian Studs Terkel mounted a wagon to deliver a speech just as anarchists had done eighty-three years earlier. Orear and Adelman founded the Illinois Labor History Society (ILHS) on August 9th of the same year. Organizing a centennial event in 1986 the ILHS and the Chicago Historical Society procured mainstream attention to the labor struggles of the nineteenth century.24

Due to pressure from labor organizations and the ILHS the Haymarket monument, erected in 1894 by friends of the Haymarket martyrs in Forest Home Cemetery, was designated a national historic landmark by the National Park Service in 1997. The plaque

next to the monument reads, "This monument represents the labor movement's struggle for workers' rights and possesses national significance in commemorating the history of the United States." The anarchist movement, which vehemently opposed the American state, has been incorporated into a nationalist framework. Rather than an icon in the history of anarchism and the international revolutionary struggle, the monument now represents a part of American heritage. Funding from the Illinois state legislature in 1998 for a commemorative park dedicated to the right of free speech signaled the final transformation of the radicalism of the anarchist movement into an inclusive liberal ideal of American society. By institutionalizing the memory of the anarchist movement as labor history the ILHS, the Chicago Historical Society, and the Chicago Federation of Labor alienated other radical organizations. Anarchists for instance were rarely, if ever, consulted about these matters. In fact, in protest of the incorporation of the Haymarket Affair by mainstream organizations and the state, anarchists often disrupted ILHS commemoration events by jeering the crowd. At the Haymarket centennial they draped the monument in a black flag and circulated pamphlets about the anarchist movement and the Haymarket martyrs.

The greatest division, however, still remains between the ILHS and the police. After labor activists and other groups lobbied the Chicago Park District Board in 2004, a new park was named after Lucy Parsons. Parsons had dedicated her life to building a revolutionary working class movement and to keeping alive the memory of the anarchists who died in 1887. In the May 13, 2004 issue of the Chicago Tribune an article about Lucy Parsons was printed under the headline "Honored by City, Still Disdained by Cops." Orear states that Parsons "represents a strain of radical and working class political thought that has been totally ignored and deserves to be acknowledged," while Mark P. Donahue, the

25 Ibid.
president of the Fraternal Order of Police, in a letter to the Park District Board states that Lucy Parsons “promoted the overthrow of the government and the use of dynamite in getting [her] way.”¹²⁶ Even at the beginning of the twenty-first century the Chicago anarchists of the nineteenth century are still associated with the iconography of the Haymarket Affair. The anarchists were nothing more than dynamite wielding criminals in the eyes of the police while, according to the Tribune article, “those on the left” look to the Chicago anarchists as martyrs in the struggle for liberty. The park, which will be known as the Lucy Ella Gonzales Park, will now be a lasting symbol to a historical debate that has lasted one hundred and nineteen years.²⁷

¹²⁶ Chicago Sun Times, April 15, 2004.
²⁷ The fact that those who named the park incorporated the middle name Ella and Gonzales, which Parsons went by on certain occasions but are not known to be her real name, reveal the historical uncertainties of the Chicago anarchists and the history of their movement. Information can be found in Gale Ahrens, “Lucy Parsons: Mystery Revolutionist, More Dangerous Than a Thousand Rioters,” in Ahrens, ed., Lucy Parsons, Freedom, Equality, 3-4; and Ashbaugh, Lucy Parsons, 267-268.
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