

Labor in America

The experience and impact of American workers as recorded by the news media



Quick Facts

Primary source coverage of work, workers, labor systems, and workplace change from the early 18th century to today

More than 15,000 American and global news sources

Includes more than 700 **Suggested Searches** that mirror teaching and research interests

Overview

Labor in America offers faculty, librarians, students, and scholars a primary source archive for exploring one of the most enduring forces in American history: work. Across more than three centuries, newspapers document who labored, how work was organized, how workers were represented, and how debates over wages, safety, rights, citizenship, migration, race, gender, technology, and power shaped American life. From the colonial era to today, the collection shows labor as both a lived experience and a critical lens for understanding social and cultural change.

Like other collections in Readex's **Life in America** program, *Labor in America* captures the experience and impact of its subject as recorded by the news media. It supports teaching and research across American history, economics, government, law, sociology, labor studies, ethnic studies, gender studies, journalism, literature, and cultural studies. While the collection's principal focus is voluntary labor, it also includes the experience of people whose labor was forced or marginalized, including enslaved Americans, incarcerated people, women, undocumented immigrants, and migrant workers.

Series 1: From Field to Factory (1706–1979)

Chronicles American labor from its earliest roots, including chattel slavery and indentured servitude, through the rise of industry and the modern labor movement. Coverage includes the Lowell Mill Girls and the fight for the ten-hour day, the Haymarket Affair (1886) and the Homestead Strike (1892), the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire (1911), the Wagner Act (1935) and the New Deal, the impact of World War II on race, gender, and unionism, and much more.

Series 2: From Factory Floor to the Digital Economy (1980–2019)

Covers the decline of manufacturing and the rise of the service and information economy. From the Actors' Strike and the Battle of Seattle protests to the Family and Medical Leave Act, the expansion of the internet, and the growth of temporary staffing and the "gig economy," researchers will find late twentieth-century and early twenty-first-century perspectives on the changing workforce, globalization, outsourcing, and mobile capital.

Series 3: From Essential Work to the AI Workplace (2020–Today)

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