The Anarchist Peril: Industrial Violence and the Propaganda of Fear in Turn of the Century America, 1886-1908

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Department of History
University of Toronto

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Abstract

Between 1886 and 1908, in the crossover between the Gilded Age and Progressive Era, people all across America felt the growing pains wrought by the second industrial revolution. Overproduction, exploitative working conditions, labor shortages, and increased rural and foreign immigration all made the country ripe for civil unrest to burst through the cracks of the Gilded Age. In particular, assassinations and bombings followed by murmurs of anarchist conspiracies within the labor movement gave social elites cause to fear for the stability of their nation-building project. The Anarchist Peril examines five sets of violent outbursts that disrupted the status quo: the 1886 Haymarket bombing, the 1892 assault on Henry Clay Frick, President William McKinley’s assassination in 1901, the assassination of Frank Steunenberg in 1905, and the 1908 anarchist scare. In reaction to these events, journalists, police officers, court officials, and state and federal legislators, who feared the effects of the anarchist tactic of Propaganda by Deed, used their powers to shape public opinion against anarchy. These acts of violence, which were endorsed by a minority within radical circles, took on greater significance when emerging ranks of middle-class professionals reshaped the meaning of anarchists’ deeds to legitimize their own competing claims to power. Since they placed so little value on anarchism’s political critique, social elites ignored the class implications of anarchists’ words and deeds and instead examined their bodies for signs to marginalize their actions, silenced them in the courtroom, and legislated against further acts of violence. While this approach did disrupt the propaganda of their deeds, it did not deter further acts of violence.
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Introduction
Cultures of Fear

In February of 1885, noted economist and reformer Richard T. Ely warned readers of *Harper’s Monthly Magazine* that a new era of labor relations was beginning; and it would involve “dynamite bombs and revolutionary murmurings.”¹ Elaborating on this theme in his 1886 book-length investigation, *The Labor Movement in America*, Ely began the work with the troubling assertion that “a marvellous war is now being waged in the heart of modern civilization.”² As a warning of the impending eruptions of anarchist violence in America, Ely wrote about a growing transnational class war:

> While the European practices of the revolutionaries have not yet been adapted in America, they themselves claim that our respite is a short one, since they are waiting for the opportune moment to begin the tactics of violence, and the favorable time is expected in a very near future.³

This near future turned out to be Ely’s present. As *The Labor Movement in America* was en route to the publisher, on May 4th, 1886, a bomb exploded amongst ranks of policemen who were attempting to break up an outdoor meeting in Chicago. After this event, revolutionary violence could no longer be viewed as the scourge of a distant Europe and authorities in Chicago attributed the bombing to a conspiracy amongst radical anarchist activists in the labor movement. Attempting to fit this act of terrorism into the conclusion of his book, Ely commented with concern that: “to-day there is a sympathy among workingmen for the Chicago Anarchists on trial for a brutal massacre of the authorities, which would have been inconceivable six months since. Never have I seen such indignation among the masses.”⁴ Ely recognized the growing class tensions in the United States and feared the emergence of further acts of anarchist violence.

Between 1886 and 1908, fear of anarchist violence grew to become an omnipresent terror. The bombing of Chicago’s police force was followed by further acts of violence credited to anarchists, including the 1892 attempted assassination of industrialist Henry Clay Frick, the 1901 assassination of President William McKinley, the 1905 bombing that killed former governor of Idaho Frank Steunenberg, and the 1908

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³ Ibid., 265.
⁴ Ibid., 302.
anarchist scare in which Father Leo Heinrichs was murdered in Denver, an assassination attempt was made on the Chicago Chief of Police George Shippy, and an attempted bombing of police ranks occurred in New York. While the number of victims of all these attacks was relatively small, the political and social prominence of the violence greatly increased the impact and notoriety of these crimes. Only some of these deeds were perpetrated by self-identified anarchists, others had no connection to anarchism; yet, authorities made links between the crimes and anarchist conspiracies in order to obscure other motives for the violence and, in some cases, to justify their continuing investigations of ethnic and working-class organizations. This dissertation is as much a study of elites' responses to the anarchist peril as it is an attempt to understand why these acts of violence plagued America society between 1886 and 1908.

The central theme to this narrative, and in understanding the nebulous relationship between industrial relations, anarchist violence, and state formation in the United States that will be elaborated upon in this dissertation, is fear. The frequently repeated fears that terrorist cabals would form violent working-class conspiracies, often assumed to be percolating in unions, stood as a shadow over the second industrial revolution. Instilling fear into systems of established authority was a significant element of the anarchist terrorism; but fear was also a useful tool for those who shaped public opinion about anarchism for their own purposes. Political theorist Corey Robin suggests that the political idea of fear could have powerful repercussions, since “it may dictate public policy, bring new groups to power and keep others out, create laws and overturn them.”

Between 1886 and 1908, an emerging strata of middle- and upper-class professionals, including police officials, lawyers, legislators, and doctors sought out publicity by readily allying themselves with journalists to nurture fears of anarchist violence and further shape public opinion to their own agendas. These professionals demonstrated a


6 Stuart Blumin argues that most American manual workers “inhabited a social, moral, and ideological world that was different from and even antagonistic to that of the professionals and businessmen who came to be called the middle class. These workers were, and knew they were, of another social order.” Blumin identifies the decade before the Civil War as critical to class formation, “a middle class was not fully formed before the war, and that developments of the postwar period – most notably, widening differences between the worlds of nonmanual and manual work, the expansion of middle-class suburbanization, and the resumption and expansion of social and economic conflict that was phrased in class terms – contributed to the further articulation of the American middle class.” Stuart Blumin, The Emergence of Middle Class: Social Experience in the American City, 1760-1900 (New York: Cambridge
racialized, classed, and gendered gaze as they looked at the world around them and interpreted the role of anarchist violence within it. Many social investigators, whether police searching for suspects, journalists’ describing defendants or even doctors writing in official autopsy reports, looked to the anarchist body as a site of evidence to substantiated their claims. In recent years scholars such as Ava Baron and Eileen Boris have focused on how representations of the body legitimated constructed meanings by arguing that

Bodies, like texts, need to be read… like other material objects… bodies are cultural productions that are constituted through an interpretive process that masks the cultural work that went into their making… [and] therefore demands inquiry into how the body has functioned as a signifier of social difference.

While the bodies of anarchist assassins were the weapons through which their propaganda was articulated, it was also from these bodies that punishment was extracted and explanations for their deviant behaviour substantiated. Therefore, middle- and upper-class professionals scrutinized the bodies of assassins as the site upon which claims over the meaning of anarchist violence could be authenticated and fears legitimated.

There were many reasons to fear anarchist violence in the late nineteenth century, particularly since increasingly ferocious tactics in Europe, which received wide coverage in American newspapers and periodicals, had shocked and dismayed audiences in the United States well before the Haymarket bombing. The brief success of the Paris Commune in the spring of 1871 had enthused radicals and terrified proponents of law and order everywhere. Following the shattering defeat and brutal repression of the

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7 Laura Wexler argues that the term “gaze” is particularly useful since it “denotes a socially engineered avenue for looking. The gaze is a literal pathway between the eye and object that reflects and intensifies the viewer’s subject position and social positioning. Like other material entities, this pathway is culturally constructed.” Laura Wexler, Tender Violence: Domestic Visions in an Age of U.S. Imperialism (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2000), 89.


9 During the Commune, radicals took over the capital from March 18th to May 25th and committed bloody excesses such as shooting hostages including the Archbishop of Paris. The French government crushed the rebellion by gathering troops from the provinces followed by police repression and deportation of most left-wing militant, although political amnesty was extended by the French parliament to exiled communards in 1879. George L. Cherry, “American Metropolitan Press Reaction to the Paris Commune,”
Commune, however, hopes for social revolution stalled as social democrats shifted toward parliamentary reform and some radical factions turned increasingly to acts of revolt, including individual terrorism. Individual acts of terrorist violence certainly contributed to anarchism’s increased notoriety in Europe. In Italy, Giovanni Passanante attempted to assassinate King Umberto I on November 17th, 1878 and the following day a bomb was tossed into a monarchist procession in Florence. In France, an anarchist named Antoine Cyvogt tossed a bomb into a crowded Paris café on October 22nd, 1882, while in 1886 the anarchist Charles Gallo attacked the Paris stock exchange. Through the 1880s, Americans were also reading about a secret organization of radicals in Russia who lethally bombed Russian Emperor Alexander II in March 1881. Between 1883 and 1885, a series of bomb plots and assassinations in Germany lead authorities to execute several anarchists. Thus, for the American public, the threat of anarchist violence was


13 Although they used similar tactics of terrorist violence, the Peoples Will in Russia was not an anarchist organization, as Jensen points out, the People’s Will “was authoritarian and hierarchical and intended to create a popular dictatorship after toppling the Czar. Most anarchists rejected authoritarian political structures, even if devised by themselves, and after the revolution favored turning power over to autonomous local groups and organizations.” Jensen, “Daggers, Rifles and Dynamite,” 129.

made real through recurring stories of terrorism in Europe that were circulated to a mass audience through American newspapers.

Historian Richard Back Jensen argues that much of this terrorist violence in Europe “had little direct connection with anarchist ideology, yet because the anarchists generally applauded them, they came to be seen as anarchist and furthermore influenced subsequent anarchist views on the use of violence.”¹⁵ In praising acts of terrorist violence, anarchists attracted both state surveillance and violent extremists to their ranks. Benedict Anderson has argued that the political doctrine of anarchism emerged as a reaction against the expansion of European capitalism and colonialism. In response, governments throughout Europe, who were motivated by fears of anarchist conspiracies, ordered massive police repression of popular demonstrations, rounded up thousands of people, and harassed or dissolved scores of labor organizations.¹⁶ This repression only further convinced many anarchists that legal activity was pointless or impossible, and that terrorism was the revolutionary’s only effective strategy.¹⁷

While the anarchist terror continued to plague European nations, many thought that America’s republican traditions would save the United States from this scourge of the Old World. Those of like minds to Richard T. Ely, however, saw the danger for growth of the anarchist movement in turbulent industrial relations of the United States. Another contemporary, reform advocate Lyman Abbott, in his personal Reminiscences, called Haymarket a “tragic” event that had still “served a useful purpose” in that it “awakened the complacent and self-satisfied nation to the existing perils.”¹⁸ American reformers clearly understood that whether or not the government or business elites were prepared for the spread of anarchist terrorism into their cities, the anarchist peril had arrived.

¹⁵ Jensen, “Daggers, Rifles and Dynamite,” 125.
¹⁷ In July 1881, an International Revolutionary Congress convened in London for the purpose of reconstituting the moribund International or founding a new association. At the congress a general agreement was reached that the use of illegal acts, including politically motivated bombings and assassinations, would be encouraged as a means to overthrow power structures, see: Roderick Kedward, The Anarchists: The Men Who Shocked an Era (Sussex: Library of the 20th Century, 1969), 35; James Joll, The Anarchists second edition (London: Methuen & Co., 1979), 109; Pernicone, “Anarchism in Italy,” 11.
Within the United States, the size and ideological distinctions within the anarchist movement were difficult to estimate with accuracy. In 1889, an article in the *Political Science Quarterly* concluded that no more than 10,000 anarchists resided in the United States. Of these, according to a Chicago grand jury in 1886, not more than 100 and probably not more than 40 or 50 could be considered dangerous. One of the foremost historians of the anarchist movement, Paul Avrich, argues that the movement was actually much larger than these conservative estimates. As Avrich writes, “[s]cattered across the country, with concentrations in the larger cities, anarchists reckoned in the tens of thousands at the crest of the movement between 1880 and 1920, with 3,000 in Chicago alone during the last decade of the nineteenth century with comparable numbers in Paterson [New Jersey] and New York [City].” Much of the uncertainty about the scope and size of the anarchist movement can be ascribed to the variations in opinions and methods amongst radicals. The movement was not monolithic or ideologically cohesive. While most anarchists agreed on the necessity of overthrowing organized government and religion, the anarchist movement had three loose ideological tendencies. First, anarchist-communists, such as Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman, rejected not only the state but also the private ownership of property. Second, the anarcho-syndicalists placed their faith in the union movement. Finally, anarchist-individualists distrusted both the communal arrangements of the anarchist-communists and the labor organizations of the anarcho-syndicalists, acting instead as autonomous individuals.

24 The individualists were libertarian reformers, disciples of Proudhon, who wished to abolish the state by fortifying the idea of capitalism as the only system under which equality could be obtained. Herbert Osgood estimated in 1889 that this branch of anarchism was the largest in the United States and “may number in all some five thousand adherents” Osgood, “Scientific Anarchism,” 18; the group published an
These three strains within the anarchist movement, however, shared a fundamental belief that by participating in the political process, the working class would only be lulled into passivity by the promise of bourgeois reformism.\textsuperscript{25} To counteract this trend, anarchists prioritized propaganda as the means to further the revolution and awaken the masses.

Schisms in the anarchist movement were further strained between two related strategies for reaching the masses: Propaganda by Word and Propaganda by Deed. The former referred to the dissemination of anarchist ideas through print and word of mouth, with platforms of publication ranging from pamphlets and radical newspapers to speeches at mass meetings and more intensive study by smaller affinity groups. Propaganda by Deed described a wide variety of criminal political activities, such as banditry, collective insurrectionism, and individual acts of terrorism as a tactical response to the monstrous violence of the state, but also to reveal the vulnerability of the power structure and thereby spark revolution.\textsuperscript{26} One of the main reasons Americans attributed so much danger to such a small a group of social disruptors was the use of assassinations and bombings in their violent plans.\textsuperscript{27} Dynamite in particular, which had been invented in 1866, prompted

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\textsuperscript{25} For many radicals in Chicago during the early 1870s electoral politics was seen as an adequate means to address the growing industrial unrest. Local anarchist Albert Parsons ran unsuccessfully for alderman, state assemblymen, sheriff, and country clerk, and in 1879 the Socialist Labor Party even nominated him for President. However, in the spring of 1880, Chicago election officials stuffed ballot boxes and forged tally sheets in order to unseat socialist alderman. Although the fraud was unsuccessful Parsons and other influential figures in the anarchist movement lost faith in representative democracy. By 1881, a congress of revolutionaries condemned voting as “an invention of the bourgeoisie to fool the workers.” Paul Avrich, *The Haymarket Tragedy* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), 73.


\textsuperscript{27} Militant anarchist’s produced manuals that offered instruction on using dynamite and violence for revolutionary ends; most prominent of which were Johann Most’s 1884 *The Science of Revolutionary Warfare* that provided readers with minute details on how to “handle guns, knives, detonating gas, dynamite, Greek fire, and Congreve rockets” as well as Luigi Galleani’s 1905 *La Salute e in voi!* which
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Americans to worry about anonymously committed mass violence in ways that were on a different scale from earlier fears of slave uprisings, urban mobs, or mass protest movements unaided by such instruments of destruction. Public fears, rather than being focused on a highly visible mob or a spontaneous uprising, converged on the notion of a dangerous and often indistinguishable individual. Historian Paul Avrich, writing on the Cult of Dynamite, explains why it was the perfect choice for anarchists:

Dynamite, in the eyes of the anarchists, had become a panacea for the ills of society. They saw it as a great equalizing force, enabling ordinary workmen to stand up against armies, militias, and police, to say nothing of the hired gunmen of the employers. Cheap in price, easy to carry, not hard to contain, it was the poor man’s natural weapon, a power provided by science against tyranny and oppression.

However, in order for these tactics of violence to be effective, they needed to co-exist within a propaganda network so that the working class would understand the political significance of anarchist’s deeds. As a whole, the anarchist movement did not embrace terrorism, but the fringe minority that did enact Propaganda by Deed created a very difficult problem for those who agitated with Propaganda by Word. Public authorities and ordinary Americans frequently held radical orators and newspaper editors responsible for the revolutionary fervour that inspired terrorist deeds. Jensen notes the awkward situation of several anarchist leaders who had:

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29 Chicago anarchist Albert Parsons was fond of citing a report by General Philip Sheridan to the United States Congress that read “It should be remembered destructive explosives are easily made, and that banks, United States sub-treasuries, public buildings and larger mercantile houses can be readily demolished, and the commerce of entire cities destroyed by an infuriated people with means carried with perfect safety to themselves in the pockets of their clothing.” Avrich, *Haymarket Tragedy*, 166-167.

30 Ibid., 166.
Called for Propaganda by Deed, meaning actions aimed at insurrection and revolution, but soon got random acts of murder about which they harboured deep misgivings. Loath to abandon the lowly instigators of these deeds, the anarchist leaders apologized for them, and thus enabled, or at least assisted, the popular press and numerous politicians in finding someone to blame, or to scapegoat, for miscellaneous anti-social acts.  

While this dissertation explores how one small network of anarchist-communists struggled with interpreting the social significance of acts of violence that were labelled “anarchist,” they were not the sole propaganda networks to do so. New forms of communication were as essential to middle- and upper-class professionals to control the meaning of the anarchist peril as they were to proponents of Propaganda by Word.  

Fears of anarchist violence were dramatically accentuated by the growth of a mass press. The increasing density of telegraph networks, expanding circulation and geographic reach of print media made events like the 1886 Haymarket bombing in Chicago more immediately known to a widely-dispersed audience that did not need to directly witness events to know and be frightened by their details. Circulation figures soared as the cost of publishing newspapers fell, creating a national public arena that increasingly became the sphere in which the meanings of spectacular events were discussed and their implications contested. Benedict Anderson developed the concept of “print capitalism” in his foundational study of nationalism, Imagined Communities, in which he argued for the ability of newspapers in the capitalist marketplace to foster a public consciousness from individuals’ solitary acts of reading. At the turn of the twentieth century the newspaper landscape was fragmented and diverse: there were labor and socialist periodicals like the National Labor Tribune and Appeal to Reason, a

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31 Jensen, “Daggers, Rifles and Dynamite,” 128.  
34 Anderson suggests that through privately reading, individuals are aware that their private act is being preformed by countless others whose existence is certain but whose identity is completely unknown, producing a “remarkable confidence of community in anonymity.” Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origins and Spread of Nationalism (Rev ed. London: Verso, 1991), 35-36.
substantial foreign-language press with its own internal class divisions, as well as English-language upper-middle-class newspapers like the Chicago Daily Tribune, Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette, New York Times and Idaho Daily Statesman. While this dissertation explores a variety of press sources to understand the contested meaning of anarchist violence, fears of the anarchist peril are particularly visible in the latter source base in which middle- and upper-class professionals were having a conversation with themselves about the nature of industrial relations and the role of foreign ideas and foreign peoples in this conflicted setting.

For many social commentators who found themselves struggling to make sense of the troubling violence between 1886 and 1908, anarchist acts seemed a symptom of a civilization in crisis resulting from the profound changes that the United States had undergone during the second industrial revolution. Even before the Haymarket bombing, Lyman Abbott warned his readers about the danger of anarchism against civilized class relations in a November 1885 edition of Century Magazine: “In a warfare between classes for the possession of property, civilization has every advantage. In a warfare by anarchy against all property, the anarchist has every advantage.”35 Ely’s 1886 observation that “a marvellous war is now being waged in the heart of modern civilization”36 grew grimmer by 1893 as Ely was describing anarchism as “the most dangerous theory which civilization has ever had to encounter.”37 Historian Gail Bederman argues that “civilization” was used to “legitimate different sorts of claims to power.” Middle- and upper-class men in particular “used this term in order to maintain their class, gender and racial authority, whether they invoked primitive masculinity or civilized manliness.”38 Those who had the power to sway public opinion frequently used a language of idleness, cowardliness and foreignness to explain how anarchist violence could take place within civilized society; quite simply these traits were associated with immigrants, aliens and outsiders. For example, in January 1886, General George McClellan argued to the readers of Harper’s New Monthly Magazine: “It is idle to close our eyes to the fact that there now

35 Abbott was adamant that “repression is not the remedy” and championed democratic values and reforms to give the laborer a greater stake in society. Lyman Abbott, “Danger Ahead,” Century Magazine 31 (November 1885): 51-59.
36 Ely, Labor Movement in America, 265.
exists in certain localities an element, mostly imported from abroad, fraught with danger to order and well-being unless firmly and wisely controlled.” McClellan suggested that the greatest threat

…will come, not from the true working-men, but from those who do not labor and do not intend to do so, but prefer to gain an easy living by misleading and deceiving the true working-men, and, emulating the wreckers of by-gone times, seek with their false lights to lure the ship of society upon the rocks of anarchy and atheism.\footnote{Ibid., 298.}

The fear that imported people and foreign ideas were to blame for the chaotic industrial relations in America was widespread. John Higham was among the first historians to identify the “distinctly modern aspect” of nativism in linking working-class struggle with foreign ideas and agitators.\footnote{Ibid., 30, 54.} The growing presence of unassimilated immigrant communities became a source of anxiety for many American citizens who feared that immigrants were now invading American cities and that their savage ways might have already overrun these centres of civilization.

In order to locate this dissertation within its historical context, Chapter One “Shots Fired in the Class War: Violent Deeds from a Violent Time,” situates acts of anarchist violence within the landscape of growing industrial unrest in the United States. Propaganda by Deed was, above all, a class critique, and its accompanying violence was repeatedly interpreted as examples of, or harbingers of, a war between the classes. Social elites like Jay Gould; academics like Edward Bemis, David Starr Jordan, and T.S Adams; police officials like Chicago’s Chief George Shippy; religious leaders like Chancellor Edward Dunne; as well as scores of journalists writing in diverse publications, from the socialist Appeal to Reason to Edward Bellamy’s New Nation to the conservative Chicago Daily Tribune and New York Times all dabbled in a language of class war to explain industrial unrest and anarchist violence. Within the anarchist ranks, responses to the violence varied considerably, but looking at a narrow segment in the movement, the anarchist-communists Alexander Berkman and Emma Goldman, illuminates how radicals

\footnote{McClellan warned, “A few hours control in our large cities by these madmen might cause almost irreparable damage.” George McClellan, “The Militia and the Army,” Harper’s New Monthly Magazine 72:428 (January 1886): 297.}
were also engaged in a nuanced conversation about who was an appropriate target for Propaganda by Deed, and whether acts of terrorism were even associated with the movement’s objectives. However, if anarchist assassins intended their acts to be rallying moments of solidarity leading to class-consciousness, such was rarely the result as anarchist violence had a dramatic impact on industrial relations.

Chapter Two, “Unseeing Eyes: Searching for Conspiracy,” picks up with the investigations that followed perceived acts of anarchist violence, focusing on how institutions of law, order and social control developed in response to industrial unrest and fears of widespread anarchist conspiracies. In particular, urban municipal police forces, private detective agencies, state militias, and federal institutions like the Secret Service rapidly evolved through this period to meet the needs of the second industrial revolution, but along the way they were all challenged by the anarchist peril. Looking closely at the private files and public declarations of agents of law and order, Chapter Two investigates how journalists and law enforcement professionals fixated on widespread anarchist conspiracies as they became caught up in the culture of fear that they helped to generate in the first place. But at the same time, reporters and police looked closely at the anarchist body for evidence to exclude it from the laboring classes. Anarchists’ lack of musculature and their perceived difference from the ideal type of the worker were used to construct them as idle and to blunt their class critiques. Further, anarchists were discredited through gendered critiques that emphasised their cowardliness and, above all else, the perpetrators of these crimes were depicted as foreign to the American nation. Anarchists were thus presented to American audiences as radically ‘other’ in an effort to mute the motivations behind their propaganda and to disrupt the spread of the anarchist peril in immigrant and laboring communities.

Chapter Three “Ordering Chaos: Legal and Legislative Responses to Anarchism,” follows the story from the 1886 Haymarket conspiracy trial to the 1908 Alia murder trial as the violence of Propaganda by Deed was reordered within the civilized display of the courtroom, and also investigates how the inadequacies of the trials necessitated new laws to respond to anarchist peril. Looking closely at trial transcripts, evidence from participants, and journalists who covered the proceedings demonstrates how court officials developed a series of strategies to vilify anarchists and to mute the class-based
politics of their deeds. In prosecuting these cases, state attorneys constructed the defendants as either participants in a vast conspiracy or as misguided tools of anarchist propagandists while repeating constructions of their foreignness, idleness, and cowardliness. The defendants themselves also had the opportunity to clarify their innocence or add propaganda to their deeds. However, over time, the trials allowed less and less space for anarchists’ dissenting voices. Yet the courtroom was not the only place to combat the anarchist peril since state and federal legislative proposals were drafted to curb the tide of anarchist activity. This incipient crisis needed novel solutions, and several legislative projects gained momentum between the 1880s and 1908, reforming existing immigration, naturalization, and deportation laws, but also drafting new laws that focused on the suppression of free speech, public assembly and the right to bear arms. Advocating for legislative changes along these lines amounted to a two-fold plan to solve the problem of anarchy. On the one hand, the augmented powers of local and state police would silence anarchists within the United States, while on the other hand, federal agencies would cut off anarchism from its “foreign” sources. However, despite the construction of anarchism’s foreign roots, deep-seeded xenophobia prevented the United States from cooperating internationally to supress the global threat of anarchist violence.

Finally, Chapter Four “Rituals of Mourning, Spectacles of Death,” contrasts mourning of the victims of anarchist violence with the executions of convicted terrorists and accompanying acts of vigilante justice against anarchists and their sympathizers. Within their historical moment, anarchists and their critics looked to gender norms of their day to interpret anarchist violence. As Michael Kimmel writes, manliness “implied that one possessed certain abstract qualities such as courage, bravery, and power, often demonstrated through the domination of – and refusal to be dominated by – women and weaker men.”42 Strike activity, protest demonstrations, and terrorist attacks defended the worker’s manhood from the assault of industrial capitalism. Anarchists also constructed a masculinized culture of the martyr who sacrificed himself for the good of the people. As historian Margaret Marsh writes of the gendered implications of Propaganda by Deed, “Anarchist terror existed mostly in the realm of fantasy, and that realm was largely a

male one.” But vigilante violence, like anarchist violence, had the potential to undermine public confidence in the authority of the state. By combining Bederman’s overlapping gendered terms of a “civilized manliness” that mourned victims and desired orderly state executions, and a “primitive masculinity” that sought redemptive violence against anarchists and their sympathizers, clarifies the complicated role of gender and violence in reaffirming support for the nation-building project between 1886 and 1908. Since few were allowed to witness the executions or participate in vigilante violence, sensationalized narratives of these events satiated violent desires by presenting savage responses to anarchist violence within the orderly columns of newspapers, like the New York Times, through the civilized act of reading. The appearances of symbolic death spectacles in popular culture were another cathartic release that pacified the primitive masculinity of unruly citizens.

By focusing on the role of anarchist violence between 1886 and 1908, The Anarchist Peril becomes both a study of dissent and a diagnostic assessment of power in turn-of-the-century America as it was articulated and naturalized through social constructions of class, gender, and foreignness by journalists, policemen, court officials, legislators, capitalists, and even the anarchists themselves. My subject, therefore, is the cultural history of anarchist violence as it was structured by gendered, racialized, and class-based ways of seeing. I am more interested in a cultural analysis of anarchist violence than a social history of the anarchist movement because there is much that can be gained from learning how fears of anarchist violence were manipulated to consolidate state power and naturalize social constructions. In this endeavour, the handling of fear in public spectacles and in written words is significant to understand both anarchist outrages and the punishments levied against their perpetrators, because it explains many of the tensions and anxieties of American society at the turn of the century.

44 Bederman, Manliness and Civilization, 23.
Chapter One
Shots Fired in the Class War: Violent Deeds from a Violent Time.

As the nation transitioned towards a second wave of industrial capitalism in the decades around the turn of the twentieth century, class relations dramatically changed in the United States. The nation’s class structure, which had been relatively fluid until the late nineteenth century, went through remarkable change with the move from farm to factory, the rapid expansion of wage labor, the explosive growth of cities, and a marked increase in immigration. In a country that had once been dominated and defined by preindustrial republican groups and ideals, a modern working class emerged in just over fifty years of industrial growth.¹ But despite the tremendous prosperity and expanding national market, America’s late-nineteenth-century economic growth was profoundly unstable. Economic instability led to social unrest, which led to protest movements, which were sometimes accompanied by assassinations and bombings. When violence did occur, journalists, social elites, reformers, and anarchists often interpreted these events in the context of a growing war between the classes. While a few anarchists did endorse violence as a means of social change, the larger labor movement often lost ground in industrial relations while both unions and radicals were blamed for the wider systemic violence that accompanied the transition to industrial capitalism.

Part of the pain of industrial change was that industrialization had necessitated a concentration of people in urban centers to provide labor for the growing manufacturing sector of the economy. While shifting citizens from rural areas into urban centers was one source of labor, attracting immigrants from around the globe was essential to the success of the new industrial order. Between 1860 and 1890, ten million immigrants came to the United States, as part of what scholars have termed “the largest world wide population movement in human history.”² As the flow of immigration increased in the closing

decades of the nineteenth century, anxiety over its effect on American society intensified. These anxieties deepened as native-born Americans and immigrants alike experienced a series of national economic upheavals.

These troubling economic downturns in the American economy were interpreted by political elites and social reformers as resulting from two problems that offset the gains of industrialization: overproduction and under-consumption, both of which fostered imperial ideals. As manufacturing and resources extraction increased, consumption in the domestic market could not absorb the growing productive capacity of industry. Increasing consumption capacity in the United States required reforming industrial capitalism’s conception of labor; wages needed to rise and profits to decline. For some reformers, and many anarchists, giving workers adequate means to afford what they produced seemed like a viable solution. However, those in positions of power instead leaned towards addressing the problem of overproduction by finding new foreign markets in which to sell American goods. Although trading partners alleviated some of the pressures of overproduction, it was difficult to secure favorable trade conditions; the tariffs imposed to protect American producers were in turn met by foreign tariffs that increased the price of American goods in foreign markets. Thus, the turn of the century was also an imperial era, and the newly industrialized nation began to search out markets free from trade restrictions in order to stabilize the economy. This quest for external expansion was spurred on by the United States Census Bureau’s calculation in 1890 of an end to the distinct frontier between settled and unsettled lands in the continental United States, seemingly bringing to a close three centuries of internal expansion.³ While at times imperial ambitions served as a distraction from domestic unrest and class tensions, which had resulted from the uneven development of industrialization, they were not a solution to these problems.

One unstable aspect of American industrial growth that contributed to the rise of civil unrest was the influence manufacturing had on the economy and the widespread effects this had on wages in urbanizing areas. Emerging factories and resource extraction

industries had to pay the high operating costs of continuous production. When production outstripped demand, corporations aggressively cut prices of their products and costs of production, including wages. By the close of the nineteenth century, many of the native-born and immigrant workers who labored in this new industrial order began to voice disapproval at the disparity between those who did, and those who did not, reap the benefits of industrial capitalism.

Increasingly in this period, trade unions and employers’ associations disputed issues between employers and employees. Collective action on the part of labour unions was typified by protests, which were often violently suppressed by employers and their state allies. In response, labor organizations mushroomed in the 1880s and 1890s. The Knights of Labor, American Federation of Labor (AFL), Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers (AAISW), and the Western Federation of Miners (WFM) all originated in these two decades. For most of these labor organizations, the strike was a major weapon to counteract the power of employers, and, in case after case, violence broke out during strikes. Labor organizations alone were not to blame for this violence. Other conditions, such as the unyielding attitude of employers in regards to wages, hours, and working conditions stimulated violent sentiments among workers and gave further impetus to their desire to unionize and use collective action. Union membership, which expanded with labor organizations around the turn of the twentieth century, agitated workers in a period already marked by heightened levels of violence by employers who were resistant to union objectives. Employers responded by beginning the open-shop campaign, a movement “without exception hostile” to unions.4 George E. Barnett commented in 1906 on the increasing violence in American industrial relations writing “the difference between the strike of 1880 and that of 1905 is the difference between guerrilla warfare and a pitched battle.”5 Thus, the inabilitys of unions and employers’

4 From the employers’ perspective, when unions “secured the control of a majority of the skilled men in their industries they forced employers to sign uniform scales. When the scales were once signed the labor business was at an end. The unions had the men, the men were necessary to the industry, and the customer could in most cases be made to bear the cost.... an unequal contest between hundreds of workmen, organized and controlled by the union, and a few foremen and the superintendent in the employer’s service,” see: William English Walling, “Can Labor Unions Be Destroyed?” World’s Work 8:1 (May 1904): 4755-4758.

associations to resolve the inequities of industrial capitalism were harbingers of class war in the United States.

This period of dramatic economic transformation in American history was accompanied by an intensification of what some sectors of contemporary society described as a class war. The language of class war was used by business and social elites to discredit labor protest, the labor movement referenced class war when chastising employer’s use of violence, and reformers drew from both arguments to comment with concern about the violence intrinsic to industrial relations in this period. Finally, for a small group of radical anarchists, references to the class war were deployed in the hopes of sparking a working-class revolution against industrial capitalism. Between 1886 and 1908, individual radicals engaged in a terrorist campaign against business interests and their state allies in the name of the working class. This class war, therefore, was a series of disconnected attacks in the nation’s industrial centers; a conflict that was unlike the preceding set piece battles of the Civil War, whose veterans sometimes found themselves on opposing sides of early battle grounds of the class war, and likewise dissimilar from the conventional warfare that the United States would wage during the Spanish American War in 1898. This chapter will focus on individual acts of terrorist violence that occurred within periods of industrial unrest: the Haymarket bombing in 1886, the attempted assassination of industrialist Henry Clay Frick in 1892, the successful assassinations of President William McKinley in 1901 and former Governor of Idaho Frank Steunenberg in 1905, and finally a series of violent events in 1908. Following on the language of some contemporaries, I use the term class war to refer to violent class conflict in this period and argue that although these violent occurrences differed substantially in their specific motivation, taken together they were seen by various segments of society to represent poignant examples of the class war in the United States.

The Haymarket Bombing, 1886

The economic depression of the early 1880s and the accompanying drastic wage cuts led to labor unrest and growing class tensions that ultimately culminated in the Chicago Haymarket Bombing of 1886. At the forefront of the labor movement was the Knights of Labor, who reached out to a cross-class constituency from a base of artisans and coal miners, which included small shopkeepers, a few manufacturers, and a growing
factory proletariat, by appealing to the labouring classes as both citizens and producers. The Knights’ moralistic republican message allowed for unity among its diverse constituency, which grew to over 700,000 members by 1886. As its membership grew, the Knights supported the shorter working day as a means to address underemployment and to encourage social uplift for the working class. Agitation over the Eight Hour Day brought the Knights together with more radical labor agitators, including anarchists, many of whom remained committed to the idea of unions as vital organizations in the restructuring of capitalist society. Even though workers in the United States had been fighting for the Eight Hour Day for decades, many anarchists saw the Eight Hour Day as a promising political cause but questioned whether speaking of hours at all implied an acceptance of the wage system. In 1884, the labor movement under the auspice of the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions, precursor to the AFL, resolved during a convention in Chicago that the legal working day be reduced to 8 hours after May 1st 1886.

As the date approached and the labor movement prepared for strikes and boycotts, some businessmen increasingly warned of a class war to discredit the labor movement. Social elites, like railway magnate Jay Gould, warned that the labor movement, and the Knights of Labor in particular, “seeks practically to plunge the country into a civil war.” Gould’s comments echoed a wide array of concerns that union resistance to industrial capitalism would inevitably lead to violence, to which Gould added his particularly extreme view of resolving class conflict: “I can hire one-half of the working class to kill the other half.” Despite Gould’s comments, on May 1st three hundred thousand workers

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nationwide demonstrated to secure the eight-hour workday. Chicago quickly became a central battleground in the fight for the Eight Hour Day after approximately forty thousand of the city’s workers participated in the protest movement.

Social historian Bruce Nelson has argued that in periods of intense agitation, such as in 1877 during the Great Upheaval and in 1886, “class overwhelmed fragmentation in Chicago. Those events cannot be seen as spasms, triggered by panic and depression. Between 1870 and 1886 Chicago’s working class increasingly acted in class ways.”

Within this charged climate, radical agitators gained an increasing audience among the city’s workers and mass rallies of workers frequently clashed with Chicago’s police force. It did not take long for clashes between the workers’ movement and city authorities to result in casualties. On May 3rd 1886, when violence broke out along a picket line between strikers and replacement workers at the McCormick Reaper Works, police were dispatched to the scene where they met a hail of stones from the strikers. In retaliation, the police drew their revolvers and fired into the crowd, killing four protestors and wounding many others. Anarchist and labor agitator August Spies witnessed that fatal violence and rushed to his newspaper office to prepare and issue a call for revenge under the bold headline: “Workingmen, arm yourselves and appear in full force.”

On the evening of May 4th, 1886, anarchist agitators organized a rally at Haymarket Square to denounce the police violence of the previous day. Prominent anarchist orators addressed the multilingual audience. The last speaker, Samuel Fielden, addressed the audience in German and urged them in typical anarchist rhetoric to “throttle” and “kill” the law that enslaved them, and to “impede its progress.” If not, he continued: “It will kill you.” Plainclothes detectives who were milling through the crowd reported these remarks to Chicago Police Inspector John Bonfield and convinced

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him to hurry his assembled force of 170 policemen toward the rally. Arriving on the scene, Captain William Ward commanded, “In the name of the people of the state of Illinois,” that the meeting disperse “immediately and peaceably.” Fielden, from his perspective on the speaker’s wagon, insisted that the gathering was peaceable and was bewildered at the appearance of the police at the close of an apparently anticlimactic meeting and among a crowd that that seemed to be dispersing on its own.

Workers and police eyed each other in an increasingly familiar standoff in the class conflict in the United States. Then something unusual happened: the eerie incandescence of a sputtering red fuse illuminated the crowded square for an instant as a small projectile arched through the night air and landed amidst the orderly ranks of policemen. Pandemonium followed the explosion. A reporter for the Chicago Daily News, Paul Hull, described his terror in being caught up in these events:

> The bullets buzzed like bees and the clubs cracked on human skulls. I was acquainted with every officer, and I hoped they would know my face – white enough, probably, to show well in the darkness. I expected, every instant, to feel a bullet in my flesh before they would have recognized me.  

The riot lasted approximately five minutes. Police emptied their pistols into the crowd and each other, causing the eventual death of eight officers and an unknown number of civilians, and injuries to another eighty or ninety civilians and police.

Although this was not the first blood spilled in the escalating class war in the United States, May 4th, 1886 marked the arrival of sensational, anarchist-inspired political violence in urban America. When the Great Uprising of 1877 had reached

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15 Officer Mathias Degan was wounded by a bomb fragment through an artery in his left side and died moments later in the police station; officers George Mueller and John J. Barrett died on May 6th, officer Timothy Flavin died on May 8th, officer Michael Sheehan died on May 9th, officer Thomas Redden died on May 16, officer Nils Hansen died on June 14, and officer Timothy Sullivan died two years later. As historian Paul Avrich demonstrates, with the exception of Degan, most injuries were caused by bullets rather than bomb fragments, raising the possibility that some of the victims may have been shot by fellow police officers, see: Paul Avrich, *The Haymarket Tragedy* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), 206-210; for modern forensic evidence of the bomb fragments used in the Haymarket investigation, see: Timothy Messer-Kruse, James Eckert Jr., Pannee Burkel, and Jeffery Dunn, “The Haymarket Bomb: Reassessing the Evidence,” *Labor: Studies in Working-Class History of the Americas* 2:2 (summer 2005): 39-51; and following retort by labor historian Bryan Palmer, “CSI Labor History: Haymarket and the Forensics of Forgetting,” *Labor: Studies in Working-Class History of the Americas* 3:1 (spring 2006): 25-40.
Chicago, it resulted in a citywide general strike, with roving groups of strikers sweeping through the city’s industrial areas calling out to workers. Bolstered by aid from Chicago’s bankers, lawyers, and merchants, city officials responded with force, organizing squads of special police to suppress the strikers. Between 1876 and 1878, the decade-long troubles with the Molly Maguires, a secret organization of Irish miners who fought their employers with assassination and violence in the coal fields of eastern Pennsylvania, resulted in the execution of nineteen for crimes of arson, violence, assault and murder.

Writing in the socialist magazine *Appeal to Reason*, Eugene Debs argued that the Mollies “who perished upon the scaffold were labor leaders…. The first martyrs to the class struggle in the United States.” In this era of violence and class tensions, historian Bruce Nelson concludes the 1886 “bomb and riot may have been shocking, but they were not unexpected.” While the 1877 national strike and the Molly Maguires were suppressed through state violence, however, reformers like Richard Ely feared the role of the Haymarket bombing in encouraging future acts of domestic terrorism and serves to contextualize his concerns of the “sympathy among workingmen for the Chicago Anarchists.”

The bomb that exploded in Haymarket Square cast a contentious shadow over the Eight Hour Movement, and the Knights struggled to understand the implications of the violence that they did not support. Even scholars of the topic disagree about the impact of the Haymarket bombing on the Eight Hour Movement. Labor historian Selig Perlman

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suggests that the Eight Hour Movement “assumed larger proportions in Chicago than elsewhere in the country and the outcome probably would have been proportionally successful, had it not been for the tragic event of the fourth of May.” This sentiment has been refuted by Bruce Nelson who convincingly argues that “As early as May 2, two days before the Haymarket bombing, the Eight Hour Association felt it had lost control of the movement; that same day the Trade and Labor Assembly discussed abandoning its demands. The bomb exploded before either could abdicate.” Whether the Eight Hour Movement would have achieved its objectives is debatable, but the results of the violence in Haymarket Square had disastrous results for the Eight Hour Day. Three weeks after the bomb exploded, the labor periodical Knights of Labor advised its readers to “settle your difficulties the best you can and return to work” and on June 5th it conceded to “the general failure of the eight hour movement.” By the end of 1886, only 15,000 of the 80,000 workers who had struck in May retained the shortened day.

The violent resistance to the Eight Hour Movement and the bomb blast in Chicago served to further shatter the traditional republican myth of harmonious class relations in the United States. The Haymarket bombing also changed the way many Americans interpreted anarchism. Prior to 1886 anarchism seemed to the few who had gone in search of it to be a utopian movement that was out of step with the dominant republican ideals of America and would remain relegated to the margins of American political discourse. After the Haymarket bombing, however, a generation of anarchists were inspired by the use of terror to counteract the intensification of the class war in the United States, and it was only a matter of time before anarchist violence would again appear in newspaper headlines across the nation.

**Attempted Assassination of Henry Clay Frick, 1892**

One of the next violent flashpoints in the class war that accompanied the industrial transformation of the United States occurred in Homestead, Pennsylvania, a vital center of the steel and iron industry. A powerful corporation, the Carnegie Steel Company, and an established union, the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel

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23 *Knights of Labor* (May 22, 1886), 2; *Knights of Labor* (June 5, 1886), 2.
Workers (AAISW), were the opposing parties in this conflict. Both organizations were products of the tremendous expansion of the iron and steel industry, essential materials of industrialization, in an era when the United States was emerging as their largest producer worldwide. The growing iron and steel industries were propelled by innovations in the techniques of production, transformations in business organization, influence of government agencies, and substantial changes to the character of the workforce, all of which had significant consequences for the industrial labor market in Homestead.

As with most manufacturing and resource extraction industries, dramatic changes in methods and machinery displaced skilled workers with less expensive wage laborers, who increasingly were immigrants. As the proportion of skilled steel workers decreased, blast furnaces like the Homestead plant increased their production capacity and employed a larger workforce than ever before, consisting of semi-skilled and unskilled labourers. The growing employment opportunities for unskilled laborers attracted many new immigrants to the area. An 1890 census revealed that of the 7,911 residents of the Homestead community, 31% were foreign born and 62% were of foreign parentage. A contemporary observer of the industry, John Fitch, commented in 1894 that “the demand for unskilled labor in the steel industry has made Pittsburgh, during the last dozen years especially, a veritable Mecca to the immigrant.”

On the streets of Homestead, like so many towns and cities at this time, Americans of several generations mixed with recently arrived immigrants from Southern and Eastern Europe.

Recent immigrants had little chance of securing the higher paying skilled jobs in the steel industry because the most skilled workers were typically native-born white citizens who were affiliated with labor unions. In the Homestead plant they were members of the dominant labor organization of the iron and steel industries, the AAISW. The union’s membership, financial resources, and collective agreements gave it a claim to recognition as the strongest labor organization in the country, enrolling about one tenth of the total number of workers in unions of the American Federation of Labor. At the

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Homestead plant, only about one quarter of the most skilled workers of the 3,800 workforce were members of AAISW, which had been recognized as the bargaining unit in July 1889.

The controlling partner of the newly incorporated Carnegie Steel Company, Andrew Carnegie, understood that domination of the steel market required not only the most modern technology but also absolute control over the cost of labor in the production process. To achieve this meant breaking the power of the unions that had traditionally protected skilled steel workers’ interests. This line of action was in stark contrast to Carnegie’s public position that workers should be given a larger share of the wealth they helped to create. Two widely publicized articles by Carnegie in The Forum, one before and one after the 1886 Haymarket bombing, were exceptional in their sympathy with unionism and collective bargaining.  

However, when the contract with the skilled workers represented by the AAISW at the Homestead plant came up for renewal on July 1st, 1892, Carnegie substantially deviated from his public position and drafted a notice that the Homestead works would be non-union after the expiration of the contract.  

Carnegie delegated the controversial task of de-unionizing the Homestead plant to the company superintendent, Henry Clay Frick. Frick disapproved of the public notice

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27 Carnegie attempted to distance himself from the events at Homestead, stating in 1920 that the impassioned plea of his partners kept him from the scene as he was “always disposed to yield to the demands of the men, however unreasonable…. Nothing I have ever had to meet in all my life, before or since, wounded me so deeply. No pangs remain of any wound received in my business career save that of Homestead” see: Andrew Carnegie, Autobiography of Andrew Carnegie (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1920) 228, 232. However, James Bridge, in his 1903 insiders account of the Carnegie firm, places the responsibility for the anti-union policy on Carnegie by reproducing the draft of a notice to the Homestead employees written by Andrew Carnegie on April 4, 1892, see: James H. Bridge, Inside History of Carnegie Steel Company: An Inside Review of its Humble Origin and Impressive Growth (New York: Aldine Book Company, 1903), 204; on page 205, is a reproduction of a letter from Carnegie dated June 10, 1892 in which he advises that conferences with the AASIW should be refused.

suggested by Carnegie, and devised a subtler strategy. While reassuring representatives of the AAISW that negotiation would continue, Frick secretly contacted the Pinkerton Detective Agency to assemble 300 armed guards and simultaneously increased production of steel plates at Homestead. Frick thereby ensured a sizable stockpile of inventory, should a strike occur, and amassed a protective force to ensure that the mill would be able to reopen with non-union workers. The growing inventory stacked on mill grounds was not the only disconcerting sight for the plant’s employees. In May, Frick called in laborers to begin construction of a tall fence of solid wood, topped by strands of barbed wire, and running three miles around the perimeter of the sprawling, 600-acre mill grounds. For many contemporary observers, such as economist Edward Bemis, “everything betokened preparation for war, or defence against attack.”29 With these precautions in place, Frick set a deadline of June 24th for the union to agree to the company’s final proposed wage reductions. When the deadline passed, Frick used the difference over wages as a justification for breaking negotiations with the AAISW. Notices, similar to those drafted by Carnegie, were posted at the recently barricaded and fully stockpiled Homestead plant. From the perspective of the Carnegie Steel Company, the AAISW no longer existed. Henceforth, the managers of the company would deal exclusively with individual workmen.

Most of the residents in the Homestead community were incensed by the course of action taken by the Carnegie Steel Company, particularly in light of the growing profits to the owners of the steel works. Although only 800 of the 3,800 workmen were enrolled union members, almost the entire workforce participated in the strike called by the AAISW in response to the steel company’s lockout. Determined to keep the plant shut down until the company would resume negotiations, on July 1st, strikers seized the mill and sealed off the town to prevent replacement workers from continuing operations. Frick’s first reaction was to request that local law enforcement intervene to allow the company to bring in outside labourers. But when the Homestead sheriff was unable to stop the union picket lines, Frick saw it within his legal rights to bring in the private guards he had already contracted for this purpose.

29 Bemis, “Homestead Strike,” 373.
In the early hours of July 6th, three hundred men from the Pinkerton Detective Agency arrived at a train station on the Ohio River just below Pittsburgh in preparation to move on Homestead. While 40 of the men were regular Pinkerton employees, 260 had enlisted in late June for an unspecified job at the Pinkerton Agency offices in New York, Philadelphia, and Chicago. As the men boarded the barges that would take them to Homestead, they found dozens of cases of provisions, including 300 pistols and 250 high-powered Winchester rifles. Placed under the command of Pinkerton Agent Fredrick H. Heinde, their orders were to occupy the plant and facilitate the introduction of non-union labor. Under the cover of darkness, the barges were towed upstream toward the Homestead plant.

Before the barges reached Homestead, union-placed sentries that surrounded the town alerted the strikers of the Pinkertons’ arrival. When the barges approached the town, nearly the whole community emerged and followed the slow moving boats along the shoreline to prevent their landing. As the Pinkerton agents neared the mill dock, the crowd broke through the fence and met the two barges. After a brief and tense standoff, both sides fired shots. Trapped on the barges, the Pinkertons fired on the shore while the Homestead community rapidly dispersed. Many strikers took up rifle positions behind the piles of steel plates stacked in the yard. After a pitched battle, in which the strikers demonstrated grim resolve in their efforts to dislodge the hired gunmen, strikers accepted the Pinkertons’ surrender at 5:00 pm. The victorious strikers led the defeated agents through the town, where many of the Pinkertons were severely mauled by strikers and their sympathizers. During this attempted landing, three Pinkertons and seven strikers were killed and many more were wounded.  

Although the violence of July 6th was temporarily successful in holding off the landing of privately funded Pinkertons, it was unable to change the outcome of the contest between the AAISW and the Carnegie Steel Company. At the renewed plea of Frick, the Governor of Pennsylvania mobilized the National Guard, ordering 7,000 troops to Homestead to pacify what appeared to many social elites as open insurrection. While battling privately funded guards seemed feasible and even justifiable to the Homestead

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strikers, the prospect of fighting the Pennsylvania National Guard was impossible. Instead, the Homestead community began elaborate preparations for a parade to meet the militia with open arms. However, the show of solidarity prepared by the Homestead community was in vain. On July 12th the militia was deployed in secret and in a matter of minutes, ninety-five rail cars deployed more than 4,000 troops at a station closer to the steel works than the Homestead station. The militia quickly secured the high ground overlooking the mill and the New York Herald publicized the Homestead community’s preparations as “The Parade That Never Was.”31 The state government had intervened to restore control of the Homestead steel mill to Henry Clay Frick. A stalwart Carnegie cabled Frick from Scotland: “All anxiety gone since know you stand firm never employ one of these rioters let grass grow over the works must not fail now you will win easily next trial only stand firm law and order wish I could support you in any form.”32

At this critical moment, when the majority of public opinion was decidedly against the actions of the Carnegie Steel Company, a young man posing as an employment agent entered Frick’s office with deadly intentions.33 At 2:00 p.m. on Saturday July 23rd, the assailant burst in on Frick and aimed a 38-caliber revolver at him. The lone attacker pulled the trigger in rapid succession. Two of the rounds misfired: one shot nicked Frick’s right ear and traveled in a downward course to lodge in his neck; a second shot also hit Frick on the left side of the neck, lodging in the left shoulder as he fell back; a third shot was diverted up into the ceiling. The assassin tossed the gun aside and lunged at Frick with a long dagger and stabbed his bloodied victim in the hip, side, and knee. Several men near the office subdued the attacker before Frick received a fatal blow. Drawn by the sound of gunshots, police Officers Crosman and McRoberts arrived to see the attacker “covered with the blood of his victim, but smil[ing] ghastly when apprehended.”34

32 Cable from Andrew Carnegie to Henry Clay Frick, (July 7, 1892) Frick Archives, Carnegie-Frick Correspondence, Box 4, Folder 1, Archives Service Centre, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA.
Once in custody, the assassin was identified as Alexander Berkman, who stated to police and reporters: “I came here from New York to kill Frick because he is an enemy of the people.” Later, in his 1912 autobiography, Berkman attempted to clarify the purpose of his violence by arguing that Frick the man was not the target, but “I aimed at the many-headed hydra whose visible representative was Frick ... it would strike terror into the soul of his class.” In both his immediate responses to police questioning and subsequent writings, Berkman justified his actions in the context of the class war in the United States and his personal belief in the valor of anarchism as “only the Anarchists dare wage war upon all and every form of wrong.” When Berkman attempted to explain his motives to an incarcerated striker he was promptly dismissed for being an outsider because “I did not belong to the Homestead men. It was none of my business.” As Berkman struggled to comprehend why the Homestead strikers did not celebrate his Propaganda by Deed, he ultimately concluded that the worker had:

No consciousness of the great mission of his class, no proud realization of the part he himself had acted in the noble struggle. A cowardly, overgrown boy, terrified at to-morrow’s punishment for the prank he has played! Merely concerned only with his own safety, and willing to resort to lying, in order to escape responsibility.

As Berkman was lamenting the lack of class-consciousness in the United States, the merit of his violence was being debated within anarchist circles. While at a public rally in New York City, leading proponent of anarchist violence Johann Most publicly denied the possibility of Berkman’s anarchist act as “probably the usual newspaper fake,” even though Most knew full well Berkman’s level of commitment to anarchist politics. Rather than support Berkman’s Propaganda by Deed to create Propaganda by Word, Most described Berkman’s assassination attempt as “inane.” Emma Goldman, who had loved both men, but was staunchly dedicated to Berkman’s cause, became so enraged at

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37 Ibid., 66.
38 Ibid., 34.
39 Ibid., 34.
40 Ibid., 77-79; Frederic Trautmann, The Voice of Terror: A Biography of Johann Most (Wesport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1980), 182.
this remark that she challenged Most at a public meeting and lashed at him with a horsewhip.\textsuperscript{41} Goldman picked up the task of Propaganda by Word and glorified Berkman as someone who “rose in mighty indignation against the horrors of wealth and power. A youth with a vision of a grand and beautiful world based upon freedom and harmony, and with boundless sympathy for the suffering of the masses. One whose deep, sensitive nature could not endure the barbarisms of our times.”\textsuperscript{42}

The implications of Berkman’s attempted assassination of Frick were also contested outside of anarchist circles, among both contemporaries and later scholars of the event. At least one prominent figure in the labor movement, Eugene V. Debs, editor of the \textit{Locomotive and Firemen’s Magazine}, was moved by the injustice of Frick’s actions to write with some sympathy about the attempted murder. While Debs had expressed little support for the Knight’s strike in 1886, and even less sympathy toward the anarchists who had been accused of throwing the bomb in Chicago, by 1892 he defended Berkman as a man of greater moral sensitivity than Frick.\textsuperscript{43} However, Debs’ opinion was in the minority. Edward Bemis of the University of Chicago noted in an 1894 article for the \textit{Journal of Political Economy} that:

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It is well known that the eight-hour movement was put back several years by the bomb-throwing of the anarchists at the Chicago Haymarket in 1886. Similarly the Homestead strikers in many ways lost some of the popular sympathy which previously was theirs by the shooting of Frick by the anarchist Berkman.\textsuperscript{44}
\end{quote}

Reporter Arthur Burgoyne argued in his 1893 account that, “the attempt to murder Mr. Frick served to hasten the defeat of the workingmen. The courage displayed by the Carnegie Chairman won him admiration in quarters where he had previously been condemned.”\textsuperscript{45} John A. Fitch, sympathetic to the workingmen of Homestead, stressed in 1911 that the attack had been carried out “by an anarchist from New York, a stranger in Pittsburgh and a stranger to the Amalgamated Association,” and, at the very least,

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\textsuperscript{43} Nick Salvatore, \textit{Eugene V. Debs: Citizen and Socialist} (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2007), 70, 100.
\textsuperscript{44} Bemis, “Homestead Strike,” 386, 395-396.
\textsuperscript{45} Burgoyne, \textit{Homestead Strike of 1892}, 151.
\end{flushright}
“served to cloud the situation.” Historians have also debated the role of Berkman’s attack on the Homestead lockout. Henry David noted that Berkman’s “deed appears to have had no discernible influence on the outcome of the strike,” while Paul Krause is more direct in his assessment of the effects of Berkman’s attack, calling it a “foolish attempt to kill Frick that led directly to the demise of the steelworkers’ resistance.”

Whether the arrival of the militia or the attack on Frick was the decisive turning point, the result of these two events led to a rapid decline for the AAISW’s position. Under the cover of military protection from the National Guard, a recovering Frick was able to partially open the Homestead plant on July 27th with 700 new men. By mid-October there were two thousand men at work in the plant; about one fifth were former employees. On November 17th, some two thousand labourers and mechanics, who had stood firm with the AAISW, met and voted to petition the AAISW to end the strike. The union members rejected the proposal, voting 224-129 to continue, but in a separate action that amounted to capitulation, the union gave notice to the labourers and mechanics that they were free to deal with the company as they pleased. The morning after the vote, the labourers and mechanics returned to their jobs at the mill. As the processing of individual employees took place, the steadily recovering Henry Clay Frick was on hand. Frick wrote to Carnegie about the events: “We shall be able to get closer to our men, and when they once become acquainted with us they will find that we are probably about the best friends they have.” On November 20th, after 143 days, the AAISW declared the strike over.

The most profound effect of the epic Homestead struggle was the setback to unionization within the steel industry. As Selig Perlman argued in 1918, “the Homestead strike forcibly demonstrated the unconquerable fighting strength of the modern large

46 Fitch, *Steel Workers*, 123.
48 Cable from Henry Clay Frick to Andrew Carnegie, (September 10, 1892), Frick Archives, Carnegie-Frick Correspondence, Box 4, Folder 4, Archives Service Centre, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA.
49 Cable from Henry Clay Frick to Andrew Carnegie, (August 17, 1892), Frick Archives, Carnegie-Frick Correspondence, Box 4, Folder 3, Archives Service Centre, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA.
The Carnegie Steel Company took the Homestead strike as an opportunity to break with the union at all of their plants so that from this time onward the AAISW was steadily pushed out of the steel industry. There were other consequences as well. Within a year of the strike’s failure, wages for many skilled workers had fallen by more than half and workers found themselves earning hourly wages set by the company. The Eight Hour Day was lost as shifts reverted to twelve hours and the plant operated seven days a week. According to Fitch, the last union lodge within a U.S. steel plant surrendered its charter in 1903. None would exist again until 1937.

Although the Homestead struggle was lost by the AAISW, its implication for the class war in the United States did not go unnoticed. The New Nation, journal of Edward Bellamy’s Nationalist movement, declared:

The Homestead Strike is dead, but its soul goes marching on. The shots fired that July morning at the Pinkerton barges, like the shots fired at Lexington... were ‘heard around the world.’ The dramatic series of events at [Homestead]... roused millions of American citizens, as no amount of books or lectures could have done, to realize that there is an industrial problem which, if it be not soon solved by ballots, will be settled by bullets.

General of the Pennsylvania National Guard, George Snowden, had less faith in the political process. From his perspective in the militia encampment overlooking the Homestead works, Snowden, quoted in the National Labor Tribune, said: “To my mind it is very evident that the authorities of the state will eventually have to join in actual battle with anarchy and the commune.” Much like the Haymarket bombing, the attempted assassination of Frick illustrated how easily labor unrest could escalate into bombings or assassination and how journalists, industrial elites, social reformers and segments of the anarchist movement increasingly interpreted labor unrest through a lens of class war.

51 Perlman, History of Labour, 499.
52 For an illustrated popular press account that details working hours and conditions following the strike and quotes one wage worker as saying the strike was “all foolishness; you can’t do anything that way. The tonnage men brought it on; they could afford to strike, but we couldn’t,” see: Hamlin Garland, “Homestead and Its Perilous Trades,” McClure’s 3:1 (June 1894): 2-20; this article was followed the next month by a mill worker’s account of the exhausting labor of a twelve hour shift, see: L. W., “Homestead as Seen By One of Its Workmen,” McClure’s 3:2 (July 1894): 163-169; for a longer view of the implications of the Homestead strike on the steel industry in the two decades that followed, see: Fitch, Steel Workers, 132; David Brody, Steelworkers in America: The Nonunion Era (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1960).
54 “General Snowden, He Proposes to Suppress the People of the United States at the Point of the Bayonet,” National Labor Tribune (August 27, 1892): 2.
Assassination of President William McKinley, 1901

In addition to the shocking attempted assassination of Frick, American fears of anarchist violence in the United States were accentuated by newspaper accounts of similar events in Europe. Just weeks after the Homestead Lockout, an anarchist named Francois-Claudius Ravachol placed bombs in the private residences of two French magistrates who had convicted anarchists in France. Although no one was killed, Ravachol was executed for his two terrorist bombings on July 11th, 1892. On December 9th, 1893 Auguste Vaillant tossed a bomb filled with iron nails into the French Chamber of Deputies. Vaillant’s actions injured himself and several Deputies but caused no fatalities. Within a week of Valliant’s execution, an 18-year-old, Emile Henry, avenged him by tossing bombs into a crowded station café in Paris on February 5th, 1894, killing one and injuring twenty. 55 Similarly, Spanish government officials attributed terrorist violence to anarchists when, on November 7, two bombs exploded in a crowded Barcelona opera house. Although there was little evidence to connect the violence to anarchists, Spanish authorities lashed out at known revolutionaries. 56 As news of the Barcelona bombing reached the United States, the Evening World reported it on the day it happened with the front-page headline: “Bombs in a Theatre, Anarchists Cast Deadly Missiles into an Audience.” 57

American newspapers continued to bring sensational news of anarchist violence while the assassination of European leaders picked up considerably in the last decade of

the nineteenth century. Anarchists of Italian descent gained notoriety as the great regicides of Europe and, like Alexander Berkman, they used the dagger and pistol rather than the terror of the dynamite bomb. In 1894 the President of France would be the first assassinated ruler of the 1890s, closely followed by the murders of the Prime Minister of Spain in 1897, the Empress of Austria in 1898, and the King of Italy in 1900. In less than a decade, anarchist assassins murdered four European heads of state.

Although American press coverage of these events was overwhelmingly sympathetic to European nations, the murder of Spanish Prime Minister Canovas in 1897 was the exception as the U.S and Spain moved closer towards war over the Cuban insurrection against Spanish colonial rule. The *New York Times* published sabre-rattling comments from the Republican Senator from Arizona, William Stewart, who explicitly connected Canovas to the suppression of anarchism in Spain and events in Cuba:

> It is very evident that the Anarchists got the worst man they could find to wreak their vengeance on. The Barcelona trials and the Cuban atrocities are the legitimate parents of Anarchy on the principle that crime produces crime.

These comments were articulated at a time when Spanish and American diplomatic relations were tense – so tense that they resulted in the Spanish-American War of 1898. As imperialist ambitions gained momentum in the United States, American troops found themselves fighting a war against Spain on the distant islands of Cuba, Puerto Rico,

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60 “Senator Stewart’s Views: Spain’s Acts of Cruelty,” *New York Times* (August 10, 1897): 2. Indeed, Richard Bach Jensen provides evidence to suggest that the leaders of the Cuban exiles in Paris, eager to undermine the Spanish government and hasten the island’s independence, probably gave Angiolillo the funds and idea of assassinating Prime Minister Canovas, rather than the queen regent or her son, as had earlier been his intention. Jensen, “Daggers, Rifles and Dynamite,” 137.

61 Even before the assassination of Canovas, American strategists from the Naval War College, the Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI), and various other branches of naval administration had already drafted three war plans between 1896 and 1897 that offered several courses of action against Spain. John A. S. Grenville, “American Naval Preparations for War with Spain, 1896-1898,” *Journal of American Studies* 2 (April 1968): 33-47.
Guam, and the Philippines. When the war ended, Americans began to debate their role in relation to the newly liberated inhabitants of these islands. In 1899, Theodore Roosevelt noted in *The Strenuous Life* that:

> Many of the people are utterly unfit for self-government, and show no signs of becoming fit. Others may in time become fit, but at present can only take part in self-government under wise supervision, at once firm and beneficent. We have driven Spanish tyranny from the islands. If we now let it be replaced by savage anarchy, our work has been for harm and not for good.

In the absence of Spanish tyranny, Roosevelt feared the intensification of the savage anarchy that seemed to be undermining many European nations. Haymarket and Homestead revealed that anarchist violence was a recurring phenomena in American industrial relations, and Roosevelt would play a key role in combating anarchism in the coming decade. But by the turn of the century, even as imperialism sought new markets to stabilize industrial growth, many elites feared the role of anarchy in unravelling the gains of American civilization.

The assassination of King Humbert of Italy in July 1900 had even greater resonance in the United States when the press reported that the assassin had been working in America and had only travelled to Italy on May 22nd, 1900. Italian police identified Humbert’s assassin as Gaetano Bresci, who had emigrated from Italy to the United States and had been living in Paterson, New Jersey. The *New York Times* expressed fears that Bresci “might have had just as coherent a motive for taking President McKinley’s life.” These fears were well grounded since the events at Haymarket and Homestead made clear that the United States was as susceptible to anarchist violence as European nations, but also because of the relatively recent assassinations of Republican Presidents.

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Lincoln in 1865 and James Garfield in 1882 deepened concerns about the safety of the President of the United States.

News of these assassinations of European political leaders came at a time of domestic instability in the United States. The economic depression that broke out in 1893 fuelled an insurgent Populist movement that challenged the Republican Party and its close association with business interests. The proportionally shrinking number of rural inhabitants of the United States began to articulate their own critique of industrial capitalism by supporting the emerging Populist Party. With the support of individuals like Tom Watson of Georgia, spokesman for poor southern farmers, and Eugene Debs, defender of the industrial working class, the populist coalition seemed to offer a progressive alternative to industrial capitalism.

William McKinley, in contrast, was the ideal Republican candidate to keep business interests at the forefront of American government. McKinley had served as a congressman, in which post his most significant accomplishment was to author the McKinley Tariff Bill of 1890. Subsequent to his congressional appointment, he served two terms as Governor of Ohio before being selected to run in the 1896 presidential election. Although McKinley’s campaign fostered a benevolent attitude toward the working class, the Republican strategy was almost entirely based on topics of business interests, such as tariffs and the gold standard. Yet, McKinley’s campaign was unlike any other that had come before it. Under the supervision of the influential Republican Party boss Mark Hanna, $3.5 million was raised from corporations in the East and Midwest. This vast sum, which dwarfed any previous campaign budget in American

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history, financed parades, pamphlets, posters, buttons, and a small army of stump speakers who preached the Republican gospel while McKinley sat on his front porch in Canton, Ohio, greeting small groups brought in on reduced train tickets by Republican-leaning railroad companies.\textsuperscript{69}

McKinley’s campaign was both technologically innovative and rooted in support of big business. The 1896 campaign also roughly coincided with the début of cinematic exhibition coupled with tightly controlled newspaper coverage, establishing it as the first mass-media campaign.\textsuperscript{70} Hanna’s skilful campaign succeeded in displacing Populist critiques of industrial capitalism with an affirmation of belief in American progress. Thus, the political scientist V.O. Key noted, after a detailed investigation of the election, that

Industrial cities, in their aggregate vote at least, moved towards the Republicans in about the same degree as did the rural farming communities…. Republicans were able to place the blame for unemployment upon the Democrats and to propagate successfully the doctrine that the Republican Party was the party of prosperity and the “Full dinner pail.” On the whole, the effect apparently was to reduce the degree of coincidence of class affiliation and partisan inclination.\textsuperscript{71}

Historian Lawrence Goodwyn argues that for the Populist insurgence, “the dream of a great national party of the industrial millions” died in 1896 as a result of the national convention’s decision to soften the movement’s goals and fuse with the Democratic Party in July as well as the overwhelming Republican victory in November.\textsuperscript{72} The general return to economic posterity and a successful war against Spain in 1898 ensured McKinley’s re-election in 1900, despite the President’s decision to deploy the Army to suppress strikes in the Western mining region of Coeur d’Alene.\textsuperscript{73}

\textsuperscript{69} William D. Harpine, \textit{From the Front Porch to the Front Page: McKinley and Bryan in the 1896 Presidential Campaign} (College Station, TX: Texas A&M University Press, 2005).
\textsuperscript{71} V. O. Key, “A Theory of Critical Elections,” \textit{The Journal of Politics} 17 (February 1955): 15; Key argues that the resulting realignment in the electorate from the defeat was so demoralizing and thorough that the Democratic Party could make little headway in regrouping its forces until 1916, and the labor movement was politically weakened until 1932.
\textsuperscript{72} Goodwyn, \textit{Democratic Promise}, 493.
Just over a year after Bresci travelled to Italy to assassinate King Umberto, President McKinley travelled to the Pan-American Exposition in Buffalo, New York, in September 1901. Expositions were a profitable and recurring phenomenon of the industrializing process that allowed business and government to showcase American progress through modernization. Earlier versions of this triumphant spectacle in the United States included the 1876 Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia and the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago. Historian Robert Rydell comments that expositions also served an ideological purpose by providing a “cohesive explanatory blueprint of social experience [to]... millions of fairgoers in the wake of the industrial depressions and outbursts of class warfare that occurred between the end of Reconstruction and United States’ entry into World War I.”

The first Exposition of the new century, the Pan-American Exposition occurred in a city strategically positioned along major land and water trade routes of the Northeast – the prospering city of Buffalo, New York. This Pan-American Exposition emphasized access to new markets and resources, and, in the wake of the Spanish American War, “was designed to celebrate the ascendancy of the United States as a world power, while promoting better commercial relations between the nation and its neighbours to the south.” President McKinley gave a public speech at the Exposition on September 5th that called for a reversal of the 1890 McKinley Tariff, the economic protectionist policy the President had penned in his days as a congressman. As McKinley explained the reversal of his position, “the only way of preserving the prosperity of the country and opening the markets of the world to American products is by a system of reciprocity treaties.” McKinley was clearly articulating that the search for new markets was the Republican Party’s response to industrial overproduction and alleviation of the instability of the American economy.

Undoubtedly many American citizens in attendance at the Exposition agreed with the President’s imperial solution of finding foreign markets to offset the violent labor unrest of the period, but at least one man who watched the speech strengthened his

75 Auerbach, “McKinley at Home,” 816.
76 “President McKinley Favors Reciprocity,” New York Times (September 6, 1901): 1.
resolve into murderous action. At 4:00 pm on September 6th, the door to the Temple of Music at the Exposition opened and the milling crowds merged into a reception line eager to shake the hand of the President of the United States. The crowd shuffled through a narrowing corridor of eighteen Exposition policemen and eleven soldiers from the Seventy-Third Company of the United States Coast Artillery, all of whom had orders to intercept any suspicious behaviour. Four Buffalo police detectives were stationed around McKinley and two Secret Service agents stood within three feet of the President. Through this gauntlet of guards, a young man walked up to the President and shot him twice at close range before Secret Service agents tackled him.77

The shooter was eventually identified as Leon Czolgosz, who had been a labourer in Cleveland. While Czolgosz did not explicitly use the language of class war, his justification was rooted in the inequalities of American society. As the New York Times published his confession: “I killed President McKinley because I done my duty. I don’t believe in one man having so much service and another man having none.”78 Czolgosz said surprisingly little about his motivations between his arrest and execution. However, his final words added propaganda to his deed when he stated, “I killed the President because he was the enemy of the good people – the good working people. I am not sorry for my crime.”79 Reform minded elites like David Starr Jordan, President of Stanford University, struggled to distance McKinley’s assassination from the class war in the United States:

The murder of the President has no direct connection with industrial war. Yet there is this connection, that all war, industrial or other, loosens the bonds of order, destroys mutual respect and trust, gives inspiration to anarchy, pushes a foul thought on to a foul word, a foul word on to a foul deed.80

79 “Assassin Czolgosz is Executed at Auburn,” New York Times (October 30, 1901): 5; Interview between L. Vernon Briggs and Warden J. Warren Mead, Briggs notes, set 1, page 11, in Dr. Walter Channings Papers, Box 15, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, MA.
80 Edward Leigh Pell, James W. Buel, and James P. Boyd, McKinley and Men of Our Times (New York: Historical Society of America, 1901), 267, 271
Jordan’s warning was not enough to prevent other media outlets from sensationalizing the assassination and fomenting public fears. For example, the *Idaho Record* argued that anarchists had “declared war upon all government and all civilization…. Owing to the nature of his warfare the civil law is manifestly unable to effect his suppression.”

Similarly, W. R. Kuylendall suggested in the *Topeka Plaindealer* that Congress grant:

> An appropriation for military expedition and then put Teddy Roosevelt in his lightening stirups, heading his horse westward gathering his rough riders as he comes; turn him loose and in twelve months this curse of anarchy will be extirpated and national decency vindicated…. Anything shorter than bayonets and anything safer then bullets will never do that work.

Similarly, the anarchist response to McKinley’s assassination was mixed. Emma Goldman stated that her sympathies were with Czolgosz because “He did it for what was his ideal: the good of the people.” Alexander Berkman, however, writing to Goldman from his prison cell in Pennsylvania, questioned the validity of McKinley as a target for anarchist violence:

> Though McKinley was the chief representative of our modern slavery, he could not be considered in the light of a direct and immediate enemy of the people; while in an absolutism, the autocrat is visible and tangible. The real despotism of republican institutions is far deeper, more insidious, because it rests on the popular delusion of self-government and independence. That is the subtle source of democratic tyranny, and, as such, it cannot be reached by a bullet.

Berkman concluded that in the United States “the struggle of labor against capital is a class war, essentially and chiefly economic” and as a result attacks should focus on business elites rather than democratically elected leaders. While many anarchists were reluctant to claim Czolgosz as one of their own, they nonetheless attempted to use his deed to further class consciousness. Max Baginski referenced the use of federal troops in labor disputes, writing that “the regime of McKinley… lost no opportunity in aiding capitalism in mercilessly crushing the aspirations of labor.” Baginski argued that the

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85 Ibid., 423-424.
“act of Czolgosz was the explosion of inner rebellion; it was directed against the savage authority of the money power and against the government that aids its mammonistic crimes.”  

Similarly, anarchist propagandist Voltairine de Cleyre warned of continuing violence in the class war when she argued that McKinley’s assassination was:

A tragedy bound to be repeated over and over, until “the good working people” (in truth they are not so good) learn that the earth is theirs and the fullness thereof, and that there is no need for anyone to enslave himself to another. This anarchism teaches, and this the future will realize, though many martyrdoms lie between.

Unfortunately, McKinley was not the last assassinated government official of the first decade of the twentieth century as economic instability and the corresponding perceptions of class war continued. Nowhere was this growing violence more acute than in the western mining industry.

The Assassination of Frank Steunenberg, 1905

The discovery of lead, silver, and gold deposits in the Rocky Mountains facilitated the rapid mining development along the mountain range and bolstered the development of an industrial economy in the fledgling state of Idaho. When McKinley was still a congressman in 1890, Idaho, through which the Rocky Mountains passed, had been admitted to the Union as an undeveloped frontier state. By the time McKinley was running for his first term as President, another politician, Frank Steunenberg, was elected Governor of Idaho in 1896 and again in 1898 with the support of Democrats, Populists, and Silver Republicans.

In his campaign, Steunenberg boasted that he was a member of the International Typographical Union and that he had the support of mining unions in his bid for the governorship. Steunenberg also had the support of the influential mine owners, who had much to gain from the victory of McKinley’s adversary, the Democratic

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87 Ibid., 8.
89 During the 1890s Populists in the Idaho legislature unsuccessfully agitated for the eight-hour day, an arbitration board to settle industrial pursuits, and objected to appropriations to the state militia because it was simply a tool used by the state and mine owners to suppress labor. William J. Gaboury, “From Statehouse to Bull Pan: Idaho Populism and the Coeur d’Alene Troubles of the 1890’s,” Pacific Northwest Quarterly 58:1 (January 1967): 14-22.
candidate for the Presidency, William Jennings Bryan. The “free silver” coalition of both mineworkers and mine owners was based on the unlimited coinage of silver, and both groups would profit from the impact this would have on the mining industry. As long as free silver dominated Idaho politics, Steunenberg was universally popular.

Class conflict, however, was as much a part of the Idaho mining industry as it was of manufacturing in Illinois and steel production in Pennsylvania. Like many other sectors of industrialization, a major problem in the mining industry was excessive production in relation to market demands that made prices low and unstable. This price fluctuation had a direct bearing on mine employees’ living since the mine operators would cut production, institute lay-offs, and reduce wages in order to prevent or minimize their losses. As political scientist Charles Emil Strangeland wrote in 1908, “the men and the descendants of men who but recently were on the far-flung frontier line are suddenly confronted by the most complex problems of modern industrialism.” Once again, the workers suffered the most from the pains of rapid industrial growth and overproduction. As a result, in 1890 western miners began to amalgamate their local unions into the Western Federation of Miners (WFM). Mine operators in the region joined the Mine Owners’ Protective Association to counteract union organizing drives. Unsurprisingly, these two organizations engaged in a prolonged struggle that stretched across the Rockies from the Coeur d’Alene in northern Idaho to Cripple Creek and Telluride in southwest Colorado.

An initial alliance between the WFM and the American Federation of Labor (AFL), which was designed to counteract big business practices that were detrimental to workers, was short lived, only lasting from 1890 to 1897. The central point of contention between the two labour organizations was that the WFM was committed to industrial unionism, while the AFL reaffirmed its commitment to organization by craft. Historian Joseph Conlin notes the significant contrasts that precipitated the split:

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The Western Federation counted thousands of unskilled laborers among its members, while the AFL declared the unskilled to be poor union risks. Many immigrants belonged to the WFM but were tacitly excluded from many sections of the AFL. The Western Federation was jealously democratic, while power within the AFL fell by default or contrivance to the union’s leadership.92

As historian Melvyn Dubofsky elaborates, “Western workers were among those Americans who opted for an alternative to the capitalist order.”93 The WFM called for severance from the AFL in 1897 in favor of forming a rival regional labor union.94 As the WFM became more radical by advocating opposition to the wage system in favor of cooperative operation of the mining industry, mine owners’ resistance intensified, as did the class war.

One site of this growing industrial conflict was the Coeur d’Alene mining district located in the northern panhandle of Idaho. The WFM slowly gained strength by unionizing the miners in Coeur d’Alene, except those of the Bunker Hill and Sullivan mining company, who remained the sole holdout to a union contract.95 By mid-April 1899, the union had secretly organized a number of Bunker Hill and Sullivan employees and it hoped soon to have enough strength to paralyze the company with a strike, thereby forcing union recognition and union wages. On April 18th, signs were posted inviting the workers to join the union, but on April 23rd Bunker Hill and Sullivan began to discharge employees with union affiliations. On April 29th, a union protest quickly escalated when masked gunmen hijacked a Northern Pacific train at Burke, Idaho. The train engineer was


93 Dubofsky identifies the introduction of industrial capitalism into mining camps which drove the WFM into political action and socialism as an acceptable alternative to the capitalistic system, he writes “class war in the West created a class ideology, and that ideology was Marxist because the Mountain West from 1890 to 1905 followed the classic Marxian pattern of development” Melvyn Dubofsky, “The Origins of Western Working Class Radicalism, 1890-1905,” *Labor History* 7:2 (spring 1966): 133, 139; Debs also refers to the “class-conscious movement in the West,” see: Eugene V. Debs, “The Western Labor Movement,” *International Socialist Review* 3 (November 1902): 257-265; on populism in the region, see: Gaboury, “Statehouse to Bull Pen,” 14-22.

94 The first regional labor organization was the Western Labor Union (WLU) in 1898, followed by the American Labor Union (ALU) in 1902, and finally the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) in 1904.

95 The Bunker Hill’s management strategy sought to destroy the miners’ union by collaborating with the state government and sponsoring a local branch of the nativist American Protective Association (APA) to counteract the large Irish Catholic segment of the workforce, see: Katherine G. Aiken, “It May Be Too Soon to Crow: Bunker Hill and Sullivan Company Efforts to Defeat the Miners’ Union, 1890-1900,” *Western Historical Quarterly* 24:3 (August 1993): 309-331.
compelled to stop at several points to allow more armed men and dynamite to be loaded. The train proceed to the Bunker Hill and Sullivan mill where masked men exchanged gunfire with guards. The dynamite was used to destroy the mill while several buildings, including the company office with all its records, were burned, inflicting a quarter of a million dollars in damages. The raiding party then quickly dispersed.\textsuperscript{96} As with the Homestead Lockout, it appeared that industrial relations had degenerated into open class war.

When the labor unrest strained the “silver front,” Governor Frank Steunenberg had to choose between his financial supporters and his popular support. Steunenberg proclaimed “a state of insurrection and rebellion,” arguing that he could not condone the actions of the WFM locals in the Coeur d’Alene district:

These organizations were originally undoubtedly legal and proper and were organized for a commendable purpose; but they have been taken possession of by men who utterly ignore all law, who are anarchists in belief and practice, and by them transformed into criminal organizations.\textsuperscript{97}

Since the five hundred men of the Idaho National Guard were serving active duty in the imperialist project of suppressing the independence movement in the Philippines, Steunenberg declared martial law in the Coeur d’Alene and wired President McKinley to request federal assistance.\textsuperscript{98} Soldiers arrived to protect replacement workers and began the wholesale arrest of some six hundred miners and their sympathizers, detaining them in hastily constructed bullpen, where the men were held for two months without charges. By September, the control of the mines was back in the hands of the owners and most of the imprisoned men had been released. Steunenberg realized that the act of calling in federal military aid had been political suicide. When his term expired in 1901 he quit politics and retired to raise sheep. The military occupation of the Coeur d’Alene district continued until April 1901 when it was terminated by a new state administration.\textsuperscript{99}

Steunenberg’s response to industrial relations echoed the alliance between employers and state governments that ended labor unrest in mining disputes in Leadville, Colorado in 1887-9; Wardner, Idaho in 1897; Lake City, Colorado in 1899; and would continue to be used in Telluride and Cripple Creek, Colorado in 1903. Such events led journalist Ray Baker to note that the region experienced “a breakdown of democracy and, through anarchy, a reversion to military despotism.”100 The class war was particularly acute in these regions, and it was not long until this escalating violence led to the assassination of a government official.

Years after retiring from politics, on a snowy December 30th, 1905, former governor Steunenberg was returning to his home after a series of errands in the small, quiet western town of Caldwell. As he opened the front gate of his home at 7:00 pm, Steunenberg did not notice the length of fishing line connected to the gate and leading to a bomb buried in the snow at his feet. The resulting explosion shattered the gate and threw Steunenberg’s mangled body ten feet into the yard. Neighbours and family rushed to the scene and carried the grievously injured man into his house on a blanket. Surrounded by his family, Frank Steunenberg died from his wounds within ten minutes.

As news of the ex-governor’s death spread, reports were divided concerning who was to blame, but most acknowledged the connection to working-class unrest. A.B. Campbell of the Mine Owners’ Association stated “There is no doubt that Steunenberg’s death was the penalty for his activity in doing his duty during the strike.”101 When the bomber was identified as Harry Orchard, the assassin promptly renounced his violent past and explained his motives not as his own belief in anarchism, but rather attempted to implicate the leadership of the WFM by stating: “I do believe, and in fact know, that the head men of this organization from the time it was first organized until the present time

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have been murderers and anarchists.”  

When union officials were arrested for the crime, President Theodore Roosevelt denounced the WFM men as outsiders to the United States by describing them as “undesirable citizens” and suggested their guilt before the trial had even begun.  

Eugene V. Debs, in contrast, composed his most revolutionary tract on March 10th, 1906 in *Appeal to Reason*, warning that if the state attempted to execute the accused men, “a million revolutionists will meet them with guns.”  

A popular front emerged as the Western Federation of Miners, the Socialist Party of America, the Socialist Labor Party, anarchists of all persuasions, some progressives, and most of the AFL all agreed that the arrests were a class action. *The International Socialist Review* went on to lambaste Roosevelt’s words, which

> Brought down such a storm of denunciation upon its author as to force him completely into the open, and the workers of the United States were treated to the very remarkable spectacle of the President on the defensive against the attacks of an outraged working-class.... There was something so despicable in this action, so much akin to that other much boasted feat of Roosevelt – shooting a Spaniard in the back.

Industrial relations had never before resembled open warfare so much as they did in the western mining industry at the turn of the century. For many contemporary commentators, such as economist T. S. Adams, the connection was clear:

> Capital and labor have now been playing the game of war for more than a century, and the game has been reduced to a science. When violence is employed, therefore, it will be employed scientifically, that is all; blows are no longer struck at random, they are directed at the nerve-centres.

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Those unsympathetic to the labor movement, such as economist Nicholas P. Gilman, noted that unions “profit by the fear of violence.”\(^{107}\) However, even though the union officials were ultimately acquitted, the WFM dwindled and lost organizational effectiveness for at least a quarter of a century.\(^{108}\) Yet the class war continued to intensify in other parts of the country, as did renewed fears of anarchist violence.

1908: Anarchy Everywhere

Labor unrest continued as the economy again slipped into depression in October 1907, intensifying fears about American social stability and the looming threat of class conflict. The most dramatic aspect of the depression was the rising level of unemployment, which grew from 1.8 percent in 1907 to 8.5 percent in 1908. Unemployment in manufacturing, transportation, building trades, and mining rose from an estimated 6.9 percent in 1907 to 16.4 percent in 1908.\(^{109}\) By March 1908, total unemployment in the country was estimated at 1.2 million.\(^{110}\) During January 1908, unemployed workers held demonstrations for relief in urban areas across the country and these gatherings frequently turned violent when they clashed with city police forces. In New York, a widespread rent strike movement erupted into violence on January 5\(^{th}\) when police dispersed crowds. On January 23\(^{rd}\), club-swinging policemen dispersed a peaceful unemployment demonstration in Chicago.\(^{111}\)

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\(^{107}\) Gilman, “Violence in Strikes,” 207-218. Steunenberg was not the only victim of violent reprisal. On November 17, 1904, a bomb ripped through the front door of Frederick Bradley, manager of the Bunker Hill and Sullivan Mining Company in Kellogg, Idaho, and left him badly mangled, temporarily blind, and deaf. Although Bradley recovered, he carried the scars on his face and body for the remainder of his life, see: Aiken, “Too Soon to Crow,” 330-331.

\(^{108}\) T. H. Watkins “Requiem for the Federation,” American West 3:1 (winter 1966): 4-12, 91-95; argues that the WFM was a failure, that its struggle with anti-union forces was inevitable, and that it died principally by “its own hand.” William A. Preston, “Shall this Be All? U.S. Historians versus William D. Haywood, et al.” Labor History 11:3 (Summer 1971): 445.


While organized political protest was rampant in many urban areas in 1908, new incidents of assassinations and bombings revived fears of anarchist violence. On February 23rd, 1908 Father Leo Heinrichs was administering the rite of Holy Communion at early mass at St. Elizabeth’s Roman Catholic Church in Denver. Suddenly, and without warning, a man spat out the wafer that Father Heinrichs had placed on his tongue, drew a pistol and fired one fatal shot that pierced Heinrichs’ heart. A policeman who had been attending the service captured Heinrich’s assassin, later identified by local officials as Guiseppe Alia, an Italian immigrant who had been in the United States for three months. Alia justified his actions to the press: “I just went over there because I have a grudge against all priests in general. They are all against the workingman…. I am an anarchist and I am proud of it.”112 The immediate effect of Heinrichs’ murder was widespread panic among religious officials across the United States. Chancellor Edward M. Dunne in particular, who represented Chicago’s Roman Catholic clerical community, warned: “a society exists with warfare on the church as its aim…. The Denver tragedy was nothing less than a step in the general scheme to make good an anti-clerical society against civilization.”113 Dunne continued, cautioning: “I am positive that anarchists, anti-clericals, or whatever they call themselves, have prepared lists of priests and clergy to be killed and am certain that some Chicago man has been marked.”114 Police were stationed at many churches in Chicago on Sunday, March 1st, to protect priests against possible assassination attempts. Although no incidents occurred, Chicago police promised that if they found any evidence that the Heinrichs’ murder had been plotted in Chicago, “We will make wholesale arrests in the Italian colony in hopes of getting some of these conspirators.”115 Before police could make much headway into their investigation of possible connections between anarchists in Chicago and the murder of Father Heinrichs


114 “Priests Alarmed by Anti-Clericals: Chancellor Dunne Says Every Clergyman is in Danger of Assassination,” Chicago Daily Tribune (February 25, 1908): 3.

in Denver, a shocking turn of events involving the their own Chief of Police monopolized the attention of Chicago’s police force.

On March 2nd, 1908, a young man knocked on the door of Chicago’s Chief of Police, George M. Shippy. In the scuffle that ensued, the young man was shot six times. Chief Shippy received a superficial stab wound to the arm, his driver was shot in the hand, and the Chief’s son received two serious gunshot wounds to the chest. Shippy justified the bloody turn of events by stating that when he opened his door and saw the Eastern European stranger, “the thought struck me like a streak of lightening that the man was up to some wrong. He looked like an anarchist.” The *New York Times* headline blared “Police Chief Kills Anarchist in Fight,” while the *Chicago Daily Tribune* reported that Shippy “declared tonight that war upon anarchists in Chicago will be prosecuted with greater vigor then ever before.” Police and undercover agents, who were determined to connect Averbuch to an anarchist conspiracy, proceeded to raid Chicago’s immigrant wards as they had in the aftermath of the 1886 Haymarket bombing.

The murder of Father Heinrichs and the assassination attempt on Chief Shippy were quickly followed by a third violent incident in New York City. On March 28th, police were tasked with dispersing thousands who were participating in an unemployment demonstration at Union Square. After city officials refused to grant a permit for the socialist-led Conference of the Unemployed, the police planned to disrupt the demonstration. When a crowd, estimated at ten to twenty-five thousand persons showed up, policemen scattered them from the surrounding area by charging the crowd on horseback and swinging clubs. After most demonstrators had been driven out of Union Square, witnesses saw a young man holding what looked like a grapefruit in his hand. While fumbling with a flame the “grapefruit,” which turned out to be a bomb composed of gunpowder and nails inside brass tubing, suddenly exploded in the man’s hand. The

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explosion instantly killed a nearby bystander and maimed the bomb thrower, blowing off his right hand and blinding him. Two policemen and another bystander suffered minor injuries. The police identified the injured man as Selig Silverstein and the New York Times quoted the bomber’s justification: “The police are no good. They drove us out of the park. I hate them. I am sorry that I did not make good. As for my life, that is nothing. It was the police that I wanted.”

The murder of Heinrichs, the assassination attempt on Shippy, and the attempted bombing of policemen in New York City all exacerbated fears of anarchist violence during a period of widespread unemployment and social unrest. Perceptions of a class war in the United States continued into a period often described by scholars as the nation’s progressive era. Historian Robert J. Goldstein, who commented on this series of violent events, stated that “[t]he anarchist scare of 1908 merely brought to the surface the fears and tensions that were always present during the Progressive Era.” From the anarchist perspective, Alexander Berkman publicly defended Selig Silverstein in the context of the class war:

The bomb is the echo of your cannon, trained upon our starving brothers; it is the cry of the wounded striker; ‘tis the voice of hungry women and children; the shriek of those maimed and torn in your industrial slaughter houses; it is the dull thud of the policeman’s club upon a defenceless head; ‘tis the shadow of the crisis, the rumbling of suppressed earthquake – it is manhood’s lightning out of an atmosphere of degradation and misery that king, president and plutocrat have heaped upon humanity. The bomb is the ghost of your past crimes.

Berkman connected recurring threat of anarchist violence to the precarious transition to industrial capitalism, and, rather than isolated incidents, they were violent moments from a violent time.

Conclusion

The trajectory of industrial unrest in the United States followed the fluctuating economy, peaking with mass protest and accentuated by open acts of terrorism in 1886, 1892, 1901, 1905, and 1908. Historian Richard Hofstadter wrote in 1972 that, “[w]ith a

120 Goldstein, “Anarchist Scare,” 75.
minimum of ideologically motivated class conflict, the United States has somehow had a maximum of industrial violence.” However, Graham Adams Jr. concluded in his 1966 study of the U.S. Commission charged with investigating the nation’s violent industrial relations:

From the industrial East to the agrarian West, these nationwide hearings and reports indicated that many employers and workers possessed class consciousness. As in previous Commission studies, the evidence revealed a disposition on the part of a significant number of Americans to disregard the usual agencies of organized society and to resort to violence. This testimony lent little comfort to those who envisioned their nation as a community of harmonious classes.

The disparity between Hofstadter’s claim of a minimum of ideologically motivated class conflict and overwhelming evidence of class consciousness articulated by Adams can be clarified by focusing on how this violence was attributed to “foreign agitators” as scapegoats in the American context, which, as this dissertation will demonstrate, was particularly true for anarchist violence. Police and journalist investigators, court and government officials, as well as the role of mourning and spectacle in popular culture all demonstrate how this violence was attributed to foreigners to depoliticise class-based ideologies while failing to actually address the very real class tensions in American society. Emma Goldman noted in 1911: “For thirty years the sturdy sons of America have been sacrificed on the battlefield of industrial war.”

Goldman’s emphasis on sons of America was written against the strenuous efforts being made by police, journalists, and court representatives and politicians to attribute this violence to immigrants and foreign causes rather than industrial relations. Authorities increasingly turned away from a language of class war to interpret these events as nothing but lawless anarchy imported by evil foreigners who wanted to disrupt the natural harmony of class relations in republican America.

Although anarchism and anarchist violence in America were linked to similar European movements, this chapter has demonstrated that they were not merely

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transplanted from the Europe. Author and journalist Louis Adamic, looking back on this period from 1931, wrote: “While anarchism no doubt had foreign roots, it was an American growth in America, nurtured in American soil.” While some scholars have traced the origins of native individualist anarchism in the United States back to Protestant, republican, and frontiersman roots, it was the precarious transition to industrialization that contributed most to the development of anarchist ideology and the emergence of anarchist terror. Historian Nunzio Pernicone, making this point, states:

The growth of the [anarchist] movement during the first two decades of the 20th century must be attributed principally to the social and economic conditions that confronted the immigrant, for it is certain that the majority of Italians who became anarchists did so after their arrival in the United States.

Although anarchist violence was not exceptional to the United States, historian Richard Bach Jensen argues that “[d]uring the 1880s and 1890s various acts of social revolt and violence took place in Italy, France, Spain, Germany, Russia, and the United States, but these acts were almost always closely connected to local conditions and traditions in which violent response to social problems had long been the norm, rather than being solely or mostly due to anarchist instigation.” In the United States, many immigrants and native-born citizens were radicalized through their experiences with industrial capitalism and the perpetrators of this violence had personally witnessed the brutality of the new industrial order. Industrial strikes made clear the fundamental conflict between labor and capital and the increasing the sense of workers’ solidarity, which deepened the chasm between the working class and their exploiters and spurred some militant radicals to further action. Indeed, August Spies wrote the Haymarket revenge circular after he returned from witnessing the picket line shooting at McCormack; Alexander Berkman decided to assassinate Henry Clay Frick only after the militia had been called into

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125 Adamic, Dynamite, 83.
129 “Speech of August Spies” in Lum, Great Trial, 35-38.
Homestead;\textsuperscript{130} Leon Czolgosz’s health had been compromised and he had been blacklisted by a wire factory, the Cleveland Rolling Company, following an unsuccessful strike in 1893;\textsuperscript{131} Harry Orchard had been forced to flee government repression that followed the 1889 Coeur d’Alene violence;\textsuperscript{132} and the rising unemployment and economic instability of 1908 played a role in that year’s burst of anarchist attacks. These acts of violence were often interpreted as episodes in the class war and, in the eyes of more militant anarchists, they were steps towards the total emancipation of workers.

However, this chapter has also demonstrated that the result of the class war in the United States very seldom favoured the workers or their organizations. Hundreds of workers were killed, thousands were injured, tens of thousands jailed or forcibly expelled from their communities. The unions most involved in violent disputes usually lost organizational effectiveness and their leaders and organizers were constantly harassed. In the chapters that follow, I will argue that, although anarchist terror was deeply connected to industrial unrest and the class war, its causes were frequently constructed as foreign to the United States to depoliticise the violence. Police, who were on the front lines of industrial conflicts, often felt they were at war with the anarchists, and they sensationalized anarchist conspiracies both to demonstrate their investigative prowess to newspaper audiences and to justify asking the state for additional resources to suppress working-class organizations. Court officials wanted to cite anarchy as the motive for crimes of violence, but at the same time it was imperative that courts distanced violence from class relations and industrial conflict to portray anarchism as barbaric and savage, a doctrine that was fundamentally opposed to civilization. When existing laws were not sufficient to suppress the perceived threat of anarchist terror, state and federal legislatures drafted new laws to counteract it. Finally, in the realm of popular culture, the public displays of mourning for the victims of anarchist violence contrasted with the state controlled private punishment enacted on the perpetrators of Propaganda by Deed; this contradiction led to spontaneous public spectacles within American society.

\textsuperscript{130} Berkman, \textit{Prison Memoirs}, 1-35.
\textsuperscript{131} For the history of industrial relations at Cleveland Rolling before the 1893 strike, see: Henry B. Leonard, “Ethnic Cleavage and Industrial Conflict in Late 19\textsuperscript{th} Century America: The Cleveland Rolling Mill Company Strikes of 1882 and 1885,” \textit{Labor History} 20 (1979): 524-548.
\textsuperscript{132} Harry Orchard, \textit{The Confessions and Autobiography of Harry Orchard} (Waukesha, WI: Metropolitan Church Association, 1907).
Chapter Two
Unseeing Eyes: Searching for Conspiracy

The process of industrialization, with the accompanying growth of cities, increase in immigration and expansion of wage labor, required a refinement of institutions of law, order, and social control. While rising crime rates were a significant motivating factor, mounting industrial unrest and accompanying violence further justified changes to institutions at the local, state, and federal level, as well as in the private sector. In municipalities, a system of county sheriffs and urban constables gave way to a modern police force. At the state level, volunteer militias were transformed into a modernized National Guard. At the federal level, modifications to the Department of the Treasury’s Secret Service Agency rounded out the state institutions that were available to address the challenges wrought by the second industrial revolution in general and to respond to the recurring threat of anarchist violence in particular. Alongside governmental institutions that maintained law, order, and social control, private detective agencies dramatically expanded as a marketable commodity. Following acts of anarchist terror, private sector, municipal, state, and federal institutions looked for evidence of clandestine working-class conspiracies to strengthen their position in, and relevance to, American society.

As law enforcement agencies took up the task of searching for conspiracies, police officials began to use new tools of surveillance, apprehension and identification of suspected anarchists, taking advantage especially of the emerging genre of photography and the accompanying advancements in photographic equipment. In the 1860s, photography as a form of evidence for criminal identification and apprehension was used sporadically to document criminals. By 1884, photography emerged as a mass-production industry, aided by the development of faster dry plates and flexible film. Expanding markets for mass-produced photographic equipment and the invention of the half-tone plate enabled the reproduction of photographs on an ordinary letter-set press, thereby making possible the economical mass production of photographic images.¹ Between 1886 and 1908, police investigators used a system of identification built on the Bertillon system.

method of physical measurements and the photograph to create a criminal archive. Historian Alan Trachtenberg notes that the art of posing in photographic portraits allowed people to learn a new way of “seeing themselves in the eyes of others,” a concept that was taken on by social investigators as they used photographs as evidence. The photographic convention of the mug shot, in its rigid positioning of the subject, stood as a clear signifier of criminality in stark contrast to the stylized portrait that came to signify middle-class respectability. In addition, photography had a special allure of authenticity, especially for police work, as it allowed the body to be graphically frozen in time. Historian of photography John Tagg explains the significance of this method to investigators when he states that photographs were seen “as a source of truth not possessed by conventional images.”

This chapter focuses on both the development and refinement of institutions of law, order, and social control as they evolved during the second industrial revolution, as state and federal agencies tried to make sense of the terrorist acts of this period and to bring the perpetrators to justice. In these violent dramas, municipal law enforcement agencies frequently pitted policemen against working-class protestors, like with the heavy-handed approach of Chicago policemen towards the striking McCormick workers that predicated the Haymarket bombing. In response to the bombing, the police force implemented highly publicized whole-scale raids that targeted leaders of radical working-class organizations. The development of private sector agencies such as the Pinkertons and the use of state militia in industrial disputes were key aspects of the Homestead

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4 Tagg, *Burden of Representation*, 2; Tagg is drawing on Bertillon among others. Roland Barthes argues that the photograph itself is not “reality,” but it is the perfect *analogon*, and it is precisely this analogical relationship between reality and representation that gives photography its “special credibility.” Roland Barthes, “The Photographic Message,” in *Image/Music/Text* trans. Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977), 27.
Lockout that had motivated Alexander Berkman to attack Henry Clay Frick in 1892. However, the arrest of Berkman and the search for suspected accomplices fell to the municipal police force in Pittsburgh, whose highly publicized investigation attributed the crime to a vast conspiracy. When President McKinley was shot in 1901, he was under the protection of federal Secret Service agents, but at the critical moment of his shooting, the Secret Service men’s preconceptions of race and foreignness distracted them. The investigation into Leon Czolgosz’s past and motives led policemen and journalists to emphasize his foreignness while claiming a larger conspiracy was afoot. When Harry Orchard was quickly apprehended for bombing former Governor Steunenberg, under the guidance of Pinkerton detectives, Orchard implicated the leadership of the Western Federation of Miners, prompting private detectives to collude with state officials to arrest the union officials as well. Orchard’s situation, however, dramatically contrasted with the way that the Haymarket anarchists, Alexander Berkman, and Leon Czolgosz were portrayed because the popular press represented Orchard as a credible witness and reformed citizen. The 1908 police investigations demonstrate continuing investigative efforts by police who were caught up in their own fears of anarchist conspiracies. In particular, the story of Lazarus Averbuch demonstrates how police and journalists could construct a motive of anarchist violence to cover up the accidental manslaughter of an innocent man.

In the investigations that followed these alleged incidents of anarchist violence, journalists stayed closely on the heels of policemen who narrated the investigations in a way that fomented fears of widespread anarchist conspiracies while downplaying connections to a class war. Both types of social investigators, police and journalists, closely examined the anarchist body as a site of clues to be “read.” Specifically, they looked at the anarchist body for evidence to exclude it from the socially legitimate laboring classes and to distance the anarchist body from claims of manliness, productivity, and citizenship. In newspaper articles and police reports, journalists and law enforcement professionals frequently portrayed anarchists as foreign, alien, and radically ‘other’ from their readers and the citizens they had sworn to protect. Furthermore, press writers and civil investigators used evidence, such as anarchists’ typical lack of musculature and their perceived difference from the ideal type of the worker, to construct
a perception of anarchists’ idleness and effeminacy, which was further layered with class and gender critiques. Although police and journalists often pointed to widespread conspiracies, they did so in a way that attempted to deny anarchism any popular support or justification. They accomplished this by simultaneously playing on public fears of widespread anarchist conspiracies and marginalizing anarchists who were caught up in their investigative gaze through socially negative categories.

**Haymarket Conspiracy**

Well before the bomb was tossed into the ranks of policemen at the Haymarket rally, municipal police forces in the United States had evolved to meet the needs of the second industrial revolution. The antiquated watch-and-ward system of daytime constables and night time watchmen had become increasingly inadequate to cope with rising crime rates and the threat of large-scale rioting that had accompanied the growth of cities. Members of these early police forces were usually part-time, unpaid, or paid on a fee-per-service basis, and there was little interaction or coordination among the various units. In their introduction to the *History of the Chicago Police*, John Flynn and John Wilkie, writing in the year after the Haymarket bombing, connected the rise in urban American crime with similar trends in Europe:

> It is not necessary to go over to Europe in order to learn how deplorable were the conditions surrounding life in large cities before the present admirable police organizations were brought into being. New York, Boston, Baltimore, and some of the younger cities of this country suffered under the “watchman” era from the depredations of thieves, the villainies of highwaymen, and the riotous excesses of mobs proportionately as much as any cities in Europe.⁵

To address the complex challenges of maintaining order in urban areas, city elites modernized their police services based on the London model, which consisted of full-time officers, easily identifiable in uniform, structured along military lines, and serving police functions integrated within a police communication network. The London model, which had been developed in 1829, was first adopted in New York City in 1844. It reached Chicago in 1851, was established in Pittsburgh by 1857 and continued to spread

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⁵ John J. Flinn and John E. Wilkie, *History Of The Chicago Police: From The Settlement Of The Community To The Present Time* (Chicago, IL: W. B. Conkey, 1887), xii.
to other urban centers. By 1886 the modernized municipal police force was instituted in Buffalo.⁶

While crime control in rapidly expanding urban centers justified expanding police powers, strike control was an equally critical concern for the new urban police force. Sidney Harring, in his study of the Buffalo police department, argues: “The desire to control dissident labor was a major impetus in the growth of the force and the technological innovations that occurred.”⁷ The evolution of the Police Department’s role in labor relations necessitated centralized control so that the entire force could be used as a unit; an efficient communication system and rapid means of mobility around the city were equally critical. This was reinforced with a dramatic increase in the size of police departments, a provision of a large reserve of officers, who could be called on in times of need, and a division of labor within the police force, creating specialists that included strike control and surveillance of perceived radical threats.⁸ These organizational developments were in effect in Chicago on the evening of May 4th, 1886 when Police Inspector John Bonfeild ordered his assembled reserves of 176 men to march on the Haymarket rally after undercover officers in civilian clothes had reported Samuel Fielden’s comments to “throttle” and “kill” the law.

The day after the bombing, policemen descended in force on every known anarchist newspaper and gathering place searching for evidence of a widespread conspiracy. The Chicago Daily Tribune encouraged their efforts in a May 7th editorial, which declared that “incendiary anarchical sheets should be suppressed by the police. Nihilistic meetings on the public parks ought to be broken up and the leaders sent home if

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⁷ Harding argues, “the form and timing of the development of the institution was strongly influenced by the particular needs of Buffalo’s most successful businessmen, rather than by any other criteria such as a rising level of disorder, or reduced tolerance for public disorder.” Sidney Lee Harring, The Buffalo Police 1872-1915: Industrialization, Social Unrest, and the Development of the Police Institution (unpublished PhD dissertation, University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1976): 40-41, 89-90.

⁸ Police forces used the most modern communications and mobility system available: an alarm system tied into a network of harnessed wagons and ready crews stationed about the city. Harring, Buffalo Police, 124-125.
need be with broken heads.” Police Captain Michael Schaack headed the investigation and boasted that he had indeed discovered evidence of a large conspiracy to inflict “a concentrated raid on the police stations, the burning of buildings and the slaughter of capitalists.” The speakers from the Haymarket rally, Samuel Fielden, Albert Parsons and August Spies, were the primary targets in the police roundup. Fielden was the first to be arrested and described as “a bloated, dirty-looking Englishman of the Black country type,” when taken from his house where he was recovering from a gunshot wound to the knee that had been inflicted as he climbed down from the speakers’ wagon into the chaos that had followed the explosion. On May 5th, police raided the newspaper office of the Arbeiter-Zeitung, arresting August Spies, the assistant editor Michael Schwab, and Adolph Fisher. When Fisher was searched, the police discovered that his belt buckle was engraved with “L. & W.V.” short for the Lehr und Weher Verein, an armed workers militia, and that he was armed with a revolver, a sharpened file, and a fulminating cap. A search of the Arbeiter-Zeitung office uncovered additional bomb making material. According to police officials Flinn and Wilkie:

The sacking of the Arbeiter-Zeitung office, and the discovery there of a vast supply of dynamite, arms, bombs, and infernal machines; the discovery of bombs in different parts of the city, under sidewalks and in lumber yards, some near the scene of the explosion, going to show that it had been intended to explode several that night….

They added their praise of Captain Schaack and his men for their brilliant investigative work “in the hunting down of the anarchists and the discovery of their dens, when every anarchist hole was entered and the assassins in some instances were dragged from their

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10 Michael Schaack, Anarchy and Anarchists: A History of the Red Terror and the Social Revolution in America and Europe (Chicago, IL: F. J. Schulte, 1889), 138, 148, 230-231; it is likely that Schaack’s book was largely the work of journalists Thomas O. Thompson and John T. McEnnis, to whom Schaack credited in his preface “much of the literary form of this volume.” Thompson was a reporter for the Chicago Inter-Ocean and later the Times before serving Carter Harrison for six-and-a-half years as private secretary. For a brief biography of Schaack, see: Flinn and Wilkie, Chicago Police, 560-561.
The Chicago Daily Tribune followed police on raids of the “regular meeting places of anarchists or the homes members of the ‘groups,’ as they term the subdivision of the murderous organization” and reported the “capture of a large amount of arms, usually of obsolete pattern, and of a number of red flags and inflammatory placards.”

Not everyone, however, was convinced that the police raid had been a triumph. The reporter Charles Edward Russell admitted his scepticism concerning some of the evidence found at the Arbeiter-Zeitung office and his belief that many of the same bombs were repeatedly planted and then “found” by the police.

Evidence uncovered at the raid of the Arbeiter-Zeitung office, planted or not, allowed for the public perception of widespread anarchist conspiracies that in turn justified more resources for continuing surveillance and infiltration of ethnic and working class organizations, ultimately leading to several additional arrests. Among those caught up in the police raids was Rudolph Schnaubelt, who was arrested on May 7th but released before one of the witnesses alleged that Schnaubelt was the bomber, but not before he left the city and evaded re-capture. William Seliger, arrested on May 6th, gave testimony that he had made bombs with other anarchists on the day before the Haymarket bombing. The most dramatic arrest was of Louis Lingg, who had been identified as one of the bomb makers, and a search of his residence revealed both completed bombs and supplies to make more. Although Lingg had not been at the Haymarket on the night of the bombing, when police caught up with him on May 14th, the anarchist violently resisted arrest before being stunned by a policeman’s club. The Chicago Daily Tribune was quick to emphasis that Lingg was a foreigner, describing the suspect as “a young man about 25 years old, and has been in this country about eighteen months.”

On May 18th, police also arrested George Engle, whom they had harassed on several previous occasions. Oscar Neebe, whose house had been searched early on in the investigation, was the last to

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13 Flinn and Wilkie, Chicago Police, 323.
16 Lingg had spent the afternoon of May 4th making somewhere between thirty and fifty bombs which had been placed in a small trunk and stored at the meeting place of the Lehr-und-Wehr Verein, and had spent the evening at a meeting of the carpenters’ union. Paul Avrich, The Haymarket Tragedy (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), 231.
be arrested on May 27th, despite very little evidence that he was connected to a bomb conspiracy. As the suspects were arrested, the Chicago Daily Tribune noted that the “leaders were taken to the rogues’ gallery” to be photographed, where they finally “seemed to realize that the humiliating ordeal meant the dawn of a new era in Chicago for their kind.”18 In order to reinforce the criminality of the suspects, the Tribune commented the next day: “The arrested Anarchists have been photographed for the Rogues’ Album. Their faces will look as natural there as mandrakes in a marsh.”19 Although investigators were still on the hunt for Rudolph Schnaubelt and Albert Parsons, by May 27th, the police had raided ten labor halls and seventeen saloons, and had arrested over 200 people.20

While those on the outside of the police and journalists’ investigations likely perceived these arrests as a success against socially menacing violence, evidence also pointed toward a great deal of corruption in the police force. Indeed, many of those arrested in the Haymarket investigation had been coerced with violence or bribes to testify against the arrested anarchists. Richard Lindberg, in his detailed investigation of corruption in the Chicago police, concludes that during the Haymarket investigation, “the Police paid approximately forty-five families in exchange for testimony and coerced many more into giving false evidence.”21 Richard T. Ely, an economist at Johns Hopkins University, termed these developments in Chicago a “period of police terrorism.”22 Regardless of how they were apprehended, the complicity of those held on grounds of conspiracy for the Haymarket bombing was not easy to prove. Oscar Neebe and Louis Lingg did not attend nor have any role in organizing the Haymarket rally. Although George Engel and Adolph Fischer had assisted in organizing the event, they were also not in the Haymarket that evening. Only four of the eight indicted to stand trial – Albert Parsons, August Spies, Samuel Fielden, and Michael Schwab – had actually attended the meeting, and Spies and Fielden were the only two defendants who had actually been

20 In Paul Avrich’s scathing description of the police investigation, “all constitutional rights were set aside. Mail was intercepted and opened. Anarchist newspapers were suppressed and their editors arrested. Trade union meetings were banned or dispersed, halls closed, files of organizations opened, and personal belongings confiscated – all without a shadow of legal process.” Avrich, Haymarket Tragedy, 222.
there when the bomb exploded. Despite difficulties in proving their complicity in the bombing, all of these men were deeply committed to the anarchist movement and authorities in Chicago pinpointed them as anarchism’s most effective organizers, editors, speakers, and writers.

The police and journalists characterized the anarchists in two contradictory ways. It was important on the one hand to express confidence that the conspirators were few in number because to admit otherwise would suggest that their causes had some popular support and perhaps even some justification. On the other hand, unless the anarchists could be described as a substantial threat, it was hard to see the necessity for intense police investigation and sensationalist reporting. Flinn and Wilkie, sympathetic to the investigators, summed up the police theory of the bombing, writing that:

For a number of years there existed in the county of Cook a conspiracy, embracing a large number of persons, having for its object the destruction of the legal authorities of the state and country, the overthrow of the law itself and a complete revolution of the existing order of society, and the accomplishment of this, not by agitation or through the ballot box, but by force and terrorism, a conspiracy deliberately formed and thoroughly organized.23

As head of the Haymarket investigation, Captain Schaack perpetuated this contradiction, writing that the anarchists were “a minority of a minority,” but at the same time arguing that a half dozen determined terrorists “at a critical time could upset a whole city.”24 Schaack boasted in 1889 that in order to infiltrate the terrorist cells that he believed were honeycombing the city, he “did not depend wholly upon police effort, but once employed a number of outside men...at each anarchist meeting I had at least one man present to...learn what plots they were maturing.”25 Schaack went so far as to propose to Chicago Chief of Police Frederick Ebersold to send police agents out to form their own imitation anarchist cells that could be broken up with much publicity.26

While the anarchists were in custody, the police and journalists capitalized on this opportunity to marginalize the arrested men and depicted them as cowardly, idle, and

23 Flinn and Wilkie, Chicago Police, 283.
24 Schaack, Anarchy and Anarchists, 26, 287.
25 Detailing his covert operations nearly three years after the end of his roundup, Schaack claimed that: “the funds for this purpose were supplied to me by public-spirited citizens who wished the law vindicated and order preserved in Chicago.” Ibid., 206.
foreign. In particular the *Chicago Daily Tribune* referred to the arrested men as an “un-Americanized, ignorant, alien class of laborers.”27 To further separate the anarchists from the working class that their violence was meant to liberate, the *Tribune* emphasised that the anarchists:

> Are not honest workingmen, and but few of them are Americans. They should be hunted down without mercy, and every real workingman who desires his cause to triumph should join the authorities in every effort to bring them to account. They must show the people of the Nation that they have neither affiliation with nor sympathy for the Anarchist scoundrels if they expect moral support.28

In contrast, Schaack commented on the bravery of the officers, noting that the “masterly courage and brilliant dash of the men soon sent the Anarchists flying in every direction.”29 When referring to the anarchists, however, Schaack both fuelled public fears of a larger conspiracy and simultaneously emasculated the perpetrators, saying that “There is no doubt that these wretches would have blown up the station if the police had dispersed the Haymarket meeting earlier in the evening, but by waiting so long they lost what little courage they had.”30 Flinn and Wilkie also elaborated up on this theme:

> The anarchists had undoubtedly expected that more than one bomb would be thrown, and had not anticipated that the police would so speedily recover from the shock. Now, as they beheld the blue-coats rushing toward them like madmen, the bloody-minded horde of cowardly assassins became panic-stricken, wavered and fled, and the police followed the retreating anarchists and sent deadly volleys into their midst, as they plunged through every avenue of escape.31

At the time of their arrest, only Fielden had been wounded by the violence in Haymarket Square, which Schaack argued was evidence of the anarchists’ lack of bravery. He wrote: “the fact remains that they were all found lacking in courage at the critical moment, and each seemed more concerned about his own safety than that of his fellow revolutionists.”32 Schaack later claimed that with few exceptions, “the men who posed as the bloodthirsty bandits of Chicago” quickly lost their bluster and bravado after their arrest and broke down under questioning, becoming “arrant, cringing cowards when they

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30 Ibid., 373.
found themselves within the clutches of the law.”

Some of the sharpest such critiques of the suspects came from the labor movement. The periodical *Knights of Labor* disclaimed any “affiliation, association, sympathy, or respect for the band of cowardly murderers.”

Similarly, Grand Master Workman of the Knights of Labor, Terence V. Powderly, in his 1890 autobiography *Thirty Years of Labor*, expressed contempt for the “average Anarchist” as “cowardly and deceitful” and that the work of anarchism’s adherents was not even “honest toil.”

As part of their effort to portray the anarchists as foreigners, police investigators and their press allies often constructed the men as alien to humanity itself. Flinn and Wilkie dehumanized the anarchists, writing that “Inspector Bonfeild could not calculate upon the devilish secret designs of the anarchists; no one could. He supposed that the police department had human beings, not bloodthirsty demons, to deal with.”

Captain Schaack, who himself had been born in Luxembourg before his family immigrated to the United States when he was ten years old, also picked up on this theme that “the Anarchists of Chicago are exotics” and that the discontent they sowed was “a German plant” in “our garden” that turned out to be “a weed” that had “to be plucked out by the roots and destroyed, for our conditions neither warrant its growth nor excuse its existence.”

The *New York Times* continued along this theme: “These aliens, driven out of Germany and Bohemia for treasonable teachings by Bismarck and the Emperor of Austria, have swarmed over into this country of extreme toleration and have most flagrantly abused its hospitality.”

Historian Nell Irvin Painter further articulates this sentiment by writing that “after Haymarket the stereotype of the foreign (especially Germanic), bearded, swarthy, bomb-throwing anarchist gained currency.”

John Higham also concludes that for years afterward “the memory of Haymarket and the dread of imported anarchy

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33 Ibid., 148, 230-231.
36 Flinn and Wilkie, *Chicago Police*, 278.
haunted the American consciousness.” The Haymarket bombing dramatically magnified public fears of anarchist violence and class warfare in the United States, and social elites were quick to attribute the violence to recent immigrants.

Immigrant communities were also quick to distance themselves from the anarchists, turning to racial solidarity in a rejection of radicalism. The New York Tribune reported on a meeting of 500 Bohemians who formed “an anti-anarchist society, in consequence of the Chicago riots and the unfounded aspirations on the character of the Bohemian nation and the entire Slavonic race.” The meeting had been called to respond to “the attack made on our nationality for the Chicago riots, we wish to say that the press has misrepresented the numbers of Bohemians taking part in the riots.” Community leaders emphasised that “only a comparatively few Bohemian people are concerned in the Anarchist movement and denouncing them as lawless fanatics, for whose doings that nationality has been made responsible.” The meeting concluded, “We are all citizens of this country and, as we find our adopted country a better one than the one we left, our duty is to work with all our power against the lawlessness, do our best to put down Anarchism among our members, stand by our flag and be obedient citizens.” The New Haven Evening Register noted approvingly of this public stance: “Bohemians as a race were peaceful people and on their arrival here studied the laws and strove to be good citizens. They would do all that lay in their power, individually and by organizations, to root out the accursed weed of anarchism.” When a group of anarchists attempted to speak at the meeting, the police appeared in force, as the Tribune reported: journalists undoubtedly wanted to assure their readers that local police had the situation under control. It was also clear that the meeting had already been under surveillance.

The bombing also quickly became a subject of xenophobic and antiradical popular fiction when several journalists and self-described “eyewitnesses” hastily produced a handful of inexpensive and highly sensational instant histories. For

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43 Even before the trial ended, the New York Detective Library issued The Red Flag; or the Anarchists of Chicago, complete with a lurid cover featuring a portrait of a stolid anarchist against a menacing backdrop of guns, daggers, and explosives, see: H. K. Shacleford, The Red Flag of the Anarchists in
example, Paul Hull’s *The Chicago Riot: A Record of the Terrible Scenes of May 4, 1886* noted that Chicago had been for some time a “central distributing point” in the United States for European immigration, but that in the last decade this “made it peculiarly the idling-place of the only human material from which social peace in America has anything to fear.” Hull continued to remark that these immigrants from European despotism had turned the city into a repository for “the feverish spirit of human resentment against laws of life, of property, and of conduct which it has no hand in making or enforcing.” For Hull, therefore, these newcomers had little appreciation for “the new civilization into which they have come and into which they should assimilate,” and from their immigrant cultures came “this band of ignorant villains and designing demagogues that has bred riot and bloodshed in Chicago.”

Hull was one of many commenters who conflated immigrants and anarchist violence in an effort to distance the violence from American industrial relations. In 1893, even avowed socialist and *Arbeiter Zeitung* staff member George Schilling wrote to Lucy Parsons, by then the widow of Haymarket martyr Albert Parsons, about precisely this sort of contention:

> The open espousal of physical force – especially when advocated by foreigners – as a remedy for social maladjustments can only lead to greater despotism. When you terrorize the public mind and threaten the stability of society with violence, you create the conditions which place the Bonfields and Garys’ in the Saddle… Fear is not the mother of progress and liberty but oft times of reaction and aggression. Your agitation inspires fear; it shocks the public mind and conscience and inevitably calls forth strong brutal men to meet force with force.

In short, when violence is attributed to foreigners, police could play off of public fears to re-establish order through increased surveillance and reciprocal violence.

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45 Letter from George Schilling to Lucy Parsons (December 1, 1893), George A. Schilling Collection, Box: 1893-1894, Abraham Lincoln Library, Illinois State Historical Society, Springfield, IL.
However, it was precisely the institutional development that transformed the urban police force into a means to suppress and control labor unrest that made them a target for anarchist violence. The Haymarket rally was as much a response to the police violence at the McCormick plant, as the bombing was a result of police efforts to break-up an otherwise peaceful meeting. In turn, the police used the bombing to justify and deepen surveillance over immigrant communities. To marginalize sympathy for the anarchists, police and the press constructed gendered critiques that emphasised cowardliness and idleness, coupled with depictions of the foreignness of the anarchists, as an effort to distance the suspects from the working class that was their intended audience. Yet the police force was not the only institution that developed during the Gilded Age to control dissident labor. The example of the Homestead Lockout of 1892 aptly demonstrated that private sector companies and state militias also had a role to play within the realm of suppressing labor unrest and contributing to anarchist violence.

**Frick in Conspiracies**

Henry Clay Frick’s strategy during the Homestead Lockout to use the Pinkerton Detective Agency and then the Pennsylvania National Guard offers telling examples of how private-sector police forces along with state and business-funded militia units were increasingly deployed in industrial disputes. Frick’s actions also motived Alexander Berkman’s choice of the Chairman of the Carnegie Steel Company as a target for Propaganda by Deed. When Pittsburgh policemen captured Berkman immediately after the Homestead events, they colluded with the press to depict the anarchist in class, racial, and gendered terms in order to distance Berkman from the working class he claimed to represent. Unlike the Haymarket bombing, the police had the perpetrator in custody, but they nonetheless catered to and added to public fears of widespread anarchist conspiracies and anxieties that upstanding citizens might be co-opted by anarchist propaganda.

The urban police force was just one of several developing institutions of law, order, and social control. Numerous private detective agencies, often authorized by state laws and invested with limited law enforcement powers, emerged as a quasi-legal private police force. After the Civil War, industrial corporations increasingly established their
own private police forces. In Pennsylvania, the state authorized private coal and iron police forces to deal with labor unrest in mines and mills, while in other jurisdictions sheriffs and other local officials were allowed to appoint persons, funded privately by the industrial employers, to patrol strikes and fulfill various police duties. Most notable among the private policing agencies was the Pinkerton National Detective Agency, established in Chicago by Allen Pinkerton in 1850. By 1865, the Pinkerton Agency was the pre-eminent private police force in the United States. During the widespread industrial unrest of 1877, Allen Pinkerton had catered to employers’ fears by advertising his agents’ ability to uncover radical agitators. When police were searching for Albert Parsons in connection with the Haymarket bomb, Allen Pinkerton provided crucial evidence of Parsons’ connections to past radical activities and singled out Parsons as a leader of the 1877 strikes. Pinkerton also criticized the anarchist’s “flippant tongue,” which had enabled Parsons to “tingle the blood of that class of characterless rascals that are always standing ready to grasp society by the throat.” What Pinkerton was really selling to industrialists was the notion that individual agitators were to blame for class conflict rather than the economic disparity generated by industrial capitalism. By the time Allen Pinkerton died in 1884 and control of the firm passed to his sons, William and Robert, the Pinkerton Agency had already become synonymous with strikebreaking and known for its ability to provide large numbers of armed men with military and law enforcement experience to break up strikes. These private police forces were essential


48 At the same time Pinkerton credited Parsons with “that devilish ingenuity in the use of words which has permitted himself to escape deserving punishment” and it was because of Parsons’ “baleful influence,” more than any other reason, “that the conditions were ripe in Chicago for all manner of excesses.” Allan Pinkerton, Strikers, Communists, Tramps and Detectives (New York: G.W. Carleton, 1878), 388-389.

for mine and factory owners who wished to supplement local authorities when labor unrest threatened.

The Pinkerton Agency, with its history of strikebreaking, played a significant role in the Homestead events. Even before Homestead, Pinkerton men had been on the job during the strike for the Eight Hour Day at Chicago’s McCormick Reaper plant in May of 1886 and contributed to the chain of events that led to the Haymarket bombing in the same month. Henry Clay Frick also turned to the Pinkertons in advance of labor unrest at Homestead in 1892. Frick began negotiations with Robert Pinkerton before the last conference was held between the representatives of the Amalgamated Association and the Carnegie Steel Company. In fact, Frick had already arranged for a private police force to take charge of the Homestead plant several days before it was positively known that the Amalgamated Association would not agree to all of the propositions of the Carnegie Steel Company. However, the Homestead community’s defeat of the Pinkerton force on July 6th had greatly tarnished the reputation of the Pinkerton Agency in particular and privately funded police agencies in general. Even conservative commentators, such as Homestead pastor James McIllyar, criticized the Pinkertons’ actions at Homestead. McIllyar wrote in 1912:

The immediate cause of the conflict, and the great mistake of the Carnegie Company was the employment of the Pinkertons without any authority of law. The Pinkertons are a body of private citizens. Whence did they acquire the right to organize themselves into an army and, armed to the teeth, march into another state at the request of a private citizen of that state to do his bidding? The whole thing

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50 The last conference with the AASIW was held on June 23, and nothing was accomplished, on June 25, Frick wrote to Pinkerton in New York acknowledging Pinkerton’s report from June 22 and confirming “We will want three hundred guards for service at our Homestead Mills as a measure of precaution against interference with the operation of the works on July 6, 1892. The only trouble we anticipate is that an attempt will be made to prevent such of our men, with whom we will by that time have made satisfactory arrangements, from going to work and possibly some demonstration of violence upon the part of those whose places have been filled, or most likely by an element which usually is attracted to such scenes for the purpose of stirring up trouble. We are not desirous that the men you send shall be armed, unless the occasion properly calls for such a measure later on for the protection of our employees [sic] and property. We shall wish these guards to be placed on our property and there to remain unless called into other service by the civil authorities to meet an emergency that is not likely to arise.” Letter from Henry Clay Frick to Robert A. Pinkerton, (June 25, 1892) Frick Archives, Carnegie-Frick Correspondence, Box 4, Folder 2, Archives Service Centre, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA. Frick and Pinkerton both later testified that several days, possibly a week or more, before the letter of June 25 was written, a representative of the Pinkerton agency had been in Pittsburgh, having come from New York at Frick’s request.
implies that the authorities of Pennsylvania are not able to protect its citizens, and is, therefore, a reflection upon the state and a menace to American liberty.\(^{51}\)

Thus, McIlyar not only critiqued the Carnegie Steel Company for their use of the Pinkertons, but also the very idea of a privately funded police industry in the democratic United States. While larger cities like Pittsburgh established citywide police bureaus in 1857, the Pennsylvania State Police were not founded until 1905, thus smaller communities like Homestead were still serviced by democratically elected sheriffs. At the time of the Homestead strike, however, the Carnegie Steel Company had acted legally and a subsequent court ruling confirmed that the company had had the legal right to bring in Pinkerton Agents.\(^{52}\) In the wake of the fiasco of the Pinkertons’ defeat at Homestead, several states prohibited the employment of armed guards, unless they were residents of that state, to prevent the use of private armies called in from distant cities. At the same time, the federal government passed the Anti-Pinkerton Act of 1893 that prohibited the US government from using private agencies for strike breaking activities and placed greater responsibility for the maintenance of social order upon local municipal police forces and state militias. However, much like the municipal police force and the private detective agencies, state militias were evolving to meet the needs of industrial capitalism.

Republican traditions in the United States had rejected the necessity of a large national Army in favor of a citizen-soldier model where a small military structure could call on community members in times of need. This held true until the Civil War necessitated the creation of a massive federal army and, particularly in the post-war Reconstruction period when the Union army occupied formerly Confederate states between 1865 and 1877 to impose the Radical Republican agenda, for some observers the post-war period seemed to demonstrate the tyrannical misuse of the military in a democratic society. This ended in the political compromise of 1877, whereby Republican candidate Rutherford Hayes was confirmed as President in exchange for an end to military occupation of the South and a dramatic reduction in the size of the regular army. However, 1877 was also an unprecedented year of labor unrest that included the first

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national strike in American history and the first time in which the federal government placed institutions of law, order, and social control on the side of business. Historian Robert Bruce concludes that one of the implications of the suppression of the 1877 strike for employers who refused to deal with the organizations of their workmen was that a new option of state assistance emerged. In the years that followed, employers “began to rely on local and State governments for assistance during labour disputes.” However, the 1877 strike also demonstrated that existing local militias, with close ties to the local community, could not always be relied on to suppress the aspirations of their fellow citizens. As Stephen Skowronek summarizes “[t]he rationale for depending upon militia over regulars to suppress insurrection seemed to have outlived its usefulness in a society torn by class conflict.” However, in a political climate in which Southern states blocked all effort to increase the size of the regular army and Northern industrial interests were calling for military aid to suppress labor unrest, it was the state militia system that was transformed into the National Guard through the 1880s and emerged as a compromise measure. The Guard’s development was most rapid in industrial states of the North that were highly vulnerable to labor unrest: Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Illinois. By 1892, the state-based National Guard system was in place throughout the nation and staffed with officers who were primarily businessmen and professionals. Sometimes the recipients of large subsidies from wealthy industrialists, National Guard contingents were often called out by employers to suppress labor

53 The United States had used the army to suppress domestic unrest as early as 1794, when President George Washington had sent troops to quell the Whiskey Rebellion in Pennsylvania; President Abraham Lincoln also dispatched Union regiments to control the 1863 draft riots in New York; and during the 1877 strike President Rutherford Hayes sent troops to Chicago, Pittsburgh, and other urban centers to protect the nation from “insurrection.”


56 In Chicago the Military Committee of the Citizens Association raised funds for the militia and in 1878 donated two Gatling guns to protect Chicago. On the evening the bomb exploded in Haymarket Square, the First Regiment Armory went through street and riot drill and assembled a Gatling gun as the local press noted, “a large quantity of ammunition accompanied the weapon, which will be kept in readiness for instant service.” “Police and Military Arrangements,” Chicago Daily Tribune (May 4, 1886), 1; Flinn and Wilkie, Chicago Police, 161, 179-183; Bessie Louise Pierce, A History of Chicago volume 3 (New York: A.A. Knopf, 1937), 252.
One of the early opportunities for the newly created National Guard to show its worth occurred in July 1892 when the Governor of Pennsylvania ordered 4,000 Guard troops to Homestead after the defeat of the three hundred Pinkerton agents. The events also gave opportunity to the police investigators and the press to further emphasize the growing threat of labor-related violence in the United States.

With the National Guard encamped on the high ground overlooking the Homestead steel plant, it was the Pittsburgh police reserves that were called out in full force after Alexander Berkman attacked Henry Clay Frick on July 23rd. Within half an hour of the shooting, the streets in the vicinity of Frick’s office were lined with policemen. Two days later, the Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette noted, “every precaution was taken to quell any further disturbances at once, as it was not known but whether Berkmann’s [sic] act was merely preliminary to a wholesale reign of assassination and riot.”

Both the police investigators and journalists who reported the attempted assassination amplified the threat of further anarchist violence and implied a widespread conspiracy. Berkman himself almost exploded in police custody. As the assailant was being positioned for his mug shot at the Pittsburgh police station, his captors noticed that he was chewing on something. The officers quickly moved Berkman back to his cell and, with the aid of a pair of depressors, fished out a slightly dented cap of mercury fulminate. Police recounted to reporters that the cap “contained explosive matter in sufficient quantity to blow a man’s head off his shoulders without disturbing his shoe laces.”

With the anarchist defused, police recorded the discovery in the Registry of Prisoners Received and held Berkman on $21,000 bail, placing him in strict seclusion until Frick’s wounds could be conclusively determined. Newspapers like the New York Times, attempting to both fuel and calm public fears of a larger anarchist conspiracy, explained to readers:

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60 The Register notes Alexander Bergman (sic) was from New York, 22 years of age, identified as “White” under the color column, Russian by nationality, literate and a printer by occupation, curiously identified
Every precaution is taken to prevent him from committing suicide. He is not allowed to receive visitors, and every person calling at the jail is scanned with care, lest he be an Anarchist in disguise. Warden McAleese says that he is not afraid that anybody will blow up the jail with dynamite.  

With Berkman’s body secured behind the jailhouse walls, local and national newspapers deployed class, race, and gendered constructions to distinguish Alexander Berkman from the so-called better classes of American society. The New York Times articulated class critiques that emphasised Berkman’s idleness as seen on the assassin’s body, writing that “when stripped the crank was… of slender frame and showed no evidence of having been engaged in a laborious occupation,” clearly dissociating him from the working class. Similarly, the Times constructed Berkman’s identity in print by emphasizing his racial characteristics, commenting that “his lips were thick, his nose large, and he was a typical Russian Jew in appearance,” and, thus, using descriptions of the body to make him appear as an outsider to American society. The Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette elaborated: “He is utterly unfit for American citizenship, and under a proper immigration law would never have been permitted to land in this country. The sooner he is out of it the better.” Pro-labor periodicals picked up on this theme. The National Labor Tribune editorialized that “right thinking men deplore, and right thinking men should pull themselves together further to resist the efforts of fools who seek to have condemned labor’s cause because an evil offshoot of Russian despotism took it into his un-American head to commit an act of atrocity.”

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In response to these negative constructions of Berkman’s foreignness, immigrant communities also attempted to distance themselves from any perceived ties to the assassin or anarchism. Although denied the opportunity to see Berkman and confirm whether or not he was Jewish, J.S. Glick, editor of the local Jewish weekly paper *Volksfreund*, told a reporter from the *Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette* that “pride in his race lead him to believe the assassin was not a Hebrew, for Hebrews do not murder nor are they anarchists.... The Jews of Pittsburgh would not lift a finger to aid Berkman if he is a Jew.” Along with foreign and class critiques of Berkman that attempted to remove him from any popular appeal, the press also used gender constructions to discredit Berkman’s masculinity. The *National Labor Tribune* reported that Berkman’s assassination attempt was unsuccessful because “His courage failed him when the moment arrived.” Similarly, Berkman’s cowardliness was expressed by a reporter circulating among the strikers in Homestead, who stated that “much regret was expressed and the workmen seemed to feel that, although Berkman did not represent them or their cause, directly or indirectly, his cowardly act was certain to prejudice their interests.”

These equations of cowardliness and lack of masculinity suggests a widespread perception that Berkman in particular, and anarchists in general, were the antithesis of the true American man.

While the police investigators also employed these class, race, and gendered constructions to marginalize Berkman, they were more interested in looking for the larger conspiracy. Although some police and journalists were stoking public fears of anarchist conspiracies to further their own ends, others were undoubtedly succumbing to their own fears and to those of the larger public around the dreaded possibility of widespread anarchist terrorism. Investigators turned their attention to searching out what they perceived as the omnipresent anarchist conspiracy, beginning with the theory that anarchist groups had picked Frick as a target and Berkman as the man to enact the

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67 “Assault on Mr. Frick: An Anarchist Assassin Shoots and Stabs the Chairman of Carnegie Co.,” *National Labor Tribune* (July 30, 1892), 8.
68 Arthur G. Burgoyne, *The Homestead Strike of 1892* (Pittsburgh, PA: Rawsthrone Engraving and Printing Company, 1893), 151; Homestead Reverend James McIllyar was also quick to emphasize Berkman’s foreignness to the Homestead community, “We have no anarchists, and none would be allowed here.” McIllyar, *Preacher-Evangelist-Freemason*, 262.
murderous deed. William McCleary, Chief Deputy to the Allegheny County Sheriff, stated to the *Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette* that he was “satisfied there was an organized movement against Mr. Frick, and that Berkman was the tool of the conspirators. There are more anarchists here than people suppose, and they were preparing to carry out some hellish plots against the lives of prominent citizens.” The search for conspirators got its first big break just two days after the attack when a clerk from the Adams Express Company provided police with an address for Berkman in Pittsburgh after seeing his name twice on the daily postal register. Police promptly raided the house and arrested Carl Nold, who admitted that Berkman had boarded with him from July 14th to July 22nd, and that he had pointed out Frick’s office to Berkman, although he had claimed to have no idea of Berkman’s intention to kill Frick. Despite Nold’s claims of ignorance, the *Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette* sensationalized this development, claiming that the search of Nold’s residence revealed “a large lot of anarchist papers... and a lot of other stuff of anarchist nature.”

Post office employees also notified the police about a known local distributor of anarchist literature, Henry Bauer, who frequently received large batches of mail “of an incendiary nature.” In connection with the Homestead investigation, the police searched Bauer’s residence on July 26th and found “much incendiary literature.” More alarming still, “concealed under debris in the back room were found guns, revolvers, cartridges, dynamite and other explosives. It required two trips of the patrol wagon to haul the dangerous stuff away.” Playing to the fears of concerned citizens, the police also

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70 Nold was promptly arrested on charges of conspiracy and identified in the *Registry of Prisoners Received* as residing in Allegheny County, 22 years of age, “White” by color, Germany by nationality, and a Blacksmith by occupation, literate and married. Register of Prisoners Received this 30th Day of July, 1892, Allegheny County Prison, Daily Register (Daily Record), July 1, 1892-March 29, 1893, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, Jail Records 1863-1932, Archives Service Centre, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA.
73 “Anarchist Plot: Bauer’s Arrest Leads to a Startling Discovery,” *Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette* (July 27, 1892): 1. Journalists sensationalized the discovery: “The inventory was a miniature arsenal, consisting of a Winchester rifle, a 44-caliber revolver, a murderous-looking dagger, a bottle of giant powder, some curious-looking round balls, which resembled candy, but were said to be dynamite bombs; a Waterbury
reported that they found “a list of a number of residents of this country who are reputed to be worth over $1,000,000” and inferred from this piece of evidence that a conspiracy of at least five anarchists had marked these men for slaughter.\(^{74}\) Sifting through the documents, police were alarmed to find “one which set forth under the seal of the superior court of New York City that Henry Bauer had been made a citizen of the United States on August 26\(^{th}\), 1890, after having taken the necessary oath to support the Constitution.”\(^{75}\) The idea that anarchists could become citizens, or that a citizen could be converted to anarchism was deeply troubling and Henry Bauer was subsequently arrested on charges of Conspiracy.\(^{76}\) Neither Bauer nor Nold could come up with the $5000 bail; they waited in jail for their trials.\(^{77}\)

The search for widespread conspiracy after the Homestead events had only led to the arrest of two men. Despite their possession of provocative material, only one had admitted to knowing Berkman and the other to being a distributor of anarchist literature.\(^{78}\) Pittsburgh police investigators forwarded Berkman’s photograph to their counterparts in New York for further investigation in hopes that police inquiries elsewhere in the country

watch, a number of obscene publications, red flags, liberty caps, and everything which goes to make up the quarter-master department of a whole tribe of fire-eating reds.” See: “Millionaires Marked: The Hellish Plot of the Anarchists,” *Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette* (July 27, 1892): 2.\(^{74}\)

“Millionaires Marked: The Hellish Plot of the Anarchists,” *Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette* (July 27, 1892): 2; the *Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette* subsequently published a list of 18 names purporting to be from the files police had confiscated during their raids: “After Anarchists: Allegheny Police Searching For Meeting Places,” *Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette* (August 1, 1892): 2.\(^{75}\)

“Millionaires Marked: The Hellish Plot of the Anarchists,” *Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette* (July 27, 1892): 2.\(^{76}\)

Bauer was entered into the *Registry of Prisoners Received* as also residing in Allegheny County, 31 years of age, “White,” Germany by nationality, identified as an Agent by occupation, single and literate:

Register of Prisoners Received this 30\(^{th}\) Day of July, 1892, Allegheny County Prison, Daily Register (Daily Record), July 1, 1892-March 29, 1893, Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, Jail Records 1863-1932, Archives Service Centre, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA.\(^{77}\)


78 Pittsburgh police failed to uncover a second plot that targeted Frick. Modest Aronstam, another New York anarchist, arrived in Pittsburgh after Berkman’s failed attempt. Oral histories conducted by Paul Avrich uncovered in an interview with Aronstam’s daughter, Luba Stein Benenson, in December 1973 that after Berkman’s unsuccessful attempt on Frick “Father [Aronstam] went to Pittsburgh to finish the job. The pockets of his trousers were filled with dynamite. He intended to blow up Frick’s house. When he got off the train he passed a newspaper stand and his eyes fell on a headline “Aaron Stamm Here To Kill Frick.” So he dumped the dynamite in an outhouse and left on the next train. Although Berkman’s *Prison Memoirs* and Goldman’s *Living My Life* discusses their relationship with Aronstam as Fedya, both Berkman and Goldman omit reference to Aronstam’s role in their memoirs. See: Interview between Luba Stein Benenson and Paul Avrich (December 4, 1973) in Paul Avrich, *Anarchist Voices: An Oral History of Anarchism in America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995), 55.
could help, but other police organizations similarly failed to produce evidence of widespread anarchist plots.\textsuperscript{79} Living in New York at the time, Emma Goldman was suspected of involvement in Frick’s murder plot, which she later admitted in her autobiography.\textsuperscript{80} Journalists located Goldman “on her little throne in the rear of the saloon in Fifth street,” where, they reported, she “talked about the wisdom of destroying capitalists to some young fellows who are just beginning the business of living without work.”\textsuperscript{81} Thus, this critique of idleness was used to separate anarchists from the proper and upstanding classes.

Similarly, anarchists who rejoiced at Berkman’s assassination attempt were depicted as dirty in an attempt to portray them as disreputable. The \textit{Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette} reported on responses amongst anarchists in New York: “each unwashed mother’s son felt that it was an opportunity for Anarchistic crowing…. There were old men and young men of various degrees of dirtiness and shabbiness. Each had something to say of the would-be assassin, and it was all praise.”\textsuperscript{82} In the most elaborate constructions of anarchists as “foreign,” many different commentators went to great lengths to depict the anarchists as dirty and stressed how filthy such malcontents invariably were, and that soap and water might be the most potent weapons in the class war.\textsuperscript{83} This fixation on dirt was critical to the imaginative attempt by journalists to cast


\textsuperscript{80} Although not charged in this matter, in her 1931 memoir Emma Goldman wrote that Berkman had originally intended to carry a bomb to Pittsburgh, however a test of the bomb design carried out in a remote section of Staten Island failed, the plan evolved to the use of a pistol. Goldman further assisted Berkman by travelling with him from Worcester to New York and sending money to Berkman in to Pittsburgh to help him in the plot. See: Emma Goldman, \textit{Living My Life: Volume One} (New York: Dover Publications, 1970 [1931]), 83-107.

\textsuperscript{81} “Still Raving: Anarchists Furnishing Evidence Against Themselves,” \textit{Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette} (July 29, 1892): 2.


\textsuperscript{83} The participants in an anarchist meeting in the dime novel \textit{The Red Flag} are likewise “unkempt and wild looking,” Shacleford, \textit{Red Flag}, 7; Schaack in particular was fixated on the filthiness of anarchists. His descriptions frequently stressed their long hair, filthy clothing, and instinctive aversion to personal hygiene. After the Haymarket trial, Schaack scorned those citizens who worked for clemency and allowed their homes to be used for meetings to promote this purpose. In such respectable settings, “avowed Anarchists and Socialists spread their feet under mahogany tables and shuffled dirt-laden shoes over
anarchists and their cause as alien to social order and civilization. Perhaps more surprising was the *Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette* reporter’s comment about “an anarchist customer, who, strange as it may seem, had on clean linen.” Incidents such as finding Henry Bauer’s naturalization documentation and wearing a clean shirt in a known anarchist den represented in print the fear that Propaganda by D-need could co-opt respectable citizens. According to a popular British journal, by 1892 anarchist terrorism had become an “epidemic... almost mysterious and universal as the influenza” against which “police precautions appear to be as useless as prophylactic against the fatal sneeze.” The difficulty in identifying anarchists, despite widely disseminated descriptions of anarchists as physically identifiable by their filth and effeminacy, and the inability to establish a conspiracy, contributed to the search for more sophisticated means of identifying suspects. The *Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette* described with anticipation the arrival of the Bertillon system as a tool for Pittsburgh police just weeks after the assassination attempt on Henry Clay Frick. But even advanced systems of criminal identification, and one of the country’s most elite investigative units, the Secret Service, could not save the next victim from anarchist violence.

**Conspiracies in the Death of a President**

The Department of the Treasury’s Secret Service Agency, which expanded during the 1898 Spanish-American War with a marked institutional bias against recent European immigrants, was responsible for protecting President William McKinley upon his ascendency to the Oval Office. When McKinley was assassinated during a public reception at the Pan-American Exposition in 1901, he was surrounded by three Secret Service agents, who were subsequently blamed for the security debacle. The immediate apprehension of Leon Czolgosz was followed by local and national press accounts that emphasised the assassin’s foreignness while distancing the assassination from the velvety rugs in houses that had hitherto sheltered owners who, on the streets and in the marts of trade, had denounced the anarchists in unmeasured terms,” see: Schaack, *Anarchy and Anarchists*, 208, 623.


period’s turbulent industrial relations as well as any popular support for anarchism. Although Czolgosz’s interrogation revealed that the assassin had acted alone, policemen and journalists contributed to public fears of widespread anarchist conspiracies by publicizing hyperbolized investigative stories that served to justify the intensity of their investigations and their choice of targets.

The same forces that had shaped the municipal police, private detective agencies, and the National Guard also played a role in enhancing federal institutions responsible for maintaining social order, particularly the Secret Service. The origins of the Secret Service owed much to the early career of Allan Pinkerton. While working a case in Baltimore in 1861, Pinkerton warned Abraham Lincoln about a plot to assassinate the President-elect on the way to the inauguration ceremony, causing Lincoln to change his travel plans. As a result, Pinkerton was enlisted to help set up the first federal intelligence agency, but Pinkerton’s tenure at the Secret Service did not last long. The primary function of the Secret Service after the Civil War was to investigate counterfeiting of the national currency, but the assassinations of President Lincoln in 1865 and President James Garfield in 1881 increased the perceived need for the Secret Service to protect the President and investigate threats against his life. Beginning in 1885, President Grover Cleveland requested agents as personal guards at his summer residence, even though the

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protection of the President was not part of the agency’s official mandate or funding. Over a decade later, on McKinley’s inauguration in March 1897, the Secret Service retained the responsibility of keeping a watchful eye on the President.

While the Secret Service was created during the security crisis of the Civil War, the outbreak of the Spanish-American War in 1898 had a profound effect on the transformation of the agency. Early on in the war, social elites were concerned that the profit motive would overshadow national loyalty in the proliferating private detective agencies in the United States. Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones’ research demonstrates that as early as January 1898, an anonymous letter to the Secretary of War suggested that “Robert Pinkerton was working for Spain and protested based on the rumoured possibility that William Pinkerton, head of the Chicago office and successor to his father’s dynasty, would become head of the Secret Service.” These rumours were circulated through the federal government and forwarded on to the Secret Service for further investigation, since the Service was increasingly becoming the principal investigative body on matters of domestic security. At the outbreak of hostilities with Spain, the head of the Service, John E. Wilkie, “respectfully requested” a modest $5000 from the Department of Treasury for “defraying the expenses of such special investigations as we may from time to time be called upon to make.” On May 16th, 1898, Wilkie used war work as a pretext to request an additional allotment of $50,000, “for the emergency force of the Division to cover more satisfactorily and completely the points of army mobilization, and all the cities where it seemed advisable to locate the agents of the Service.” After the peace treaty

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89 Explaining these arrangements in 1910 Franklin MacViegh, Secretary of the Treasury, wrote to his assistant, Charles D. Norton, “I assume that the only reason why a selection was made from the men in the Secret Service Division was that their training and experience, which demanded a high degree of personal courage and the ability to think and act quickly in emergencies, qualified them particularly for the duty to which they were thus assigned. The compensation of these men while on this duty continued to be paid from the appropriation for suppressing counterfeiting.” Franklin MacViegh to Charles D. Norton, Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, page 1, Franklin MacViegh Papers, box 27, 1910 folder, Library of Congress, Washington, DC.
90 Jeffreys-Jones, American Espionage, 20-21. Jeffreys-Jones also uncovered evidence in the form of a letter, dated June 6, 1898, addressed to the head of Spanish Intelligence in North America by a spy in Pennsylvania, which referred to the assistance from Pinkerton men.
92 Wilkie, “Secret Service,” 429; Franklin MacViegh explained that the wartime funding increase came with a provision from the President’s personal secretary, George B. Cortelyou, that four men be assigned to maintain “a twenty-four hour tour of duty” around McKinley at all times. Franklin MacViegh to
was signed with Spain on December 10th, 1898, John Wilkie publically elaborated on his strategy during the war as:

…one wholly of defence and protection. It was believed that every large center of population was infested by foreigners of anarchistic tendencies who might seize the opportunity for the execution of plots against the officers of the Government or against the welfare of the community at large.\textsuperscript{93}

Wilkie explained the Secret Service’s role in the Spanish-American War in a way that could justify the continuation of government funding of the Agency in peacetime to counteract the continuing threat of anarchist violence. In their war work, Secret Service agents demonstrated an anti-foreign gaze in their perceptions of the peril posed by non-Americans, especially Eastern and Southern Europeans, to American security. The expanded Secret Service, in contrast to the hordes of foreigners and anarchists that were subject to their surveillance, was “made up wholly of Americans.”\textsuperscript{94} Wilkie, a clearly biased source as the head of the Secret Service, implied that agents’ activities brought them in contact with a wide segment of American society, but historian Jeffreys-Jones’ 1970s analysis and close investigation of the Secret Service files revealed that the Agency had actually singled out a rather narrow segment of American society for further surveillance: newly-arrived immigrant groups. Jeffreys-Jones concluded that “Letters from people informing on their neighbours tended to reflect personal problems such as declining status, nostalgia, and an inability to cope with newcomers, particularly Catholics from southern Europe.”\textsuperscript{95} Many native born American citizens, particularly in

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\textsuperscript{94} Wilkie also elaborated on the investigative strategy of the Secret Service, “suspicious persons were watched for a while, and then, if necessary, warned that the Government was aware of their sentiments and intentions, and that any attempt on their part to make a move against the interests of the United States would be followed by arrest.” Wilkie, “Secret Service,” 425, 429.

\textsuperscript{95} Wilkie detailed that of the thousand or more suspects who were reported to the Secret Service, more than six hundred were under close surveillance, including “professors, diplomats, doctors, merchants, cigar-makers, marines, electrical experts, government employees of foreign birth and uncertain antecedents,
urban environments with large immigrant communities, perpetuated anti-foreign biases during investigations.

The Secret Service emerged from America’s war with Spain as a much larger institution that, in the words of Chief Wilkie, had operated under assumptions that the greatest threat to the United States was the infestation of ‘foreigners of anarchistic tendencies.’ Secret Service agents carried what they learned from their war work forward into their role as Presidential protectors in a decade darkened by the sensational assassinations of European leaders by anarchists. Charles G. Dawes, then Comptroller of the Currency and insider to the Secret Service’s administrative home with the Treasury Department, noted that as early as 1900, McKinley had been apprised of the anarchist peril facing him as President. In an official report that crossed McKinley’s desk, he was informed that “the anarchists or socialists through their various organizations resolved to rid the earth of a number of its rulers, including the American chief executive.”

Although McKinley did not take this threat very seriously, it was a very real concern for the men assigned to guard him.

As President McKinley traveled to the Pan-American Exposition in 1901, three Secret Service agents accompanied him: George Foster, Samuel Ireland, and George Porter. These agents, who were particularly outspoken about the public reception scheduled for September 6th, suggested that it be cancelled but, as McKinley’s personal Secretary George B. Cortelyou explained, since “this was not received favourably by the President, the program was carried out.” Foster, Ireland, and Porter were all posted around McKinley at the public reception in the Temple of Music, along with eighteen Exposition policemen, eleven soldiers from the Seventy-Third Company of the United States Coast Artillery, and four Buffalo police detectives. The assembled force had orders from Cortelyou to “keep the line moving as fast as possible as it was a large crowd and


96 Diary entry (September 1, 1901) in Charles G. Dawes, A Journal of the McKinley Years Bascom N. Timmons ed., (Chicago, IL: Lakeside Press, 1950), 277.

97 George B. Cortelyou to Louis Babcock (March 6, 1902), Czolgosz/McKinley Papers, microfilm M65.7, Buffalo and Erie County Historical Association, Buffalo, NY; Franklin MacViegh to Charles D. Norton, Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, page 3, Franklin MacViegh Papers, box 27, 1910 folder, Library of Congress, Washington, DC.
the President was tired,” but these precautions were not enough to prevent Leon Czolgosz from firing two shots at close range into McKinley’s abdomen.98

Secret Service agents’ assumptions about foreigners of anarchistic tendencies played an interesting, and fatal, role in the moments leading up to the assassination. The agents later explained that they had allowed the assassin to slip past their gaze, despite the bulky bandage that covered his right hand, because when they looked into his eyes they “thought he was a mechanic.”99 Yet, rather than appear less than diligent in their duty, the agents stated that they had been distracted by a “dark complexioned man with a black moustache” about ten feet ahead of the fair-skinned assassin. In both his official report and while testifying under oath about the suspicious man, George Foster stated: “I put my hand on his shoulder and passed him past the president… I didn’t like his general appearance.”100 Similarly, Samuel Ireland stated to the press immediately after the shooting that he was watching the man with a bandaged hand closely,

But was interrupted by the man in front of him, who held onto the President’s hand an unusually long time. This man, who appeared to be an Italian and who had a short cropped heavy moustache was persistent and it was necessary for me to push him along so that the others could reach the President.101

Newspapers, such as the Buffalo Courier, quickly disseminated the assumed link between the dark complexioned moustached man and the assassination plot, reporting just after the shooting that “at present all the energies of the Secret Service operatives as well as those of the Exposition detectives and the local police are bent on finding the little Italian

98 Samuel Ireland, “Report prepared at request of John Wilkie,” (September 6, 1901) Buffalo, NY, Records of the U.S. Secret Service, Record Group 87, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), College Park, MD.
99 Testimony of Secret Service Agent George Foster, People of the State of New York against Leon F. Czolgosz, Supreme Court, Erie County, Buffalo, New York (September 23-26, 1901), 76.
100 Testimony of Secret Service Agent George Foster, People of the State of New York against Leon F. Czolgosz, Supreme Court, Erie County, Buffalo, New York (September 23-26, 1901), 76; George Foster, “Report prepared at request of John Wilkie,” (September 6, 1901) Buffalo, NY, page 13, Records of the U.S. Secret Service, Record Group 87, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), College Park, MD.
101 “Secret Service Guard Ireland Tells Story of Anarchist’s Deed: Man Who Preceded Neimann in Shaking President’s Hand Lingered Longer Than Usual and May Have Been in the Plot: Police are Looking for this Man; No Blame Is Attached To Guards,” Buffalo Daily Courier (September 7, 1901); this mysterious man appears far less sinister in Irelands report filed later on the day of the assassination: “the man who preceded Czolgosz, dark complexioned man, about 35 years of age, pleasant featured, well dressed, and wore a dark mustache; I did not see this man after the shooting, as the crowd at both sides of the line was made to leave the building promptly... I passed the man on with a touch on his arm and a word.” Samuel R. Ireland, “Report Prepared at Request of John Wilkie,” (September 6, 1901), Records of the U.S. Secret Service, Record Group 87, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), College Park, MD.
who immediately preceded the assassin.”\textsuperscript{102} Subsequent investigations, however, concluded that the Italian was unconnected to the crime. In light of the anti-foreign bias of the Agents, it is telling that the light skinned assassin had managed unopposed access to McKinley, as this accessibility was not extended to all who had desired to meet the President that day, particularly dark complexioned Italians.

While the press portrayed a unified investigation between the Secret Service and local police, other members of the President’s protective entourage were quick to pass responsibility for the shooting specifically onto the Secret Service. Lieutenant G. Barrett Rich of the 65\textsuperscript{th} New York Infantry, who had been part of the military escort that accompanied McKinley to Buffalo, stated, “On arrival in Buffalo, the escort was excused, we being told that the Secret Service would take charge from that point.”\textsuperscript{103} Major Alexander R. Robertson, Assistant Commandant of the Pan-American Exposition’s Police Force, noted also that the Secret Service Agents exclusively assumed control of guarding the president, stating that he “was advised that the Exposition Police would control and handle the general public and that the personal safety of the President would be taken care of by the Secret Service men and guards who accompanied the President from Washington.”\textsuperscript{104} Likewise the final report of the Pan-American Exposition complied by Director General William Buchanan evaded responsibility for allowing the assassin into the presence of the president when it stated that:

By request of the President’s advisors the immediate person of the President was in charge of the Secret Service officers of the Government detailed to accompany him, and that the duties of the regular police organizations of the Exposition and of Buffalo did not bring them near his person at any time, and that these special

\textsuperscript{102} “Secret Service Men Unraveling the Plot,” \textit{Buffalo Daily Courier} (September 8, 1901); also see: “Secret Service Guard Ireland Tells Story of Anarchist’s Deed: Man Who Preceded Neimann in Shaking President’s Hand Lingered Longer Than Usual and May Have Been in the Plot: Police are Looking for this Man; No Blame Is Attached To Guards,” \textit{Buffalo Daily Courier} (September 7, 1901). Agents uncovered witnesses willing to testify that Czolgosz had been seen “talking to two middle aged men, one having a light complexion and small, light mustache, the other dark complexion and dark mustache; they looked like Italians.” However, agent Porter wrote in his report back to Wilkie that the witness “saying that he noticed that the dark one had an ugly scowl on his face, and had a treacherous looking eye, spoiled his story.” Thomas Porter, “Report Prepared at Request of John E. Wilkie,” (September 16, 1901), Chicago, IL, Records of the U.S. Secret Service, Record Group 87, National Archive and Records Administration (NARA), College Park, MD.

\textsuperscript{103} Letter from G. Barrett Rich to Mrs. Nathaniel Patch, (October 23, 1936) Papers of Mrs. Ethel Chaplin (Nathaniel) Patch, Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society, Buffalo, NY.

\textsuperscript{104} Statement of Major Alexander R. Robertson, Assistant Commandant of Police, Pan American Exposition, on the assault of President McKinley, in the temple of music on September 6, 1901, Papers of Mrs. Ethel Chaplin (Nathaniel) Patch, Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society, Buffalo, NY.
Government officers were familiar and in accord with all the police plans that had been prepared both by the Exposition Police Force and by the Police Force of the City of Buffalo, so that it is believed nothing was omitted that could have been done by either the City of Buffalo or the Exposition to have prevented the national catastrophe which occurred through the shooting of the President in Music Temple, on Friday, September 6th. 105

Even Robert Pinkerton jumped on this bandwagon, arguing to readers of the North American Review “With a properly trained and disciplined force of protectors for the President on that day, I believe the tragedy might have been prevented.” 106 No doubt Pinkerton was attempting to redeem his private-sector detective agency in the public eye, but journalists turned to the Secret Service agents to explain what had happened.

The Secret Service agents themselves struggled with the assassination that had occurred under their watch. Agent Ireland wrote in his report to Chief Wilkie and told the newspapers on September 6th that Secretary Cortelyou had exonerated the agents so “that no blame could attach to us. He said that it was without the power of any human being to detect the assassin before the crime was committed and he assured us that the little criticism by those who did not know the facts was unwarranted.” 107 Chief Wilkie, however, immediately censured Ireland for being interviewed by journalists and Ireland responded that “It was an event of such large and awful proportions that the usual rules for absolute silence would scarcely be expected to apply and I saw no one else observing them.” He also admitted to some personal traumas as a result of his perceived failure, commenting further: “I was so crushed and ashamed at my inability to do what I was sent to do, that I could not sleep nor rest and all my heart and feelings absorbed in the shock and grief at his dastardly shooting right before my eyes.” 108 Agent Porter’s report, which

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107 Samuel Ireland, “Report Prepared at Request of John Wilkie,” (September 6, 1901) Buffalo, NY, Records of the U.S. Secret Service, Record Group 87, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), College Park, MD; “Secret Service Guard Ireland Tells Story of Anarchist’s Deed: Man Who Preceded Neimann in Shaking President’s Hand Lingered Longer Than Usual and May Have Been in the Plot: Police are Looking for this Man; No Blame Is Attached To Guards,” Buffalo Daily Courier (September 7, 1901).
108 Samuel Ireland to John Wilkie (September 17, 1901) Rochester, NY, Records of the U.S. Secret Service, Record Group 87, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), College Park, MD.
he gave as he was preparing to leave Buffalo on September 21st, also attempted to exonerate the Secret Service from responsibility for the lapse of security:

Mr. Cortelyou requested him to say to Chief Wilkie that no blame could be attached to our Service on account of the assassination of the President; that we all did our duty, and we did it well. He said he regretted that one of our men said some things to the newspaper men, casting reflections on him – Mr. Cortelyou – but he supposed it was done thoughtlessly. He said at first opportunity he would call on Chief Wilkie and exonerate this Service from any blame in the matter.\textsuperscript{109}

Once the ineptitude of the Secret Service was settled, the only one left to blame for the President’s death was the shooter himself: Leon Czolgosz.

In the investigation that followed, police and journalists clashed over the use of photographic representations of America’s newest, and most notorious, criminal. Journalists eagerly followed the assassin to the Buffalo police station where a photographer managed to snap a quick picture of him behind bars and bearing the marks of his reception into police custody (Image 1: Czolgosz in prison). Police authorities expressed anxiety about how this candid photograph might elicit sympathy for the President’s assailant, and press access to the assassin was sharply curtailed. The \textit{Buffalo Courier} smugly noted that a “determined effort was made to suppress the pictures, although it will be noticed that the picture appears in \textit{The Courier} this morning.”\textsuperscript{110} Subsequent photographers arriving at the jail to take Czolgosz’s picture were turned away and Czolgosz was held in near seclusion until his trial.\textsuperscript{111} However, police widely distributed copies of Czolgosz’s mug shot, taken after the assassin was permitted to clean his face.\textsuperscript{112} (Image 2: Czolgosz’s mug shot) By 1901, the photographic convention of the

\textsuperscript{109} Thomas Porter, “Report Prepared at Request of John E. Wilkie,” (September 21, 1901), Chicago, IL, Records of the U.S. Secret Service, Record Group 87, National Archive and Records administration (NARA), College Park, MD.

\textsuperscript{110} “Secret Service Men Unraveling The Plot,” \textit{Buffalo Daily Courier} (September 8, 1901).

\textsuperscript{111} Many journalists lamented the lack of other photographic evidence given the emerging prominence of photography in this historical moment “The development of amateur photography in the past ten years has made it a popular amusement and the instantaneous film carrying camera an almost necessary adjunct to a successful outing. Hundreds of cameras are brought on the Exposition grounds every day and a few of these hundreds happened to be within the Temple of Music when President McKinley’s would-be assassin fired the shots.” However, the article goes on the lament, “Still less of them were at such vantage points they could be used, and still less of those were in the hands of operators with sufficient presence of mind to press the button at the crucial moment.” See: “Amateur Photographers of Czolgosz’s Crime,” \textit{Buffalo Daily Courier} (September 8, 1901).

\textsuperscript{112} The photographer at Police headquarters was instructed to make as many copies of Czolgosz’s mug shot as possible be placed in the different newspapers, so that anyone knowing of the assassin could add
mug shot had emerged as the standard representation of criminality which, when combined with constructions of the assassin’s foreignness, might allow viewers to see his guilt with much less sympathy.

Image 1: Czolgosz in prison, Leslie’s Weekly (September 9, 1901).

strength to the investigation. “Secret Service Men Unraveling The Plot,” Buffalo Daily Courier (September 8, 1901); Czolgosz’s Bertillon card from the Buffalo Police station is still on file, see: Czolgosz, Leon Bertillon Card, A90-4, William McKinley Assassination Documents, Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society, Buffalo, NY.
The assassin’s distinctly un-American sounding name made it fairly easy for the police and journalists to emphasize his foreignness. The *Buffalo Evening News* wrote, “we are pleased to know the Assassin is not an American,” while the *Journal of American Medical Association* printed that the assassin: “thank God, bears a name that can not be mistaken for that of an American.” The *New York Times* voiced the assumptions of many of its readers when it editorialized Czolgosz’s foreignness:

They say that he is a Pole, and his name indicates a foreign birth. Assume that he is a native of a land that has felt the heavy hand of the oppressor. That but deepens amazement at his deed. He must have come to our country as to a refuge, and there is no other in which he would be safer, surer of his rights, with brighter lot awaiting honest effort to attain it.

Pontifications along this line quickly evaporated, however, when it was discovered that Czolgosz had been born in the United States. Furthermore, the heavy hand of the oppressor in Leon Czolgosz’s life belonged to the Cleveland Rolling Company, an industrial wire manufacturer that had compromised Czolgosz’s health and required him to

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116 Leon Czolgosz was born in Michigan on May 5th, 1873, the first American born child of Polish immigrants Paul and Mary Czolgosz. The Czolgosz family moved around northern Michigan and Ohio working as laborers while saving to buy a small family farm.
to adopt the alias Fred Nieman, since he had been blacklisted after an unsuccessful strike there in 1893. Investigators who wanted to play up Czolgosz’s foreign sounding name were surprised to learn of the assassin’s statement from his interrogation: “I am a citizen. I voted once about 7 years ago. It was in 1894 when I was 21. I voted in Cleveland. I don’t vote and have not voted since. I don’t believe in voting.” Regardless of Czolgosz’s citizenship, police swept through the immigrant quarters of Buffalo and arrested many who had been in contact with the assassin, filling the daily newspapers with foreign sounding names such as John Nowack, who owned the hotel in which the assassin had stayed; Pasczek, whose tavern Czolgosz had visited; and even Paul Redlinski, who had simply cut the assassin’s hair.

Polish immigrants in Buffalo responded to the ethnic focus of the police investigation by holding a mass meeting to denounce the assassin since they feared that Czolgosz’s “dreadful act will reflect upon the entire race, particularly its Buffalo representatives.” The *Buffalo Commercial Advisor* estimated that approximately 500 people had attended the meeting and noted favourably that: “The Poles are proving their hatred for Czolgosz and their good citizenship by offering to the police every possible assistance in tracing Czolgosz’s movements.” Thus, as with the Bohemians in Chicago who rejected anarchists after the Haymarket bombing and the Pittsburgh Jewish community’s denunciation of Berkman, so too those of Polish descent in Buffalo called on racial solidarity to distance themselves from any association with Czolgosz and anarchism. The *Commercial Advisor* article elaborated on actions being taken by the Polish community to prove their loyalties to the American state: “Some Socialists in Buffalo, suspected by the more hotheaded as being in sympathy with the attempted

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118 Typed copy of Handwritten Statement of Leon F. Czolgosz, dated September 6, 1901, witnessed by Frank T. Haggerty, M. J. O’Laughlin, and John Martin, Papers of Mrs. Ethel Chaplin (Nathaniel) Patch, Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society, Buffalo, NY.
120 “Poles Show Sympathy: Owing to the Presidents Condition their Day at the Fair is Postponed,” *Buffalo Morning Express* (September 9, 1901).
121 “Poles Incensed: They Denounce the Deed of Czolgosz – Large Meeting in Fillmore Hall,” *Buffalo Commercial Advertiser* (September 9, 1901).
assassination, are being shadowed by Polish patriots, eager to afford the slightest clue to authorities” and further that “the Poles urge that greater strictness be shown by the police against the local Socialists, claiming that some of them may use the name of Socialist to mask anarchistic tendencies.” Where Czolgosz’s explanation for his crime had signalled class motivations, the Polish community’s call to the “entire race” for a rejection of radicalism signalled a recurring challenge to class-based violence and the anti-foreign focus of investigations.

The interrogation of Czolgosz began almost immediately after the shooting as the assassin was moved to the Buffalo Police Station. Major Alexander Robinson, Assistant Commandant of the Pan-American police force, rode with the assassin to the station and documented his contact with the assassin:

The prisoner was taken to a cell on the third floor and questioned by Captain Vallely. He first insisted that his name was Fred Nieman, age 28, single, born in Detroit, Michigan, parents Polish, occupation blacksmith. He said he had been boarding at 1025 Broadway since Saturday (August 31). When asked by Captain Vallely “Why did you do it”, he said “I only done my duty”, and when asked “Are you an anarchist”, he answered “Yes”. Later he acknowledged that his correct name was Leon F. Czolgosz. That he had come to Buffalo from Cleveland where he had attended anarchist meetings and that he believed we should have no rulers and that it was right to kill the President.

Czolgosz himself admitted he had seen and been influenced by Emma Goldman when he saw her speak in Cleveland. In his signed confession, he wrote that:

One woman whom I saw at the Cleveland club was Emma Goldman, from Chicago. She talked about Government. Said all Government was tyranny. She said she believed in Anarchy. I am an anarchist. Anarchy as I understand it means self-government. That time in Cleveland was the only I saw Emma Goldman. She writes for newspapers in Chicago, I think. I don’t know for sure. I read the “Free Society.” It is published in Chicago. I have been reading that for a long time.

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122 Ibid.
123 Statement of Major Alexander R. Robertson, Assistant Commandant of Police, Pan American Exposition, on the Assault of President McKinley (September 6, 1901), Papers of Mrs. Ethel Chaplin (Nathaniel) Patch, Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society, Buffalo, NY.
124 Typed copy of Handwritten Statement of Leon F. Czolgosz, dated September 6, 1901, witnessed by Frank T. Haggerty, M. J. O’Laughlin, and John Martin, Papers of Mrs. Ethel Chaplin (Nathaniel) Patch, Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society, Buffalo, NY; also quoted in letter from Mrs. Nathaniel Patch to Mr. Charles W. Thompson (December 14, 1936), Papers of Mrs. Ethel Chaplin (Nathaniel) Patch, Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society, Buffalo, NY.
From this paltry tidbit, journalists extrapolated that Czolgosz “was in love with her.”

Although Czolgosz was adamant that he had acted alone and had only solidified his intent to murder the President the day before the shooting, the Buffalo Police looked for a wider anarchist conspiracy. As the police searched the assassin’s rented room, they discovered a “half pint bottle half filled with cod liver oil” which Czolgosz had supposedly taken from a barbershop thinking that it was glycerine. When Czolgosz was interviewed on the subject, “he refused to say what he had intended doing with the glycerine. The police have a suspicion that Czolgosz had in mind the manufacture of a nitro-glycerine bomb. All that it would have been necessary to do in order produce such an instrument of death would have been the adding of a little nitric acid to the glycerine.”

Clearly the Buffalo Commercial Advisor was prepared to see a deadly bomb in even the most trivial of pharmacy items.

On September 7th, the Buffalo Chief of Police, William Bull, assigned Officer Mathew O’Loughlin to investigate the previous history of the assassin. O’Loughlin located the Czolgosz family on a small farm just outside of Cleveland where Czolgosz’s father and brother informed the police officer that they had recently bought Leon out of his one-third interest in the family farm for about $800. After the sale, they informed O’Loughlin that

Czolgosz then became a follower of Emma Goldman and either travelled with her or followed after her. He went to Detroit where he remained for a certain time and then to Chicago, and possibly other places. In the meantime, he was drawing out

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125 The New York Times used creative licence to paraphrase the assassin’s confession: “What started the craze to kill was a lecture I heard some time ago by Emma Goldman. She set me on fire. Her doctrine that all rulers should be exterminated was what set me to thinking so that my head nearly split with pain. Miss Goldman’s words went right through me, and when I left the lecture I had made up my mind that I would have to do something heroic for the cause I loved…not until Tuesday morning did the resolution to shoot the President take a hold of me. It was in my heart; there was no escape for me. I could not have conquered it had my life been at stake. There were thousands of people in town on Tuesday; I heard it was President’s Day. All those people seemed bowing to the great ruler. I made up my mind to kill that ruler. I bought a 32-calibre revolver and loaded it.” Yet, even the New York Times noted after its sensationalist story that the confession “Is not genuine. The text of the confession is kept secret, under instructions from the federal authorities… Secretary of War Root had through them made a request for complete secrecy in the connection with the investigation of the crime… the making of a hero of this man with certain classes or the bitter condemnation of him will tend to disturb the people.”

the fund that he had on deposit so that at the time of his death it was practically all spent. There was only about three dollars left in the Savings Bank and when Czolgosz was captured he had less than forty dollars on his person.  

From this information, O’Loughlin concluded that Czolgosz “was completely absorbed in the teachings of the anarchists.”  

Despite Czolgosz’s insistence that he had acted alone, detectives worked on the theory that Czolgosz was part of a circle of anarchists who plotted the death of the President. In a surprising twist of deception, Buffalo police inferred that Czolgosz’s insistence was further evidence of the conspiracy. The Buffalo Daily Courier printed “The Police say that Czolgosz is just the kind of man who would refuse to make any statement implicating his confederates if he has any. The fact that he apparently has made a special effort to allay suspicion against anyone but himself is one of the reasons why the police believe he had confederates.” In hopes of uncovering a larger conspiracy, police agencies spread a dragnet across the country, shaking down suspected and known anarchists. In a Chicago raid, a dozen officers arrested several local anarchists and seized “a quality of Anarchist literature.” When progressive allies initiated habeas corpus proceedings to free the anarchists, newspapers reported “the court seemed to incline to the belief that the police had the right to hold the anarchists as a precautionary measure, even though evidence was lacking to convict them of any crime.” Once detained, they were asked if they knew Czolgosz. To the frustration of investigators, the response was almost universally no. Emma Goldman, who had taken refuge in Chicago among “American friends,” stayed with the son of a wealthy preacher who lived in a fashionable neighbourhood. However, despite her attempts to evade police by staying clear of immigrant neighbourhoods, Goldman was soon apprehended. As she would recount in her autobiography:

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128 Ibid. O’Loughlin states that he delivered a careful report of his investigation to the Chief of Police but was unable to find a copy in the files of the District Attorney’s Office in 1931.
129 “Anarchist Plot: Evidence Upon This Point is Being Gathered by the Police,” Buffalo Daily Courier (September 8, 1901).
130 “Cheers of Devils: Chicago Anarchists Gloated Over Czolgosz’s Crime, and Hurrahed for Him,” Buffalo Commercial Advertiser (September 8, 1901).
131 “Anarchists Will Be Held: Chicago Court Will Do So Even Though Police Evidence is Not Definitely Strong,” Buffalo Morning Express (September 14, 1901).
I had been arrested a number of times since 1893; no violence, however, had ever been practiced on me. On the day of my arrest, which was September 10, I was kept at police headquarters in a stifling room and grilled to exhaustion from 10:30 a.m. till 7 p.m. At least fifty detectives passed me, each shaking his fist in my face and threatening me with the direst things.  

Goldman was initially denied water in her interrogation, and then she was deprived of sleep and assaulted by her guards until the Chicago Chief of Police O’Neill put an end to the mistreatment after five days. In the end, however, officials in Buffalo were not able to produce enough evidence to connect Goldman or other anarchists to Czolgosz’s crime closely enough to extradite them to Buffalo to stand trial with the assassin. Most anarchists that had been swept up in the police raids were quietly released.

Despite the failure of the Secret Service to protect the President because of their racial assumptions, police and journalists worked together to emphasize Czolgosz’s foreignness to distance the assassin from industrial unrest as well as any popular support for anarchism. This conflation was resisted by the local Polish community who nonetheless argued that Czolgosz was an outsider to their assimilation to American values, particularly through the public rejection of radicalism. Although Czolgosz’s interrogation revealed that he had acted alone, policemen and journalists fuelled public fears by exaggerating widespread anarchist conspiracies, in part by arresting many suspected accomplices. But investigators struggled to connect Czolgosz to the anarchist movement, either because anarchists would understandably deny any knowledge of Czolgosz to authorities or because they legitimately did not know who he was. Czolgosz himself grew increasingly uncommunicative as he waited for his trial. While the 1901 investigation was relatively unsuccessful in establishing proof of a conspiracy, police and private-sector investigators would find a much more willing informant to tell tales about anarchist conspiracies when they apprehended Harry Orchard for the murder of Frank Steunenberg in 1905.

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133 “Mr. Penney’s Evidence: It Does Not Yet Warrant The Extradition of Goldman,” *Buffalo Morning Express* (September 14, 1901). Goldman noted “ever since my arrest the press of the country had been continually denouncing me as the instigator of Czolgosz’s act, but after my discharge the newspapers published only a few lines in an inconspicuous corner to the effect that ‘after a month’s detention Emma Goldman was found not to have been in complicity with the assassin of President McKinley.’” Goldman, *Living My Life*, 310.
Orchard’s Tale of Conspiracy

The investigation into the bombing and murder of Former Idaho Governor Frank Steunenberg had some similarities to the investigations of Haymarket, Homestead, and McKinley’s assassination -- except that the lead detective on the Steunenberg case worked for the Pinkerton Detective Agency. Detective James McParland was able to convince Orchard to confess that an “inner circle” of the Western Federation of Miners had put him up to the murder. Pinkerton agents then colluded with local authorities in Idaho and Colorado to arrest and quickly extradite three WFM officials to stand trial for conspiracy to murder Steunenberg. Yet, because the actual assassin, Harry Orchard, provided all of the evidence to justify their capture, he was portrayed very differently than the Haymarket anarchists, Alexander Berkman, and Leon Czolgosz. The press and civil authorities still deployed constructions of ethnicity, masculinity and criminality, but they were used to transform Orchard from a confessed murderer into a credible witness. *McClure’s Magazine* in particular gave validity to this reconfiguration of rhetoric in Orchard’s favour through photographs and a series of articles that publically disseminated his autobiographical confession.

When Steunenberg was killed by bomb in the remote Idaho town of Caldwell on December 30th, 1905, municipal authorities sealed off the surrounding area to prevent anyone from leaving while the sheriff quickly arrested several likely suspects. Among those detained was Harry Orchard, who told local investigators that he had been in Caldwell for the greater part of December to purchase sheep. Since authorities were unable to corroborate this story, they searched Orchard’s hotel room and found bits of plaster-of-paris like that used in the bomb that killed Steunenberg, a length of fishing line identical to that used in the detonator, crumbs of dynamite, chloride of potash, and sugar. In Orchard’s trunk at the Caldwell railroad station, policemen found a large quantity of explosives and a full set of burglary tools.134 From the very start, the evidence against Orchard was compelling.

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Orchard was promptly arrested, but unlike Alexander Berkman and Leon Czolgosz, he did not discuss the connection between his violence and anarchism until the arrival of Pinkerton detective James McParland, who had earned public acclaim for infiltrating the ranks of the Molly Maguires during the violent coalfield disturbances in Pennsylvania in the 1870s. McParland’s investigation led to a series of arrests and sensational trials between 1876 and 1878 that not only resulted in the breaking up of the Maguire group and the execution of ten of its members, but also connected labor violence and trade unionism in the public mind for decades to come.135 Allan Pinkerton celebrated McParland’s infiltration in his 1880 novel, *The Molly Maguires and the Detectives* and McParland continued to work for Pinkerton as a specialist in labor unions. At the time of Steunenberg’s murder, he was assigned to the Agency’s Denver Bureau, where he was tasked with surveillance of the Western Federation of Miners.136 On January 8th, 1906, the Governor of Idaho, Frank B. Gooding, hired McParland as the chief investigator for the state. The Pinkerton detective’s interest in the case was undoubtedly piqued by the ten thousand dollar reward offered by Governor Gooding and the five thousand dollars offered by the Steunenberg family to uncover the plot that led to the bombing.137 McParland arrived in Boise on the evening of January 9th and met almost immediately with the head of Pinkerton’s Spokane office, Governor Gooding, and Justice E.C. Stockslager of the Idaho Supreme Court to detail his investigative strategy.

Before even meeting Orchard, McParland’s first report to William Pinkerton signified his belief in a conspiracy to murder Steunenberg. On January 10th, McParland wrote that:

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I am satisfied that there were other people in this plot besides Orchard and feel almost sure that Orchard was the tool of others. This conspiracy is so widespread and so well and secretly conducted that it would not surprise me that the W.F. of M. has one or more men posing in Caldwell as bona fide residents, for the purpose of proving an alibi.\textsuperscript{138}

On January 13\textsuperscript{th}, McParland wired back to the Denver Pinkerton office requesting photographs of prominent WFM officials and suggested to Caldwell authorities that Orchard should be transferred to solitary confinement in the state penitentiary at Boise and held on limited rations for ten days of “softening up.”\textsuperscript{139} Days later, on January 22\textsuperscript{nd}, and over an exquisitely prepared lunch followed by fine cigars, with photographs of the WFM officials in hand, detective McParland presented Orchard with his theory about the murder. McParland emphasized that he had not come after Orchard’s personal confession of the Steunenberg murder, since the state already had more than enough evidence to execute him, but McParland wanted Orchard to implicate the “inner circle” of the WFM. Initially, Orchard maintained his innocence and mocked McParland’s hint that by cooperating with the state he would receive special consideration. The detective paraphrased Orchard’s words in his report:

\begin{quote}
You speak your piece very well, but I don’t know what you are getting at. I have committed no crime. I have heard and read over forty times just such talk as you have made, and there are instances where such talk has only made innocent men confess to crimes that they never committed and to implicate others who were also innocent. Talk about acting square with the state? I never heard tell of a man that did but that he afterwards paid the penalty.
\end{quote}

In a further attempt at manipulation, McParland then related to Orchard cases in which state witnesses went entirely free. His report continued: “I cited and named personally the Molly McGuire state witnesses who saved their own necks by telling the truth,” including key witnesses who were freed despite their own admissions of murder. McParland ended the interview by warning Orchard that his defense attorney would “caution him to keep

\begin{footnotes}
\item[138] Pinkerton Reports (January 9, 1906); Ravitz and Primm, \textit{Haywood Case}, 67.
\item[139] Pinkerton Reports (January 10, 13, 1906); Ravitz and Primm, \textit{Haywood Case}, 70; Foner, \textit{Labor Movement}, 41-42. By the 1890 the Pinkerton National Detective Agency, whose motto was “the eye that never sleeps,” had amassed one of the largest criminal archives in the world, see: Ardis Cameron, “Sleuthing Towards America: Visual Detection in Everyday Life,” in Ardis Cameron ed., \textit{Looking for America: The Visual Production of Nation and People} (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2005), 37-38.
\item[140] Pinkerton Reports (January 22, 1906); Ravitz and Primm, \textit{Haywood Case}, 70; Foner, \textit{Labor Movement}, 41-42.
\end{footnotes}
his lips sealed until such time as the inner circle of the W.F. of M. had him properly hanged,” \(^{141}\) clearly implying that if Orchard wanted a break, he would have to act before the WFM left him to take the fall all on his own.

At their second meeting on January 25\(^{th}\), McParland noted that Orchard’s manner was “entirely changed” from the first interview. The detective managed to persuade Orchard to confess by flattering the assassin with bodily evidence of Orchard’s superiority:

A man of his intelligence and reasoning power, as his forehead would indicate, had the ability of doing a large amount of good, as well as evil. As I stated to him on Monday, if he had formed associations of law-abiding citizens when he first started out in the world instead of a crowd of socialists, anarchists, and murderers, he would have become a shining light in any community instead of now occupying the cell of a condemned felon, and relying on his intelligence when the right path was pointed out to him. \(^{142}\)

Shortly thereafter, Orchard agreed to dictate his confession. McParland, shamelessly praising himself, concluded his report to William Pinkerton by stating: “I found that he prides himself on being very intellectual and I catered to his vanity in that respect all through the conversation.” \(^{143}\) Thus, prior to meeting Orchard, McParland openly admitted his plan to manipulate Orchard into implicating the WFM in an effort to save his own life.

For four days, January 27\(^{th}\), 28\(^{th}\), 29\(^{th}\), and 31\(^{st}\), McParland took down Orchard’s statement and Orchard was moved from the solitary confinement of the penitentiary to a little bungalow where he was served better food, received new clothing, spending money, and an ample supply of his favourite cigars. In his confession, Orchard copped to rigging innumerable bombs and killing seventeen men before Steunenberg, all of which actions were allegedly commissioned by the “inner circle” of the WFM. \(^{144}\) Orchard’s statements

\(^{141}\) Ibid.


\(^{143}\) Ibid.

\(^{144}\) Foner advances the theory that McParland: “Came to see Orchard with the express purpose of getting him to name the leaders of the W.F. of M. as the men responsible for the assassination…. McParland did not ask Orchard who might have been associated with him in the assassination. He told Orchard, without having any proof of the charge, that the leaders of the W.F. of M. – the so-called ‘inner circle’ – had hired him to do the job. Orchard was given a clear alternative: either name the leaders of the W.F. of M. as the instigators of the assassination or hang! Name them and the States of Idaho and Colorado would see that Orchard was not made to pay for his crimes.” Foner, *Labor Movement*, 43-44.
provided the necessary links to incriminate key members of the union: William D. Haywood, secretary-treasurer; Charles Moyer, president; and George Pettibone, a blacklisted miner who had become a businessman in Denver and unofficially advised the union leaders. However, none of the men had been in Idaho at the time of the bombing and they would need to be brought from Colorado to stand trial as accessories to Steunenberg’s murder. At McParland’s urging, Orchard’s testimony was kept a secret and the assassin continued to profess his innocence to his attorney and the Caldwell County prosecutor. In February 1906, Haywood began to notice several Pinkertons observing the WFM’s Denver office and the *Miners Magazine* published a short article with a photograph of one of the “secret agents,” of which they sent a copy to the Pinkerton office on St. Valentine’s Day. It would not be long before it became clear to the WFM officials why the Pinkerton Detective Agency had taken such a keen interest in the union’s office in Colorado.

In February, the State of Idaho indicted the three WFM officials named by Orchard as accessories to the murder of Steunenberg, but extradition from Colorado to Idaho was rather difficult even when secrecy was not an issue. McParland wrote a “Strictly Confidential” letter to Luther M. Goddard, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of Colorado, that the detective had “unearthed the bloodiest crowd of anarchists that ever existed, I think, in the civilized world, not even excepting Russia,” and asked for Goddard’s cooperation in getting the WFM leaders moved from Colorado to Idaho. After hearing McParland’s three hour retelling of Orchard’s confession, Goddard arranged a meeting with Governor McDonald who readily signed the extraction papers. The Governor also agreed not to put his approval on record nor notify the attorney general of the legal request until after the men had been secured in Idaho. McParland also took precautions to protect himself and the Pinkerton Agency he represented by keeping “not only myself but the Agency in the background during the arrest and the conveying

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of the prisoners from Denver to the State of Idaho.”

With the necessary preparations made, deputies waited to apprehend Haywood, Moyer and Pettibone until late Saturday night since the courts were closed on Sunday, so that it would be near impossible to obtain a writ of habeas corpus to stay the extradition. The three men were arrested, denied counsel, and rushed onto a specially commissioned train. En route between Denver and Boise, the train avoided stopping at urban centres by taking on coal and water and completing other necessary maintenance, like changing engines, at isolated spots or small junctions. Once in Boise, the prisoners were taken to the penitentiary and held in solitary confinement on death row. Haywood later wrote about the experience in his autobiography:

I have always thought that we were put in the death cells in order to condemn us in the mind of the public before we were tried…. Here we were in murders’ row, in the penitentiary, arrested without warrant, extradited without warrant, and under the death watch! We had been kidnapped in the dead of night and did not know whether our lawyers were aware of our destination. Certainly no one could have expected that we would be put in the penitentiary without a hearing, without a trial, or even the semblance of an investigation.

Upon news of the completed transport of the WFM “ring leaders,” William Pinkerton, head of the Pinkerton Agency, wired McParland to congratulate him on his “splendid work.”

But unlike the Haymarket anarchists and Alexander Berkman, all three members of the arrested “inner-circle” were American-born citizens and none of them espoused anarchist politics. The journalist William Ward commented to the readers of Outlook that the “favourite National scapegoat, ‘the foreigner,’ cannot be loaded with the sins of the Western Federation and driven into the desert of contemptuous indifference.”

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148 To further cover his own complicity, McParland created documentary evidence in his report by adding, “In order to clear myself particularly on this matter I never looked at the requisition papers, nor did I carry them to the Governor’s office.” McParland was reassured by Colorado Supreme Court Justice Goddard that “the Agency and myself were of too much importance at the present time to get into trouble with either [the] United States or county officials enroute to Boise.” McParland Report (February 16, 1906); Foner, Labor Movement, 47, 49.

149 Haywood, Haywood’s Book, 194. When lawyers from the firm of Patterson, Richardson and Hawkins, who represented the WFM, telephoned the county jail and inquired if Moyer and Haywood were there McParland reported “Jailer Duffy replied that they were not. From this it will be seen that the Sheriff carried out his instructions to the letter.” McParland Report (February 18, 1906); Foner, Labor Movement, 48.

150 McParland Report (February 18, 1906); Foner, Labor Movement, 49.

However, President Theodore Roosevelt looked past their native birth and denounced the incarcerated men as “undesirable citizens,” and stated, “The Western Federation of Miners is a body just like the Molly Maguires of Pennsylvania.”152 Thus, the President publically connected the three union men to the image of violent labor radicals from the coalmines of Pennsylvania before their trials had even begun. With the leadership of the WFM securely and illegally in custody, McParland revealed the substance of Orchard’s confession and journalists began to rework the image of Steunenberg’s actual murderer: Harry Orchard.

As the content of Orchard’s confession became public, journalists flocked to Boise, where S.S. McClure, editor of the muckraking *McClure’s Magazine*, discussed the possibility of interviewing Steunenberg’s murderer with the warden of the Boise penitentiary.153 In striking contrast to the limited press access to Alexander Berkman in 1892 and Leon Czolgosz in 1901, McClure’s request for an interview with Orchard was granted soon after Orchard’s statement went public. The reporter assigned to the story, George Turner, met with the assassin and secured the story of Orchard’s life, his full written confession, and Orchard’s signature on a contract stipulating that both the confession and the life story would be sold exclusively to *McClure’s Magazine*. What emerged from this partnership between press, prison officials, and the assassin is a remarkable document entitled “The Confession and Autobiography of Harry Orchard,” which was published as a five-part serial article between July and November of 1907, during which period William Haywood was on trial. Commissioned to help edit as well as write the introduction and background to Orchard’s confession, Turner spent two weeks with the incarcerated assassin and the resulting document “taken down from Orchard’s lips by stenography” gave authentication to his story and was presented to


readers as having great historical importance, “irrespective of its truth or its value as legal evidence.”\textsuperscript{154}

In order to portray Orchard as a plausible witness against the leadership of the WFM, Turner grounded his arguments about Orchard’s trustworthiness in the photographic evidence. Introducing Harry Orchard to the readers of \textit{McClure’s} alongside a photograph that mimicked the forward facing mug shot (Image 3: Orchard’s mug shot), Turner described the assassin with the following language:

When he was first arrested, this man was clearly one of the most dangerous characters our civilization can produce. His face showed this more accurately than words. It possessed the characteristics of a clearly developed type – the nervous eyes, the compressed lips, and the hardened face muscles of the hunted beast we call the criminal.\textsuperscript{155}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{Orchard_mug_shot.jpg}
\caption{Orchard’s mug shot, January 1906, from: Harry Orchard, “The Confession and Autobiography of Harry Orchard,” \textit{McClure’s Magazine} (July 1907), 298.}
\end{figure}


\textsuperscript{155} Turner, “Introductory Note,” 295.
While this initial depiction and the photographic evidence was similar to the dominant image of criminality that was represented by the mug shot, Turner proceeded to turn this depiction of Orchard on its head. The “clearly developed type” described by Turner had been transformed through the rejuvenating act of confession, the results of which were further supported by a second photograph depicting Orchard posed in a formal portraiture akin to photographs routinely taken of and for more socially distinguished classes of American citizens (Image 4: Orchard’s portrait). Turner reassured the readers of McClure’s Magazine that “the deep marks cut in his face by the last decade of his life have gone like an evil mask… every one who has seen him closely is now absolutely convinced of his sincerity… his absolute and level sanity.”


The art of posing in photographic portraits, as historian Alan Trachtenberg elaborates, offered subjects a new way of “seeing themselves in the eyes of others.” Thus, Orchard’s stylized portrait intended to equate him with middle-class respectability, in

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156 Ibid., 295.
157 Trachtenberg, Reading American Photographs, 28-29, 57-59.
stark contrast with the photographic convention of the mug shot that had been central in the Czolgosz investigation, which rigidly positioned its subject and offered a clear signifier of criminality to the visually literate middle-class beholder. In positioning Orchard’s portrait alongside his mug shot, McClure’s Magazine distanced Orchard’s working-class past from the more respectable representation of Orchard as a valid witness for the state. Turner’s photographically manipulated evidence offered Orchard’s integrity visibly to the McClure’s readers and the wider American audience.

Turner also drew on turn-of-the-century notions of civilization and savagery to contextualize Orchard’s crimes in the isolated mining camps as a place where “society slipped back into primitive and brutal conditions.” Orchard stated that in the mining camps he had found himself surrounded by a “savage campaign to drive non-union men out of the district,” which had led to the formation of the Western Federation of Miners. For Turner, and the reading audience of McClure’s, Orchard’s crimes mirrored this step back from civilization that had been initiated by the savage collectivism of labor organizing. Orchard posited his ethnicity in the first paragraph of his autobiography -- as one of eight children born into a poor Ontario farming family to a British father and Irish mother in 1886 -- in order to distance himself from the savagery of his surroundings and the anti-foreign phobia that permeated earlier instances of anarchist violence. In the 1880s, Irish immigrants were still negotiating their assimilation into North American society, just as were German immigrants at the time of the bomb in Chicago’s Haymarket Square. Yet, by the first decade of the twentieth century, anxieties about the racial fitness of the Irish and Germans immigrants had been displaced by fear of more recent arrivals. Indeed, this view was reflected in the 1911 conclusions of the Dillingham Commission

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158 As John Tagg elaborates on the subject’s positioning, “The head-on stare, so characteristic of simple portrait photography, was a pose which would have been read in contrast to the cultivated asymmetries of aristocratic posture…. Rigid frontality signified the bluntness and ‘naturalness’ of a culturally unsophisticated class and had a history which predated photography…. In the course of the nineteenth century, the burden of frontality was passed on down the social hierarchy, as the middle classes secured their cultural hegemony…. By the 1880s, the head-on view had become the accepted format of the popular amateur snapshot, but also of photographic documents like prison records and social surveys in which this code of social inferiority framed the meaning of representations of objects of supervision or reform.” Tagg, Burden of Representation, 35-37.


that categorized the Irish as representatives of the “old immigration,” noting that, “the racial identity of their children was almost entirely lost and forgotten.” In contrast, Berkman and Czolgosz would have been easily identified by the Dillingham Commission as a representative of the “new immigration,” unskilled laboring men from Southern and Eastern Europe, who were racially distinct for the most part from the “British, German, and other peoples who came during the period prior to 1880.”161 By clearly identifying his British-Irish ancestry in his published confession, Orchard was reaching for the kind of racial legitimacy offered by the Dillingham Commission’s category of “old immigration” while also attempting to avoid the racialized caricatures that had accompanied publications about the Haymarket anarchists, Berkman, and Czolgosz.

Turner exploited this more favourable association, even going so far as to emphasize that Orchard’s American techniques of violence were vastly superior to those routinely employed by European assassins. He wrote about Orchard’s sophisticated bombing methods, stating that,

High explosive is becoming the chief modern instrument of assassination in class warfare, but Orchard’s method of using it was a new departure. In European murders of this kind, the assassin throws the bomb himself, and is sacrificed with his victim, or is captured immediately afterward. The story of the American assassin shows the development of a most ingenious type of man-trap, in which the victim kills himself, and the assassin is able to escape. This new device proved, in itself, the most baffling feature of the tragedies in which Orchard was engaged to the authorities investigating them, and was never fully understood until this confession.162

Quite simply, unlike the other “foreign” anarchists who were accused of violence in this period, Orchard’s American ingenuity made him a more effective murderer. This theme also emerged in coverage of the assassination by the Outlook when Luke Grant noted in April 1907 that Steunenberg “was literally blown to pieces by a bomb placed with such devilish ingenuity that a Russian Anarchist might well shudder at the thought of employing such an agent of destruction.”163

Similarly in contrast to how the other anarchists were depicted as idle and cowardly, Orchard’s physical body was described in a way that legitimated his working class identity and his actions as manly. Turner described Orchard’s “deep, rounded barrel of a body, the kind that carries large, strong vital organs, balanced sturdily on short, stout legs – a most excellent and workman like human machine, with the power and directness of a little Orkney bull.”\(^{164}\) Turner also suggested that there was courage in Orchard’s heinous crimes despite the fact that Orchard had placed himself at minimal physical risk: “In fact, the active and successful assassin, working, as Orchard did, with high explosives and firearms, planning his ‘get away’ to avoid the safeguards of the big modern city, can scarcely be a physical coward.”\(^{165}\) Thus, Turner used Orchard’s acceptable heritage, evil ingenuity, and physical body to portray him in class, race, and gendered terms that supported his credibility as a witness.

While press coverage of Orchard did not match the critiques of foreign, idle, and cowardly that were applied to the Haymarket defendants, Berkman, and Czolgosz, the Pinkerton Detective Agency continued to play a prominent role in perpetuating public fears of a widespread anarchist conspiracy behind Orchard’s actions. The validity of this conspiracy theory, however, would be tested when the State of Idaho announced that they would try William D. Haywood as the first conspirator for the murder of Frank Steunenberg. Harry Orchard would be the star witness for the prosecution.

The Peril of “Looking Like” an Anarchist Conspirator

The violent incidents of 1908 fit seamlessly into the established narratives of anarchist violence in turn-of-the-century America, starting with those that pertained to ethnic prejudices. The assassination of Father Leo Heinrich in Denver on February 23\(^{\text{rd}}\), 1908, brought the problem of anarchist violence back onto the front pages of American newspapers. An investigation revealed that the assailant, who had been apprehended by a policeman who was attending the service, was an Italian immigrant named Guiseppe Alia. Journalists were quick to print that Alia had only been in the United States for three

\(^{164}\) Turner, “Introductory Note,” 295.
\(^{165}\) Ibid.
months, again giving credence to the fears of recent immigrants. Although Alia gave several explanations for his actions, the press widely circulated this statement:

   I just went over there because I have a grudge against all priests in general. They are all against the working men… I am an anarchist and I am proud of it. I shot him and my only regret is that I couldn’t have shot the whole bunch of priests in the church…. He looked to me the same as any other priest, whose hypocritical influences take the bread out of the mouths of the poor, while they themselves live in luxury.”¹⁶⁶

Although at first Alia said that he did not know Heinrichs and that he acted alone, newspapers were soon searching for anarchist conspiracies. As the Idaho Daily Statesman speculated “[t]he police are now working on the theory that a well laid plot for the murder of father Leo had been worked out by… possibly anarchists.”¹⁶⁷ Denver police hypothesized that Alia was part of a band of 40 anarchists who had come to the United States and that men in six other cities were connected with him in the killing, Chief Delaney was “Not sure whether Alio [sic] was merely a tool in the anti-clerical society… or whether he was the ringleader.”¹⁶⁸ Taking the offensive against anarchism, Bishop Alphonse Glorieux warned his listeners of the dangers of “secret societies, as it has been proved that certain secret societies were the hot beds of anarchism and without these secret meetings the propaganda could not spread.”¹⁶⁹ In fact, no evidence was ever disclosed indicating that Alia was involved in any sort of a conspiracy, but this incident did illuminate that there was still fear of violent groups in the Denver area two years after members of the WFM had been extradited to Idaho for the alleged assassination plot against Steunenberg.¹⁷⁰

This first incident of anarchist violence in 1908 was soon eclipsed by the alleged assassination attempt of Chicago Police Chief George Shippy, who, as it turned out, had been pressing for more severe punishments for anarchists and their sympathizers. When anarchists in Chicago celebrated the assassination of the king of Portugal and the crown prince in Lisbon on February 1 st, 1908, Shippy warned the readers of the Chicago Daily

“never in the history of Chicago have anarchists and other enemies of law and order been more dangerous than at present.”\(^{171}\) Although twenty-two years had passed since the Haymarket bombing, Shippy criticized a municipal judge who had released two men who had been arrested for illegally placing posters advertising an anarchist meeting on telephone poles. The judge flippantly explained his actions by stating, “they did not look like wild-eyed anarchists.”\(^{172}\)

When Chief Shippy shot and killed Lazarus Averbuch on his doorstep on March 3\(^{rd}\), he justified the bloody turn of events by saying that when he opened his door and saw the Eastern European stranger, “the thought struck me like a streak of lightening that the man was up to some wrong. He looked like an anarchist.” The *New York Times* published the headline: “Police Chief Kills Anarchist in Fight,” and the accompanying story was quick to divulge that “Averbuch was a Russian Jew, 20 years old, and had only been in the United States three months.”\(^{173}\) Policemen and undercover agents, determined to connect Averbuch to an anarchist conspiracy, proceeded to raid Chicago’s immigrant wards in a similar fashion to how they had reacted to the Haymarket bombing of 1886.\(^{174}\)

The *New York Times* narrated the municipal police force’s retaliatory raids:

> Police in swarms, attended by reserves in patrol wagons, swept through all the Anarchist quarters of the city, raiding and confiscating printing offices, making arrests of suspects, visiting supposed Anarchist libraries, confiscating books, pamphlets, and papers, and seeking for evidence of a widespread plot of the “reds” against the police and city officials.\(^{175}\)

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\(^{174}\)State’s Attorney John J. Healy stated to the press, “the investigation will not stop with the dupes who undertake assassinations, but will go back to the instigators… we shall follow the precedent established at the time of the Haymarket riots. There is no specific statue on the subject of anarchy in Illinois, but if it can be shown that the attempt to kill was the result of an agreement, the conspiracy statute will apply. Instigators can also be held as principles.” “Police Chief Kills Anarchist in Fight,” *New York Times* (March 3, 1908): 2.

\(^{175}\)Ibid.
Right on cue, the municipal police forces suspected a widespread conspiracy and descended on immigrant neighbourhoods to substantiate this theory. Approximately 15 people were arrested for their alleged anarchistic leanings or for their supposed acquaintance with Averbuch. Among the targets of the police repression in Chicago was Emma Goldman, who had evaded arrest after Berkman’s attack but had been briefly incarcerated in a Chicago jail after Czolgosz shot McKinley. Goldman was repeatedly forced to cancel speaking engagements after her arrival in Chicago on March 5th because of police harassment. Newspapers were quick to substantiate the police theory of a wider anarchist conspiracy and reported that the attack on Shippy “is believed to have been the result of a conspiracy to harm Chicago officials.” In solidarity, the Pittsburgh police chief expressed relief that Shippy had killed Averbuch, since a trial would have inevitably led to “riots, bloodshed and possibly many deaths.”

Lazarus Averbuch’s remains were taken into custody and his body was photographed in such a way as to demonstrate his criminality. On March 6th, 1908, a Chicago Daily News photographer posed the cadaver (Image 5: Averbuch posed). However, the lifeless corpse of Averbuch presented a challenge to the camera’s lens, so the body was propped up in a chair with the assistance of a Captain Evans and the camera was positioned further back from the standard focal length of the mug shot. By photographing Averbuch’s body in this manner, Evans and the photographer created a visual document that demonstrated police control over Averbuch’s body, while also creating an image that could be cropped to the standardized mug shot. As the photographic genre of the mug shot was a known signifier of criminality, police and

176 For example, the bartender and owner of a saloon which Averbuch was reputed to have frequented was arrested, and another man was imprisoned on the basis of an anonymous tip that he was an anarchist. Most of those detained were released after a few days. One man was fined five dollars for stating that Shippy and “a lot more like him” should be killed, and another man who was fined $85 for handing out leaflets that criticized Shippy. Goldstein, “Anarchist Scare,” 63-64.

177 When Goldman showed up to greet some friends at a meeting of an anthropological society on March 15, an “army of uniformed policemen” invaded the hall, only to discover a woman anthropologist reading a paper attacking vaccination. When Goldman finally got inside a lecture hall and attempted to speak on March 16, she was physically dragged off the podium and ejected from the hall by police. Goldman, Living My Life, 413-419.


180 These images are consistent with this photographic practice described by Allan Sekula: “the profile view served to cancel the contingency of expression; the contour of the head remained consistent with time. The frontal view provided a face that was more likely to be recognized within the other, less systematized departments of police work… by detectives on the street.” Sekula, “Body and the Archive,” 30.
journalists were creating evidence of Averbuch’s guilt even before their investigation of Averbuch’s intentions began in earnest.

After being photographed, Averbuch’s body became the site of intense scrutiny, with reporters and police looking closely at it for evidence to exclude it from the respectable laboring classes. In confirmation of this sentiment, the *New York Times* commented that Averbuch’s “hands do not indicate that he was accustomed to toil.”

An autopsy performed by coroner Peter Hoffman noted on March 6th that Averbuch’s cranium was of a “peculiar formation” and the coroner asked doctors to examine Averbuch’s brain for signs of insanity. One of the examiners at the dismemberment was Dr. Otto W. Lewke, who reported to the *Chicago Daily Tribune* that Averbuch, “according to the theories of criminologists, was a degenerate.”

The body of Lazarus Averbuch was then hastily buried in the potter’s field in Chicago’s Dunning Cemetery.

Despite Assistant Chief of Police Herman Schuettler’s declaration to journalists that it had “been proven without a doubt” that Averbuch’s crime had been “carried out by a commission intrusted to him by a group of Chicago anarchists” the story was not entirely convincing.\footnote{“Anarchist Plot Said to be Unearthed,” Philadelphia Inquirer (March 4, 1908): 2; “Plot to Kill City Officials: Averbuch Was Tool Of Chicago Anarchists,” Colorado Springs Gazette (March 4, 1908): 1} Even with the Chief of Police’s explanation of Averbuch’s motives and the wide-sweeping raids of immigrant neighborhoods with Averbuch’s “mug shot” in hand, police were unable to establish a clear, uncontested link between the dead man and anarchism. Olga Averbuch, Lazarus’ sister, spoke up in defense of her brother, portraying a very different image of the young immigrant who had arrived on Shippy’s doorstep than those that were already in circulation. In the context of an economic recession that began in October 1907 and rising unemployment rates well into 1908, Olga suggested that Lazarus had intended to get a letter of good conduct from the Chief of Police before going west or returning to Europe.\footnote{Lazarus Averbuch’s well kept appearance seems to support Olga’s explanations, however, the New York Times interpreted Averbuch’s groomed attire by stating that “the assassin apparently had dressed himself for death,” see: “Police Chief Kills Anarchist in Fight,” New York Times (March 13, 1908): 1.} This testimony so contradicted the Chief of Police’s attempted assassination narrative that it became plausible to many in Chicago’s immigrant wards that Shippy had invented the story of an anarchist assassination attempt to cover up the accidental slaying of an innocent man. Organized opposition to Shippy’s explanation of Averbuch’s death started as outrage in the Jewish slums but developed into a broad coalition of anarchists, socialists, and progressive reformers including Jane Addams.\footnote{Shannon Jackson, Lines of Activity: Performance, Historiography, Hull-House Domesticity (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2000); Katherine Joslin, Jane Addams: A Writer’s Life (Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2004); Louise W. Knight, Citizen: Jane Addams and the Struggle for Democracy (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2005).} In the weeks after Averbuch was killed, Addams, in the progressive journal Charities and Commons, noted her position in the Settlement House as one of “interpreting foreign colonies to the rest of the city.” In her article, Addams railed against “the curious logic of the policeman” that overlooked oppressive conditions that led to disorder to interpret “acts of violence… as a justification for further repressive measures.” Addams concluded: “The only cure for the acts of anarchy was free speech and an open discussion of the ills of which the opponents of government...
complained.”186 Although Averbuch had no established ties to anarchism, Addams feared that the police response would lead to further violence unless the newest members of the American public – immigrant communities – had an opportunity to be heard without fear of police repression.

Addams secured a young attorney, Harold Ickes, to represent the Averbuch family’s interests at the upcoming inquest to determine if Chief Shippy had been justified in the use of lethal force against the man who he thought “looked like an anarchist.”187 Averbuch’s body remained at the center of the controversy as the challenges to Shippy’s explanation led to an exhumation and a second independent autopsy on March 13th. This second and closer examination of the body by Dr. Ludwig Hektoen, a faculty member at Rush Medical College, revealed that not only had the coroner’s report neglected to mention a bullet wound in the corpse’s back, but more alarmingly, the cadaver’s brain was missing.188 Thus, Averbuch’s body had been buried in violation of Jewish rites. Had this information been made public, discontent in the Jewish community would have intensified, but Ickes used this information to other ends.

Before the upcoming inquest, Ickes confronted coroner Peter Hoffman with the information obtained from the second autopsy. In a backroom conversation, the progressive attorney threatened the publicly-appointed coroner that he would reveal what he knew about the inaccuracies of the first autopsy and Averbuch’s missing brain to newspapers if the inquest attempted to influence public opinion by claiming that Averbuch had been an anarchist despite the lack of evidence to support this assertion.189 When the inquest convened on March 24th and 25th, 1908, Coroner Hoffman presided over the proceedings. He had sole responsibility of determining whether the inquest would proceed to a trial against Shippy, and he not only served as judge, but also

186 For Addams, the role of progressive reformers was clear, “the more recklessly newspapers state mere surmises as facts and upon these surmises arouse unsubstantiated prejudices against certain immigrants, the more necessary it is that some body of people should be ready to put forward the spiritual and intellectual conditions of the foreign colony which is thus being made the subject of inaccurate surmises and unjust suspicion” Jane Addams, “The Chicago Settlements and Social Unrest,” Charities and Commons 20 (May 2, 1908), 155, 166.
188 Roth and Kraus, Accidental Anarchist, 95-96.
authorized who would be able to ask questions of witnesses and placed limits on which questions could be asked. Although Ickes was permitted to ask some questions, Hoffman did not allow any that challenged the Shippy family’s testimony to the crime. As though influenced by his backroom conversation with Ickes, the sole evidence Hoffman permitted concerning Averbuch’s political affiliations and beliefs was the testimony of a former co-worker that Averbuch had expressed dissatisfaction that Shippy would not allow Emma Goldman to speak in Chicago earlier that month. The official inquest came to a paradoxical conclusion with the recommendation of exonerating Police Chief Shippy of all wrongdoing but not ruling on Averbuch’s connection to anarchism or a violent motive. The Jewish Daily Courier demonstrated little surprise at the outcome when it noted that:

We recognize that under the circumstances no other verdict could have been expected. The eye-witnesses to the tragedy are all members of Chief Shippy’s household, only they and God know the truth, and God has not appeared as a witness at the inquest.

The Chicago Daily Socialist was more biting in its critique: “No proof was brought of any such action beyond that ‘vindictive look’ of which we have heard so much.”

190 Shippy’s story went unchallenged stating that once the Chief opened the door he immediately pinned the assailant in his front hall but Averbuch had broken free, stabbed the Chief, turned to wrestle with Harry Shippy with one hand while drawing his gun and shooting with the other, the Chief then fired three fatal bullets into Averbuch, but the assassin supposedly still had enough strength to ward off a lunge by Shippy’s driver, James Foley, while shooting him through the hand. For a critical investigation of the evidence produced at the inquest see: Roth and Kraus, Accidental Anarchist, 147-168.

191 Goldstein, “Anarchist Scare,” 64.

192 Two biographers of Jane Addams contest the contention that Averbuch was unarmed at the time of the shooting: Cornelia Meigs, Jane Addams, Pioneer for Social Justice: A Biography (Boston, MA: Little Brown, 1970), 196; James Weber Linn, Jane Addams: A Biography (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc., 1935), 219; but Goldstein finds this view untenable since it assumes that Shippy, his son and Foley shot and stabbed each other, and it contradicts evidence presented at a coroner’s inquest showing that Averbuch had bought the gun and knife two days before the incident, shortly after he had been paid. However, Goldstein concludes, “The fact the Averbuch almost certainly was armed does not support the police version; however, given the amount of random crime and violence occurring in the country in 1908, it would not necessarily be a sign of planning an assassination to buy a gun and knife, especially if one were planning to travel from Chicago to Europe. In sum, it is certainly possible… that Averbuch had come to the chief’s house seeking a letter of recommendation but panicked when Shippy grabbed him and when Shippy’s wife searched him.” Goldstein, “Anarchist Scare,” 63. More recently Walter Roth and Joe Kraus maintain that the weapons dealer could have been manipulated by police; Roth and Kraus, Accidental Anarchist, 159-161.


Addams also openly ridiculed the inquest and expanded her critique to the role of the daily press for its biased and inept coverage of the proceedings:

Not a scintilla of evidence was produced at the inquest to prove the charge of anarchy, and yet that the same newspapers which had so assiduously spread the police charge of anarchy did nothing whatever to rectify the mistake when the coroner’s inquest not only failed to establish such a charge, but when their silence confirmed a lack of material upon which they were willing to make such a charge.  

Thus, just as prison officials, Pinkerton agents, and journalists colluded to make the guilty Harry Orchard a credible witness in 1906, the police and journalists were able to sway public opinion and a coroner’s jury to cover-up the accidental murder of a simple immigrant by playing on public fears of anarchist violence and on their predetermined assumptions of the poor quality of immigrants from Eastern and Southern Europe and those on the political margins in America.

Within three days of the Averbuch inquest in Chicago, police in New York were reeling from the bombing in Union Square on March 28th. The New York Times reported that in retaliation, the police went on a rampage, “hitting every head in sight” and that they arrested about 10 people in the area who were seen acting suspiciously. Able to talk despite his injuries, the maimed bomber was immediately apprehended by police and was identified as Selig Silverstein, a Russian immigrant who had been in the United States for most of his nineteen years. Silverstein stated that he had been the victim of police brutality at an unemployment demonstration a week prior and he had brought the bomb to Union Square to gain his revenge, implying that he had acted somewhat spontaneously and independently. The New York Times quoted the anarchist as stating: “The police are no good. They drove us out of the park. I hate them. I am sorry that I did not make good. As for my life, that is nothing. It was the police that I wanted.” Policemen in New York further responded to the bombing by announcing that no permits would be allowed in the future for protest demonstrations and that the police force would begin a massive

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196 “Bomb Kills One, Police Escape,” New York Times (March 29, 1908): 1; Silverstein himself made contradictory statements on the question of conspiracy, at one point stating he had been told to throw the bomb which had been given to him by someone else, and at another point saying he had acted alone and built the bomb himself from instructions from an encyclopedia. “No “Red” Plot, Say the Police,” New York Times (March 31, 1908): 1.
campaign of surveillance and investigation of radicals within New York immigrant communities. In the days immediately after the Union Square incident, New York policemen followed through on their threats and broke up several radical meetings.\textsuperscript{197}

As with the Haymarket bombing, the attack on Henry Clay Frick, the murders of William McKinley and Frank Steunenberg, and the suspected assassination attempt on George Shippy, the police and press were soon suggesting that Silverstein’s action was part of a major anarchist conspiracy. In response to fears of additional anarchist violence, the galleries of four New York stock and produce exchanges were closed to visitors. Police investigators searched Silverstein’s room and found two letters and a membership card for the Anarchist Federation of America, all signed by Alexander Berkman, who had been released from prison on May 18\textsuperscript{th}, 1906 after having served fourteen years for the failed assassination attempt on Henry Clay Frick. The police suggested that Berkman’s letters contained highly sensational revelations and promptly arrested Berkman, hoping to substantiate their conspiracy investigation by bringing him to Silverstein’s hospital room to see if the two anarchists would betray an acquaintance with each other. However, since Silverstein was blind as a result of injuries sustained in the explosion, he could not see Berkman. Additionally, Silverstein’s face was entirely swathed with bandages except for his chin. Thus, it is not surprising that Berkman did not reveal an acquaintance. Police efforts to connect Silverstein to a larger conspiracy stalled when the bomber died after a month of agony in a New York hospital on April 28\textsuperscript{th}, after which most of the people arrested in Union Square and in the subsequent investigation were quickly freed.\textsuperscript{198} The police also released Berkman after he proved that the signed letters were mass produced mimeographed pleas for funds and not the evidence of conspiracy that police purported, thus ending the investigation into the Union Square bombing with an inconclusive dud.\textsuperscript{199}

**Conclusion**

\textsuperscript{197} Goldstein, “Anarchist Scare,” 70.
Throughout these investigations, law enforcement agencies and reporters made a consistent effort to perpetuate widespread fears of anarchist conspiracy while distancing the perpetrators of these crimes from any popular support. Investigators and their allies in the press portrayed their suspects in contradictory ways: although they were few in number, anarchists still represented a substantial threat to American civilization. The majority of media sources under consideration in this chapter are middle- and upper-class daily newspapers that were limited in what they could write because they had daily publishing deadlines. Thus, reporters were frequently chasing incomplete or developing stories and sometimes got their facts wrong. In addition, journalists relied on police officials who only wished to relay parts of their investigation to the public, so coverage often mirrored the views of the police investigators that were fraught with their own errors, mistakes, and exaggerations, further shaping newspaper coverage. Many of these newspapers of the social elite, such as the New York Times, Chicago Daily Tribune, Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette, Buffalo Daily Courier, and Idaho Daily Statesman, made generalizations about the role of conspiracies in suspected acts of anarchist terrorism that further sensationalized these stories. While policemen, private investigators and the Secret Service were quick to accept full credit for the arrest of anarchists and to use the fear of anarchist conspiracies to justify their increasing surveillance of working class and ethnic organizations. Journalists in particular played a vital role in perpetuating fears of conspiracies, even though these investigations repeatedly failed to uncover supporting evidence. Furthermore, while the search and arrest of suspected accessories became front-page news, the failure to hold many of these arrestees for trial went to a large extent underreported.

To distance the anarchists from the working class they claimed to represent, police and journalists rendered the suspects through a class lens of idleness, a gendered lens of cowardliness, and an ethnic lens that emphasised the foreignness of the anarchists and their ideas to the United States. There were a number of reasons why investigations into widespread anarchist conspiracies were not successful; one of the challenges demonstrated in these investigations was the racialized gaze that accompanied criminal identification. Many investigators often read criminality as something that was innate and visible on the body. For example, Gustavo Tosti, the Italian consul-general of New York,
argued in 1899 that anarchist violence had less to do with political motivations than with the innate tendencies within individuals, who “do not become assassins because they are more or less imbued with the most superficial aspects of the theory of Anarchism, but simply because they are born criminals.”200 The use of photography, motivated in part by the belief that the surface of the body, and especially the face and head, bore outward signs of inner character, was used to render anarchist’s criminality visible as indisputable evidence.201 However, the Bertillon system and the criminal archive rapidly complicated the project of taxonomizing criminal types. As the scholar Ardis Cameron writes, “the problem of identification persisted as the specificity of individual images overwhelmed the physiognomic standards of the day. By 1900, few departments of police maintained any faith in the practice of visual detection. Fingerprinting turned professional detection away from representative type towards the invisible mark of individual difference.”202

However, throughout these investigations the idea of a representative type lingered, and other experts, particularly in the press and courtroom, turned to these assumptions to substantiate their theories of the crimes.

While urban police forces, private sector detective agencies, state militias, and the federal Secret Service all changed dramatically during the Gilded Age to address the needs of industrial capitalism, the challenge of anarchist violence often served to demonstrate the limits of these institutions. Sufficient evidence shows that not only did municipal police forces contribute to the problem of anarchist violence by attacking workers or radicals who were legally assembled, but also that police officials were not above corruption. The 1886 Haymarket and 1908 Times Square bombings are the most prominent examples of police attacking protesters at otherwise peaceful meetings; both of these police assaults led directly to retaliatory violence. As much as police were involved in the maintenance of law and order, they were not above scandal, disgrace, or insanity.

202 Fingerprinting techniques were introduced to the United States by an Englishman named Edward Henry at the 1904 St. Louis World’s Fair, and the technique spread through police departments in the first decade of the twentieth century, rapidly replacing the Bertillon system which had served its purpose in criminal identification for nearly a quarter of a century. The Bertillon system would be completely discarded by law enforcement and penal institutions by 1920. Cameron, “Sleuthing Towards America,” 37-38.
Central to the Haymarket investigation, Inspector John Bonfeild and Captain Michael Schaack were discredited in January 1889 for ongoing crimes of receiving payments from criminals and trafficking in stolen goods.\textsuperscript{203} Similarly in Buffalo, Superintendent of Police William S. Bull, who had directed the investigation of Leon Czolgosz, became the target of an anticorruption campaign when a 1906 audit showed him to be over $10,000 short in his accounting of pistol and dog license fees and substantial shortages in his accounting of funds for the hiring of special officers to protect the Pan American Exhibition, where President McKinley had been fatally shot. As a result of the exposition of his illegal actions, Bull resigned and the department did not pursue charges against him, further allowing for the perpetuation of unchecked abuses of power and the exploitation of those without it.\textsuperscript{204} Finally, Chicago’s Chief of Police George Shippy recovered from his stab wound sustained in the scuffle with Lazarus Averbuch, but Shippy never fully resumed his police duties and within a few months of the incident, he resigned from the force. A year and a half after Averbuch’s murder, Shippy voluntarily admitted himself to a sanatorium with advanced syphilis, and according to his obituary on April 14\textsuperscript{th}, 1913 died a “raving maniac,”\textsuperscript{205} calling his mental state in 1908 into question. Although the municipal police were the front line of defense against anarchist violence, their recurring inability to establish evidence of anarchist conspiracies would have a decisive effect on the trials that will be investigated in the next chapter.

Employer’s use of private detective agencies to supply armed men in labor disputes was sharply criticised even before the Homestead debacle. Even moderate voices, such as Richard T. Ely in 1886, chided this arrogance of exploitation:

> The outrages of private bands of hirelings have continued too long. If property owners may employ a private army to protect their things, surely workmen may employ armed forces to protect their lives; and we may as well give up government and return to the barbarism of anarchy.\textsuperscript{206}

While the 1892 Homestead strike had temporarily tarnished the reputation of the Pinkerton Detective Agency, Rhodri Jeffreys-Jones concludes that the free-enterprise

\textsuperscript{204} Buffalo Police Department, Annual Report, 1906, 13-14, Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society, Buffalo, NY; Harring, \textit{Buffalo Police}, 115.
\textsuperscript{205} “Shippy Funeral Held Tomorrow: Former Chief Succumbs at His Residence from Softening of the Brain,” \textit{Chicago Daily Tribune} (April 14, 1913).
detective industry owed “its growth not to the righteousness of the private eye or to divorce work (which came later, with changed attitudes of the Progressive era) but to the good money to be made from bad industrial relations.” A distrust of private agencies lingered in many circles since many of these agencies had made it clear that they were preoccupied with making money and were often accused of encouraging radicalism or escalating violence to necessitate their continued investigations and surveillance. The Haymarket anarchists, who claimed that the bomb had been thrown by an agent provocateur, most likely from the Pinkerton Agency, articulated evidence in support of these fears. Similarly, Harry Orchard admitted during William Haywood’s trial to also working for the Mine Owners Association and the Pinkerton Detective Agency while the “inner circle” of the WFM was supposedly directing him in his spree of murders. This led to suspicions that Orchard had planted the bomb to discredit the WFM and, as we will see in the next chapter, culminated in Haywood’s acquittal. In his 1911 article, “A Detective,” Haywood lambasted the hired thug in the service of industrial businessmen as “the lowest, meanest, most contemptible thing that either creeps or crawls, a thing to loath and despise.” Yet, many large industrial corporations continued to use whatever means at their disposal to keep tabs on their employees and ward off worker organizations, sometimes even developing elaborate internal surveillance networks.

Although the evolution of state militias into the modernized National Guard kept with long-standing American traditions of a small free-standing army that could call on citizen-soldiers in times of need, the role of industrial elites in both the institutional

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208 Parson’s argued during the Haymarket conspiracy trial that the bombing “was instigated by eastern monopolists to produce public sentiment against popular movements, especially the eight-hour movement then pending, and that some of the Pinkertons were their tools to execute this plan.” Lucy E. Parsons, The Famous Speeches of the Eight Chicago Anarchists in Court (New York: Arno Press, 1969 [1910]), 93.
209 Carlson, Roughneck, 119; Elizabeth Jameson, All That Glitters: Class, Conflict, and Community in Cripple Creek (Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1998), 228.
development and new strike-breaking functions of the Guard assured that militias would not be free from the class tensions in this period. Indeed, a young Pennsylvania private named William Iams was severity punished during the occupation of Homestead for shouting “Three cheers for the man who shot Frick!” The punishment of Iams, which we will explore in greater depth in Chapter Four, reflected a fear of worker-to-soldier solidarity in the intensifying industrial war. Iams himself made this connection in an interview with the *Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette*, stating: “I had been called out with the national guard twice before on account of labor troubles between Mr. Frick and his men and felt a little sore about two weeks service that the guard had been obliged to give at Homestead, but had not the slightest animus against Mr. Frick.”

By 1892, even Samuel Gompers, president of the American Federation of Labor, argued at the AFL’s twelfth annual convention that the militia was no longer an “organization of the masses” and “that membership in a labor organization and the militia at one and the same time is inconsistent and incompatible.” Labor historian David Montgomery summarizes the dramatic shift between the Civil War and the 1890s:

> The use of military power as the ultimate bulwark of a free-market economy had left many workers perceiving the nation’s armed forces as their enemy, not as the defender of their liberties. Although it was impossible to resist such a force, labor organizations could and did urge their members to withdraw from the military service of the republic, which their arms had helped preserve in the 1860s.

Even the Secret Service, which had played a prominent role in domestic security during the Spanish American War, was relieved of major investigative duties in the first decade of the twentieth century. A July 1907 report from the Chief of the Secret Service, John Wilkie, stated that he could not find “the slightest suggestion of a ‘plot’ against the President or any cabinet officer” by anarchist societies or the radical Western Federation of Miners. Particularly in the wake of McKinley’s assassination, the federal

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216 John E. Wilkie to William Loeb, Jr., (July 31, 1907), reel 75, Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, DC.
government needed to develop a new apparatus for seeing and a refined capacity for surveillance that would surpass the limited reach of the Treasury Department’s Secret Service. In part as a response to continuing anxiety over anarchist terror perpetuated by law enforcement professionals and journalists, the federal government unveiled a new institution of law, order, and social control in 1908: the Department of Justice’s Bureau of Investigation. Initially, this fledgling agency was staffed with just twenty-four operatives who were only authorized to investigate interstate commerce and antitrust cases, but it would expand in to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) by 1935.

Local, state, and federal institutions of law, order, and social control experienced mixed success in establishing evidence of anarchist conspiracies. Since their role was limited to confinement and documentation, it was really up to the court system to distill the evidence into plausible motives. Yet, the highly publicized police investigations, with their constructions of the foreign, idle, and cowardly nature of the suspects can be read as early efforts to re-write the politics of Propaganda by Deed and distance these acts of violence from perceptions of a class war. In the court cases that followed the apprehension of suspects for these crimes of violence, existing statutes were manipulated to both silence the defendants and deter future acts of class violence. When existing laws were not sufficient to prevent recurring acts of violence, state and federal legislative bodies drafted new laws to suppress the growing threat of anarchist terror in the United States.

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Chapter Three
Ordering Chaos: Legal and Legislative Responses to Anarchism

The presentation of evidence, judgment, and sentencing for crimes of anarchist violence was under the jurisdiction of court officials, although not all suspected perpetrators of Propaganda by Deed, such as Selig Silverstein and Lazarus Averbuch, survived long enough to stand trial for their alleged crimes. From the Haymarket conspiracy trial of 1886 to Giuseppe Alia’s 1908 murder trial, court officials developed a series of strategies to vilify anarchists and to mute the class-based politics of their deeds. In prosecuting these cases, state attorneys constructed the defendants as either participants in a vast conspiracy, as was the case in the Haymarket and WFM trials, or as misguided tools of anarchist propagandists, which typified the trials of Alexander Berkman, Leon Czolgosz, and Giuseppe Alia. Throughout their arguments, state prosecutors deployed several tactics to discredit anarchists, including repeated constructions of their foreignness, idleness, and cowardliness. Prosecutors also presented these crimes as anarchist violence, regardless of whether their perpetrators claimed an affiliation with anarchy, and also through sensationalized descriptions of blood and gore, claiming that no less than civilization was at stake in the judgement of the defendants. In short, prosecutors reordered the violence of Propaganda by Deed within the civilized venue of the courtroom.

Yet, with the eyes of the nation focused on the trial, the defendants themselves had one last chance to clarify their innocence or add propaganda to their deeds, and sometimes they did both. Although courtrooms are highly formalized and controlled environments, they were also a place for the accused to counteract the class, race, and gendered critiques of anarchists that had been imposed by the police investigations, prosecution arguments, and newspaper coverage. The contest of meaning in the courtroom, therefore, set up a confrontation between anarchists who used their trials as one last effort to control the propaganda of their words and deeds, and the state, which relied on the court proceedings to condemn the anarchists through the rule of law. However, after the Haymarket conspiracy trial, court officials ensured that defendants had less and less opportunity to carry out Propaganda by Word.
Although the trials provided a highly visible forum for defendants to articulate a critique of industrial capitalism, the primary purpose of the legal proceedings was judgement and punishment. The trials demonstrate how existing statues were manipulated against those accused of anarchist terror in order to deter future acts of class violence. This strategy, however, had mixed results. First, trials were not always successful at proving conspiracy and some defendants were acquitted. Second, punishment had its complications. Death sentences often led to the martyrdom of the defendant, while those sentenced to long prison terms could be pardoned, have the sentences reduced, or even break free in dramatic prison escapes. The trials between 1886 and 1908 demonstrated these possibilities and the need, therefore, for stronger laws to combat the anarchist peril.

Federal and state politicians began to debate laws that specifically or indirectly targeted the perceived threat of widespread anarchist terrorism. Several legislative projects gained momentum during this period, bringing reforms to existing immigration, naturalization, and deportation laws, while newly drafted regulations also focused on the suppression of free speech, the right to public assembly and the right to bear arms. Advocating for legislative solutions along these lines divided the problem of anarchy into two solutions. By augmenting the powers of local, state, and federal police to act against anarchists, authorities sought to silence and suppress the peril within the United States, resulting in more court cases and punishments that were inevitably fraught with complications. But the vastly more popular option was to enhance federal immigration powers, particularly screening and deportation policies, to cut off anarchism from its “foreign” sources while purging undesirable immigrants from American soil. However, throughout this period of legislative solutions to anarchist violence, the United States remained reluctant to cooperate with European nations in international efforts to track and suppress anarchism. The project of cracking down on immigrants with anarchist tendencies ran up against American isolationist tendencies.

This chapter will begin by focusing on prosecution strategies in the Haymarket conspiracy trial of 1886, Alexander Berkman’s trial for felonious assault in 1892, Leon Czolgosz’s 1901 murder trial, the WFM conspiracy trials in 1907, and Alia’s 1908 murder trial. While the prosecutions’ strategies had the very clear objective of
demonizing anarchists, the defendants also had a role to play in the courtroom. The Haymarket anarchists, Alexander Berkman, Leon Czolgosz, the WFM officials, and Giuseppe Ali sought to insert their own interpretations of the charges against them into the courtroom narrative. However, court officials increasingly frustrated this objective. While juries were asked to render verdicts of guilt or innocence, judges played a key role in these trials by interpreting existing laws and determining sentences. This chapter will also investigate how state and federal legislatures began to develop new laws to protect the nation from anarchism. Specifically, the 1879 worker militia laws in Illinois and the 1902 Criminal Anarchy Laws in New York typified an increasing trend toward the suppression of free speech, assembly, and the right to bear arms in an effort to silence anarchists already in the United States. The 1903 Immigration Act and 1906 Naturalization Law sought to cut off anarchism from its foreign roots. Taken together, from the courtroom to the legislature, the violence of Propaganda by Deed was stripped of its class connotations and connections to American industrial capitalism and reconstructed as foreign in opposition to the very foundations of American civilization.

**Prosecution Strategies**

From the very first trial for anarchist violence in the United States, court officials developed a series of strategies to deprecate the defendants and to mute any association of class-based politics to their deeds. In prosecuting these cases, state attorneys constructed the defendants as either participants in a vast conspiracy or as misguided tools of anarchist propagandists. The success of the cases did not wholly depend on adequate evidence, but also relied heavily on favorable trial judges and juries, and, sometimes, when police investigations had been unable to generate compelling evidence of anarchist conspiracies, the use of paid witnesses. Throughout their arguments, prosecutors principally repeated constructions of the apprehended anarchist’s foreignness, and often supplemented their critiques with accusations of idleness and cowardliness. Prosecutors also dramatized the magnitude of these violent crimes by spotlighting their blood and gore and claiming that civilization and order were at stake during the trials.
The first major anarchist courtroom saga was the trial for conspiracy that followed the May 1886 Haymarket bombing. On May 27\textsuperscript{th}, a grand jury indicted ten anarchists for conspiracy to murder Patrolman Mathias Degan.\textsuperscript{1} The indictment named Rudolph Schnaubelt as the bomb-thrower and George Engle, Samuel Fielden, Adolph Fisher, Louis Lingg, Oscar Neebe, Albert Parsons, Michael Schwab, August Spies, and William Seliger as accessories to the crime. Although Parsons and Schnaubelt had evaded arrest, the trial was set to begin just seven weeks after the explosion. With the majority of the accused incarcerated, Chicago Police Captain Michael Schaack noted that the case “touched the stability and welfare of every city of any considerable size in the United States,” and, consequently,

The eyes of the whole country were riveted on Chicago, and the outside world was eagerly watching the results of a case, the first in America, to determine whether dynamite was to be considered a legal weapon in the settlement of socio-political problems in a free republic.\textsuperscript{2}

Formal court proceedings began on June 21\textsuperscript{st}, the same day that Albert Parsons walked into the courtroom to willingly surrender and declare his innocence as well as to stand with the other accused anarchists. The trial continued until the jury delivered its verdict on August 20\textsuperscript{th}. During the court proceedings, the Haymarket conspiracy trial demonstrated an important series of strategies from prosecutors, defense attorneys, and defendants that were closely followed by local, national, and international audiences.

The prosecution’s strategies benefited from a sympathetic trial judge. Judge Joseph E. Gary ruled almost all of the contested points in the State’s favor and permitted the prosecution wide latitude in its arguments while holding the defence tightly in check. Before the trial began, Gary had refused a request from the defense to delay the proceedings, demonstrating his sympathies toward the prosecution from the outset. Once the trial began, Gary also rejected an affidavit from the defense that the defendants should be tried separately thus allowing evidence presented against one of the accused to be used prejudicially towards all the defendants. The charges that these men had worked

\textsuperscript{1} Historian Paul Avrich demonstrates that only one policeman can be convincingly proved to have died due to bomb fragments, while other police died from a combination of bomb fragments and bullet wounds, which suggests they could have been injured by other police in the chaotic aftermath of the bomb blast, see: Paul Avrich, \textit{The Haymarket Tragedy} (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), 235.

together to set off the bomb were tenuous since Oscar Neebe and Louis Lingg did not attend nor have any role in organizing the Haymarket rally. Yet, by trying them all together, Neebe and Lingg could be easily implicated into a wider conspiracy simply by association and despite the lack of substantial evidence. Similarly, although George Engel and Adolph Fischer had assisted in organizing the event, they were also not in the Haymarket that evening, and could thus be incriminated by association. Only four of the eight who stood trial – Albert Parsons, August Spies, Samuel Fielden, and Michael Schwab – had actually attended the meeting, and Spies and Fielden were the only two defendants who had been there when the bomb exploded. Judge Gary’s decision to overrule the motion for separate trials, which allowed for rushed proceedings when public opinion was against the defendants, reinforced the idea that they were in conspiracy even though the prosecution was unable to prove conclusively who had thrown the bomb and in spite of the fact that the alleged bomb thrower, Rudolph Schnaubelt, was not even present during the proceedings.3

The collective conspiracy trial proceeded with a lengthy jury selection process, in which Judge Gary’s favouritism toward the prosecution was also apparent. Over a period of twenty-one days, 981 jury candidates were examined. Early on in the process, Gary assigned Bailiff Henry Ryce to fill the jury pool. While Ryce manipulatively selected men who admitted their belief in the defendants’ guilt, Gary rejected protests from the defense, such as the fact that the pool of jurors contained virtually no workingmen. In addition, the extensive newspaper coverage of the police investigation prior to the trial, which had been heavily biased against the defendants, effectively convicted the anarchists in print before they were even indicted. Among the audience for these sensational articles were men who were on the jury list, and the majority freely admitted that their prejudices were based on their reading of newspapers.4 However, since Gary did not dismiss all biased jurors and since each of the defendants was only legally entitled to twenty peremptory challenges each, the defense attorneys were forced to use all 160 challenges before the full jury was seated. In contrast to this forced defensive strategy, the prosecution’s tactic was to screen out jurors who were members of trade or labor

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unions or jurors who potentially had sympathies for anarchists, communist, or socialists. In the end, the Haymarket defendants had to accept a hostile white-collar jury made up mainly of clerks and salesman.\(^5\) With the jurors sworn in on July 15\(^{th}\), the prosecution began to present its case.

The prosecution also contended that the Haymarket bombing was part of a larger conspiracy that threatened to destroy the very fabric of civilization. In his opening remarks, District Attorney Julius Grinnell, hell-bent on securing a guilty verdict for conspiracy to commit anarchy, told the jury that on the night of May 4\(^{th}\), 1886, “bombs were to be thrown in all parts of the city of Chicago. Everything was to be done that could be done to ruin law and order.”\(^6\) Assistant District Attorney George C. Ingham also emphasized this theme, declaring to the jury: “when the bomb was thrown it was the opening shot of a war which should destroy all government and destroy all law.”\(^7\) The purpose of this war, according to Ingham, was to “strike terror into the hearts of the capitalists.”\(^8\) To prove conspiracy, Grinnell and Ingham proposed that the incendiary language used by the anarchists had caused the death of Patrolman Degan as surely as if one of the accused had thrown the bomb. This argument made no differentiation between seditious opinions and murderous actions and made no distinction between word and deed, a subtle but powerful conflation. In order to substantiate these claims and to convince the jury members, the prosecution procured the biased testimony of Chicago policemen as well as the disreputable testimonies of paid witnesses. The prosecution successfully mingled credible and dishonest witnesses, feeding these stories to the unwitting jury members as equally reliable.

In their employment of corrupted and bribed witnesses, the prosecution relied on the overzealous investigation headed by Chicago Police Captain Michael Schaack. As

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\(^5\) The final jury consisted of George W. Adams, salesman; James H. Brayton, retired school principle; James H. Cole, bookkeeper; Theodore E. Denker, clerk; John B. Greiner, clerk; Andrew Hamilton, hardware dealer; Charles H. Ludwig, bookkeeper; Frank S. Osborn, salesman; Scott G. Randall, salesman; Alanson H. Reed, co-owner of a music store; Harry T. Sandford, clerk; and Charles B. Todd, salesman. Avrich, *Haymarket Tragedy*, 266.


\(^7\) Ibid., 188.

\(^8\) Ibid., 192.
historian Richard Lindberg concludes in his detailed account of corruption in the Chicago police force, during the Haymarket investigation “forty-five families were paid money by the police in exchange for their testimony, and many others were coerced into giving false evidence.”9 During the trial, two paid witness, Harry Gilmer and M.M. Thompson, claimed that they had seen August Spies light the bomb and Rudolph Schnaubelt throw it. The defence challenged the reliability of witness who had accepted money in exchange for their testimony in court and presented counter evidence to refute the prosecution’s witnesses because neither Gilmer nor Thompson’s stories were supported by any of the other dozens of eyewitnesses called to the stand. Grinnell ultimately conceded that he could neither prove that any of the accused anarchists, including Rudolph Schnaubelt, had thrown the bomb nor say conclusively who did.10 Instead, what the prosecution attempt to prove, through the carefully rehearsed testimony of William Seliger, who had originally been indicted with the defendants, was that the bombing had been the direct result of a conspiracy. In exchange for having all charges dropped against him, Seliger testified that he had made thirty-two bombs with Louis Lingg and had transported the explosives to Nepf’s Hall on May 3rd.11

Grinnell further padded these arguments for conspiracy by demonizing the defendants, sensationalizing the violence of the bomb, expressing gendered constructions of their cowardliness, and making racial constructions of their foreignness in order to de-

11 Although a confessed bomb maker, William Seigler was relocated to Germany at the expense of the Chicago police department, see: Avrich, Haymarket Tragedy, 273-274.
politize the class violence implied by the Haymarket bomb. The historian Paul Avrich asserts that the District Attorney’s reference to the defendants as “loathsome murderers,” “organized assassins,” “rats to be driven back into their holes,” “traitors,” “godless foreigners,” “infamous scoundrels,” and “the biggest cowards that I ever seen in the course of my life” solidified their fearful degeneracy in the eyes of the jury. The prosecution also reinforced the idea of the defendants’ foreignness to substantiate the charges of conspiracy when Grinnell stressed to the jury that the defendants had not been tried for treason because of their un-Americanness: “treason, gentlemen, can only be committed by a citizen. You and I can commit treason. None of these defendants except Parsons and Neebe can commit treason under the laws. Why? Because they are none of them citizens.” Grinnell and Ingham repeatedly distinguished between the “good” immigrant, who had successfully adapted to American institutions and thereby found happiness within the existing order, and the troublemakers, who had imported foreign notions that were perhaps justifiable in the nations of their birth but had no application to America.

As if emphasizing the defendant’s foreignness was not enough, Grinnell exploited the spectacular possibilities of the trial through the use of sensational and highly prejudicial evidence of a tenuous and often ghastly nature. The prosecution’s evidence was vast, but very little of it was connected with the Haymarket bombing. In particular, Schaack’s testimony was a detailed inventory of anarchist propaganda that advocated violence, an arsenal of fearsome explosives, and other weapons that had been seized in the police raids. None of these were directly linked to the trial. One piece of evidence given by Schaack, however, was at least vaguely connected. He narrated what he saw as the key piece of evidence among what had been discovered in the body of one of the bomb victims:

A young man named Hahn, a shoemaker on the West Side, had come to the hospital wounded by the explosion, and that upon examination a wound had been found in

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14 As Carl Smith points out, “Virtually everyone directly involved in Haymarket had come from somewhere else. Not only eight defendants, but all twelve jurors, seven of the eight attorneys (including Black and Grinnell), and Judge Gary were born, and in most cases raised to adulthood, outside Chicago,” Smith, *Urban Disorder*, 148, 150.
the fleshy part of his thigh, from which a piece of iron had been removed. This piece was nothing less than the nut which had been used to assist in holding together the two halves of the composition bomb which had been exploded at the Haymarket. This discovery was a most important one. It proved at the trial the best piece of evidence used by the prosecution, as it demonstrated that the bomb exploded at the Haymarket was one of the bombs manufactured by Louis Lingg, since fifty bolts and nuts of the same size and description were subsequently found in Lingg’s possession.15

In addition to the bolt that had been extracted from one of the bomb’s victims, when Dr. Theodore Bluthardt was called to the stand he showed the jury bomb fragments removed from patrolman Degan’s body and he testified with a gruesome tale of bomb wounds:

The large hole in the middle of the left thigh was the mortal wound. It was caused by an explosive, a piece of lead that had penetrated the skin and destroyed the inside muscles of the left thigh to a large extent, lacerating also the femoral artery, which caused the man to bleed to death.16

Judge Gary also allowed into evidence several tattered and bloodstained uniforms, which the prosecution hoped would further sway the jury. However, Dyer Lum, who chronicled the case from the anarchists’ perspective, argued, “it was not Degan’s clothing thus paraded, showing holes made by fragments of the shell, and it was not shown in evidence that the clothing belonged to officers who died.”17 Whether the bloody remnants of police uniforms were legitimate or not, reporter Fredrick Hill surmised that these “silent witnesses, spoke louder than words,”18 providing compelling evidence by proximity rather than by actual association.

The use of paid witnesses, the maligning of the defendants, and the submission of sensational evidence all served to underscore the central argument of the prosecution that the trial was not just about the murder of Patrolman Mathias Degan, but also about a conspiracy to overthrow civilization.19 Assistant District Attorney Ingham summarized this idea in his closing statements to the jury:

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15 Schaack, Anarchy and Anarchists, 177.
16 “Trial of the Chicago Anarchists,” 83-84.
19 Paul Avrich’s scathing criticism of Grinnell prosecution: “His arguments were not only riddled with false and distorted statements, but he relied on hearsay, innuendo, and perjured testimony, twisting both fact and law in his determination to convict.” Avrich, Haymarket Tragedy, 268; Carl Smith has argued that
The very question itself is whether organized government shall perish from the earth; whether the day of civilization shall go down into the night of barbarism; whether wheels of history shall be rolled back, and all that has been gained by thousands of years of progress be lost.\textsuperscript{20}

This sort of testimonial grandstanding sought to sway the jury and the American public to the reasoning of the prosecution. The court strategies and conduct of the Haymarket conspiracy trial also set precedents for the trials of Alexander Berman, Leon Czolgosz, the WFM officials, and Giuseppe Alia in the years that followed, particularly through their attempts to marginalize anarchists by emphasising their foreignness, idleness, and cowardliness to the jury and a wider audience who followed the trials in newspapers. However, when the actual perpetrators of anarchist violence had been apprehended, as was the case in the attempted assassination of Henry Clay Frick in 1892, as well as the murders of President McKinley in 1901, Frank Steunenberg in 1905, and Father Leo Heinrichs in 1908, prosecutors had a much easier time attributing the violence to misguided tools of anarchist propaganda than they had had with proving a widespread conspiracy.

Although both trials attempted to mute the class-based politics of these violent deeds, Alexander Berkman’s trial for the attempted assassination of Henry Clay Frick in 1892 was many things that the Haymarket trial was not. While the Haymarket prosecutors contended with alleged participants in a vast conspiracy but did not have the actual terrorist, the District Attorney in Pittsburgh had the perpetrator but very few suspected co-conspirators in custody. District Attorney Clarence Burleigh with the assistance of Philander C. Knox, corporate attorney for the Carnegie Steel Company, dramatized the magnitude of these violent crimes through sensationalistic depictions of blood and gore while claiming that the preservation of civility and order was on the line.

While looking to the Haymarket trial and using similar strategies, the prosecution did not press for a conspiracy trial but proceeded with an individual trial against Berkman in an effort to obtain a speedy judgement and deprive the accused assassin of notoriety. Berkman was arraigned on July 29\textsuperscript{th}, 1892, but the trial date was intentionally kept off the

\textsuperscript{20} “Trial of the Chicago Anarchists,” 175-176.

the trial in Judge Gary’s court was so unfair and irregular that it remains “one of the most shameful proceedings in American history.” Smith, \textit{Urban Disorder}, 122.
criminal court trial list because court officials were concerned about public demonstrations, particularly by anarchists, that might demonstrate sympathies for the would-be assassin. While the Haymarket trial had convened before a packed courtroom, when Berkman’s trial began on September 19th before Judge Samuel McClung, no spectators were permitted. The Haymarket conspiracy trial had dragged on for eight weeks, but Berkman’s trial only lasted several hours. In several ways, Berkman, following the same disdain for the courtroom proceeding as Louis Lingg, helped to facilitate the speed of the trial by declining defense counsel and choosing not to challenge any of the pre-assembled jurors. Berkman appeared in court without an attorney or witnesses and sat beside Warden McAleese, which reinforced Berkman’s status as a criminal to the jury. The prosecution team presented six indictments, charging the prisoner with offences ranging from felonious assault and battery to carrying concealed weapons. In presenting their arguments, Burleigh and Knox followed some of the melodramatic tactics used during the Haymarket trial, including placing Henry Clay Frick, still recovering from his injuries, as the first witness on the stand to narrate his perspective of the attack. Frick’s testimony was corroborated by the blood stained clothes he had worn on the day of the attack, and the Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette provided detailed descriptions of this evidence to their readers: “All his garments had been saturated with blood and they presented a gory appearance when the package was opened.” J. Leishman, the Vice President of Carnegie Steel, who had been in a meeting with Frick at the time of the attack, testified that he thought that his life had also been in


22 The final jury would include: John E. McCrickart, clerk; G. W. Ache, saddler; William Alisman, broker; Joseph Hillman, Farmer; John Keating, farmer; George Miller, farmer; H. S. Paul, manufacturer; G. T. Renolds, minister; J. B. Kerr, feed store; Robert Wallace, upholsterer.


24 The dagger and revolver used in the attack were given to Frick after the trial, “who expressed a desire to have them, and who it was thought was entitled to them.” “Twenty-Two Years: Anarchist Berkman Sentenced to A Long term in Prison,” Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette (September 20, 1892), 3; “Justice finds Berkman” Pittsburgh Leader (September 19, 1892), in Homestead Strike Scrapbook, The Carnegie Steel Co., Ltd., Strike and Riot of 1892, vol. 3, (August 16 – October 18, 1892), 187, Helen Clay Frick Foundation Archives, Archives Service Centre, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA. The dagger is currently on display at the Senator John Heinz History Centre in Pittsburgh, PA.
danger. Dr. Litchfield then described the macabre nature of Frick’s wounds. All in all, the prosecution succinctly established their case of Berkman’s guilt to the jury in less than four hours before the anarchist attempted to read a long and detailed explanation for his crime, which, as we shall see in the next section of this chapter, was also cut short. This streamlined approach to legal proceeding was widely applauded and was to be a key feature that was repeated in the murder trials of Leon Czolgosz in 1901 and Giuseppe Alia in 1908.

Although the fast pace of Berkman’s trial was repeated in the 1901 proceedings against Leon Czolgosz for the assassination of President McKinley, court officials were acutely aware that they were under considerable scrutiny in their dealing with such a high profile case. District Attorney Thomas Penney recognized the imperative to be conscientious of conduct throughout the trial; in his closing remarks to the jury, he said, “we have endeavoured to eliminate everything of a sensational character from everything concerning this case.”

On September 16th, Czolgosz was arraigned in Buffalo before Judge Edward K. Emery on the charge of murder in the first degree, which carried the death sentence in the state of New York. Similar to several anarchist defendants from earlier trials, particularly Louis Lingg and Alexander Berkman, Czolgosz refused to play his proscribed role of defendant and did not willingly participate in the trial until asked if he had any final words. Judge Emery assigned council to the defendant and District Attorney Penney moved that the trial begin the following Monday. Shortly after the arraignment, Judge Emery received a letter threatening more violence against government officials if Czolgosz was sentenced to death. Whether motivated by the

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25 *The People of the State of New York against Leon F. Czolgosz*, Supreme Court, Erie County, Buffalo, New York (September 23-26, 1901), 120.

26 In the eight days before President McKinley died journalists and legal pundits articulated anxieties about how Leon Czolgosz should be charged as the crime could only be legally defined as Assault in the First Degree, which was punishable by a maximum sentence of ten years. Senator Thomas C. Platt was quoted in the *New York Times*: “It is a shame that a man who makes an attempt on the life of the President can escape with such a light sentence. I think a special law should be passed making a crime of this kind punishable by instant death.” Looking to the precedent set by Berkman’s trial, an article in the *New York Times* suggested Czolgosz be charged “with two counts of assault, one for each bullet for a total prison term of 20 years.” The conundrum of how to suitably charge Czolgosz was resolved on September 14 when McKinley died from his wounds. See: “Punishment Should be Death,” *New York Times* (September 8, 1901): 5; “Physicians Declare That Czolgosz is Sane,” *New York Times* (September 9, 1901): 2.


28 The full text of the threat reads: To Judge Emery, We have executed McK [McKinley] whom we admired. His Funeral is Now Passing. If you railroad the poor demented tool Czol. [Czolgosz] – we shall
threat of further violence or a general distain for being associated with the President’s murderer, Emery did not participate in the remainder of the trial. Intimidation tactics, it seems, were not only a device of the prosecution.

On September 23rd, Czolgosz, along with his appointed but reluctant defense council, was brought before Judge Truman C. White and asked for a plea. Although Czolgosz submitted a plea of “guilty”, Judge White promptly rejected the defendant’s words and “not guilty” was placed on the record to ensure that Czolgosz would receive the appropriate judgement from a civilized trial. The jury selection process was as swift as it had been in Alexander Berkman’s trial, since neither defendant challenged the appointment of potential jurors. The New York Times praised District Attorney Penney and the state-appointed defense council for their speed in the selection process:

Technicalities were not raised, but it was noticeable that every man who acknowledged that he had not formed an opinion on the case was excused by the District Attorney. Men who had formed an opinion or stated that they were prejudiced but were willing to acknowledge that their opinion could be changed by evidence, were accepted by both sides.

Although the Pittsburgh Dispatch attempted to suggest that the jury was primarily composed of working-class men by writing that there was “not a smooth shaven” among them, the final jury who would pass judgement on Czolgosz, like the juries in the

strike R [Roosevelt] – whom we detest – and other heads will fall. Put your wits to work and find party who bandaged his hand – if you can. Let up on the tool. Be warned in time – these national funerals are expensive and unsettling. There was to have been one in March – there will be another in December – earlier if you murder C. [Czolgosz] – New York will mourn also. Tyranny & Trusts Tremble – the reconing [sic] is at hand. The child strikes down the giant and god laughs. A. See: A. to Judge Emery (September 17, 1901), Emery Family Papers, Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society, Buffalo, NY.

Both of Czolgosz’s appointed defense lawyers Loran L. Lewis and Robert C. Titus, both former Supreme Court justices and senators, Republican and Democrat respectively, repeatedly emphasized their reluctance to defend the assassin. The New York Times quoted Lewis regretting “that his name had been mentioned in connection with this trial, as he had been out of practice for some considerable time, and had a very strong repugnance to appearing.” Czolgosz also felt uneasy with his counsel and had met with his appointed defense lawyers only “when virtually forced to do so.” “Assassin Czolgosz Refuses to Plead,” New York Times (September 18, 1901): 3; Briggs notes, set 1, page 24, in Dr. Walter Channings Papers, Box 15, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, MA.

In the State of New York a guilty plea was not admissible in cases where capital punishment was a possibility, see: People of the State of New York, 4.

Haymarket and Berkman trials, was primarily middle-class and decidedly biased against the defendant.\textsuperscript{32}

While earlier trials for crimes of anarchist violence provided some guidance to the District Attorney, Penney’s strategy was primarily informed by lessons learned from the 1881 murder trial of Charles Guiteau for the assassination of President James Garfield.\textsuperscript{33} The Guiteau trial, which stretched over eight weeks, prompted Penny not to take too much time, not to let the definition of insanity come up for debate, not to let charges of medical malpractice obscure the assassin’s bullet, and not to let the defendant turn the proceedings into a circus.\textsuperscript{34} Penney likewise planned a swift trial that would avoid these potential delays and would deprive Czolgosz of further notoriety. Despite amassing prestigious medical professionals who would attest to Czolgosz’s sanity, Penney’s approach was simply not to call on these expert witnesses or discuss Czolgosz’s mental status before the jury.\textsuperscript{35} To refute the suggestion that McKinley had died from malpractice, Penney called Dr. Harvey R. Gaylord, who performed the autopsy on William McKinley, as well as Dr. Herman Mynter and Dr. Matthew Mann, who


\textsuperscript{33} McKinley became the third President of the United States to die from an assassin’s bullet in just thirty-six years. But unlike the assassination attempt on Presidents Jackson in 1835, and murders of Lincoln in 1865 and Garfield in 1881, which had all taken place in the District of Columbia and were subject to federal jurisdiction, McKinley’s wounds had been inflicted within the legal jurisdiction of Erie County in the State of New York.


\textsuperscript{35} The medical professionals who interacted with Czolgosz before the trial presented a unanimous consensus that he was sane at the time he committed the murder and at his trial, see: Joseph Fowler, Floyd S. Crego, and James W. Putnam, “Official Report of the Experts for the People in the Case of the People vs. – Leon F. Czolgosz,” \textit{Philadelphia Medical Journal} (November 9, 1901): 1-6; medical examiner for the defence Carlos F. MacDonald noted, “This course on the part of the District Attorney, marks a new departure in the methods of getting expert evidence in criminal trials where the question of mental responsibility is involved, which is to be highly commended as a practical measure tending to eliminate much superfluous testimony and at the same time to minimize the danger of contradictory expert opinions.” Carlos F. MacDonald, MD, “The Trial, Execution, Autopsy and Mental Status of Leon F. Czolgosz, Alias Fred Nieman, the Assassin of President McKinley,” \textit{American Journal of Insanity} 58:3 (January 1902): 372-373.
performed the operation on McKinley within an hour of the shooting, to provide their observations and interpretations of the autopsy. The *New York Times* summarized their testimonies: “There was nothing known to medical science which would have arrested the progress of the changes caused by the passage of the bullet through the pancreas.”

One of Czolgosz’s medical examiners, superintendent of the Buffalo State Hospital Arthur W. Hurd, commented on the conduct of the case when compared to Guiteau’s trial, saying that “in its lack of sensational features, in its unanimity on the part of the profession (both in this phase and in the treatment of the President himself) is a marked and pleasing contrast to the Guiteau case, and I think that it has redounded to the credit and standing of the profession.”

Penney then presented eyewitnesses to the murder, both bystanders and guards involved in the immediate capture of Leon Czolgosz, further mounting evidence against the assassin.

To establish the assassin’s motive, Penney submitted Czolgosz’s September 6th handwritten confession as evidence, which read: “I killed President McKinley because I done my duty. I don’t believe one man should have so much service and another man should have none.” Penney also called on attorney James L. Quackenbush to testify about Czolgosz’s confession at the Buffalo Police headquarters. In doing so, Quackenbush helped to establish the foreignness of the assassin, since he testified that Czolgosz’s anarchist beliefs had come from foreign sources: “He gave the names of several papers which he had read. Polish names which I cannot recall, four of them.”

Czolgosz’s motive for the murder as presented by the prosecution was that “he had gone to these anarchistic or socialist meetings and that there had been embedded in his diseased heart the seeds of this awful crime.” In the District Attorney’s closing address, Penney furthered his critique of unassimilated immigrants, referring to Czolgosz as an instrument of an awful class of people that have come to our shores, a class of people that must be taught, that should be taught and shall be taught that it is entirely foreign to our laws, to our institutions and to the laws and institutions that evolved such a man as William McKinley that they have no place upon our shores,

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37 Letter from Dr. Arthur Hurd to Dr. Walter Channing, (December 16th, 1901), in Dr. Walter Channing Papers, Box 4, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, MA.
39 *People of the State of New York*, 61.
40 Ibid., 119.
that if they cannot conform to our laws and our institutions, then they must go hence and keep forever from us; that they will not be permitted to come here, to stay here to educate themselves into the notion that they can take the life of any individual irrespective of consequences.  

For all the editorials lamenting that Czolgosz was not American, the District Attorney who prosecuted him was less of an American than the murderer. Thomas Penney was of British birth and had immigrated to America like the assassin’s father, Paul Czolgosz, and thus was a first generation immigrant in comparison to Czolgosz’s experiences as a second-generation immigrant. Historian Eric Rauchway compellingly argues that what made Czolgosz “seem un-American was the indelible taint of race in the sound of his name.” In an argument similar to one of the Haymarket prosecution strategies, Penney explicitly connected Czolgosz’s violence not to the American industrial conditions in which he laboured, but to the jury’s fears of foreigners. For the prosecution to label Czolgosz as a foreign threat to American civilization, it did not matter that Czolgosz had actually been born and raised in the United States. The District Attorney, in his closing address, skirted the issue of Czolgosz’s American birth and highlighted the need to lawfully discipline the foreigner who had killed the American President:

A terrible thing has happened and it has happened because there is a certain class of people in this country that unless they feel the strong arm of justice, the strong arm of the laws that it is irresistible and will force down everything that is against law and order, that unless they feel that with the irresistible force that I know that you will bring to this case, that something terrible will happen.”

When the prosecution closed, Czolgosz’s trial had lasted less than eight hours. The New York Times praised the success of case by stating that “counsel for both sides seemed to be in perfect harmony.”

The fast pace of Berkman and Czolgosz’s trials was repeated in Giuseppe Alia’s trial for the murder of Father Leo Heinrichs in Denver, Colorado. Prior to the outset of the trial, Gustavo Tosti, the Italian consul-general of New York and an expert on diseases of the brain, stated that Alia was clearly insane because of his “very low order of

\[41\] Ibid., 121.
\[43\] *People of the State of New York*, 120.
intelligence” and on the issue of anarchism “seems not to understand the meaning of the word.”

Tosti’s approach to anarchist violence stretched back to 1899 when he argued that the crimes had less to do with class relations than with the innate tendencies within the individual, writing in the Political Science Quarterly that perpetrators of this violence “do not become assassins because they are more or less imbued with the most superficial aspects of the theory of Anarchism, but simply because they are born criminals.”

When Alia was arraigned on February 29th he entered a plea of “not guilty,” but the most surprising turn of events during the arraignment was that the interpreter, Peter Ressle, was dismissed because of the charge that he was “a member of an Anarchist organization.”

District Attorney George A. Stidger assigned doctors to interview Alia and prepare evidence against Tosti’s implied insanity defense. The trial began before Judge Greeley W. Whitford on March 2nd. The prosecution presented their case over two days, calling on Coroner R. P. Rollins to describe Father Leo’s wounds and Detective Claude Bossie, who passed around the gun used in the crime and showed how the bullets had been sharpened to a point. The prosecution also called on Mrs. M. Van Cleave, who testified that she had seen Alia at the church three times before the shooting; each time he was accompanied by two other men, and as the men talked, Alia pointed towards the altar. While Stidger attempted to use Van Cleave’s testimony to suggest a larger anarchist conspiracy, Van Cleave’s comments were uncorroborated by additional witnesses or police evidence. Stidger then called two altar boys, Joseph Hines and Joe Miller, aged nine and fourteen respectively, as the only two eyewitnesses to the attack. Finally, four doctors testified to Alia’s sanity.

During the proceedings journalists emphasised that Alia, “who understands practically no English,” appeared to “take no interest whatever in the proceedings.”

The fast-paced trials of Berkman, Czolgosz, and Alia were a marked contrast to the prolonged Haymarket conspiracy trial and the 1907 trials of the WFM officials, William Haywood, Charles Moyer, and George Pettibone, which shared much in

47 “Alia Pleads Not Guilty: Slayer of Denver Priest is Frightened at Crowds,” Cleveland Plain Dealer (March 1, 1908): 1.
common with the prosecution strategies for the Haymarket conspiracy trial. While the bomber had been absent from the Haymarket trial in 1886, the Idaho court officials had the full cooperation of the bomber who had killed former Governor Steunenberg. So compelling was Orchard’s transformation that even the trial judge, Fremont Wood, did not recognize the murderer in the courtroom:

The Harry Orchard then standing before the Court seemed to be vastly different from the Harry Orchard I had observed when he was being transported from the Canyon County jail to the State penitentiary in Boise. The pictures of Orchard which have been published and which were taken soon after his arrest show him with the hard lines then existing over his face which to my mind evidenced a long period of criminal activity. These lines had now disappeared; the hardness was entirely eliminated, and his countenance had taken on an appearance of conscious, satisfactory repose, exhibiting a change that I had never supposed possible in so brief a period of time.  

Thus, like the Haymarket trial, Idaho prosecutors would rely on a state witness to portray the defendants as participants in a vast conspiracy. In their arguments, prosecutors, instead of deploying tactics to demean anarchists, valorized Orchard, despite his admission of murder, in order to represent him as a pawn in the larger conspiracy of the Western Federation of Miners officials’ plans of labor-based violence. Even though they came up short of proving this conspiracy, prosecutors dramatized the magnitude of these violent crimes, declaring that, yet again, social stability and public safety were at stake during the trials.

Before their trials for the murder of Steunenberg began, the defense counsel of the WFM officials argued that the nature of their imprisonment and their immediate extradition had violated the right of habeas corpus, which protects the personal liberty of free citizens and provides that an individual cannot be held prisoner without due process of the law. The U.S. Supreme Court acknowledged the illegality of their kidnapping on December 3rd, 1906, but denied the defence’s request to dismiss the case by ruling that they could still be lawfully prosecuted since they were now in the state that had indicted

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51 The defense consisted of the WFM’s regular attorney, Edmund Richardson, and retained the services of Clarence Darrow who had already established himself as a friend of the labor movement for his eloquent defense of Eugene V. Debs in the Pullman Strike case of 1894, and had advocated on behalf of the United Mine Workers before a Federal mediating board after the coal strike of 1902.
them, regardless of how they came to be there.\textsuperscript{52} An editorial in the \textit{International Socialist Review} declared that the Supreme Court’s decision on kidnapping would “go down to historical infamy side by side with the Dred Scott decision with which it has so frequently been compared.”\textsuperscript{53} When the trial opened, the next move of defense attorney Clarence Darrow was his request that the case be dismissed for lack of corroborative evidence beyond Orchard’s testimony. Judge Wood denied this motion, although he later conceded, “There was very little legal corroboration upon which a verdict of guilty could be justified.”\textsuperscript{54} Fremont feared that dismissing the case might have led to questions of his impartiality and “would have been cowardly upon my part to have admitted for the moment that I could not try the case without embarrassment to myself.”\textsuperscript{55}

William Haywood’s trial began on May 9\textsuperscript{th}, 1907 in Boise, Idaho.\textsuperscript{56} At the time of arraignment, the defendant and his legal counsel did not know the evidence or charges against Haywood, particularly the testimony of corroborating witnesses like Steve Adams who were imprisoned. It was difficult even to guess what they were since none of the incarcerated WFM officials had been in Idaho when Steunenberg was assassinated sixteen months previously. The chief prosecutor for the WFM trials was James H. Hawley, who had built his early career defending miners and their organizations, but had definitively sided with mine owners when he accepted the appointment as special prosecutor for the State of Idaho.\textsuperscript{57} Associate counsel for the prosecution was William E.

\textsuperscript{52} Supreme Court Justice Joseph McKenna was the lone dissenter, writing, “Kidnapping is a crime, pure and simple. All of the officers of the law are supposed to be on guard against it. But how is it when the law becomes the kidnapper, when the officers of the law, using its forms and exerting its power, become abductors?” cited in Luke Grant, “The Idaho Murder Trial,” \textit{Outlook} 58 (April 6, 1907): 805-808; Joseph Wanhope, \textit{The Haywood-Moyer Outrage: The Story of Their Illegal Arrest and Deportation from Colorado to Idaho} (New York: Wilshire Book, 1907).


\textsuperscript{55} Ibid., 24-25.

\textsuperscript{56} Journalists descended on the remote western town of Boise, \textit{Current Literature} noted in June “fifty special correspondents of newspapers and magazines from all parts of the country hastened last month to the little city to report the case, and the telegraph company installed ten additional circuits to handle the press business.” “A Review of the World,” \textit{Current Literature} 42:6 (June 1907): 587.

Borah, Idaho’s most prosperous lawyer, who had been elected to the United States Senate four months before the trial began.

As jury selection began, the Governor of Idaho, Frank R. Gooding attempted to minimize the growing class tensions in the region, stating to the Outlook in April 1907: “There is no question about a fair trial. No higher class of citizens can be found than those who live in Canyon County. They have no prejudice against any class of citizens, be they laborers or capitalists.”

Luke Grant echoed this sentiment in the Outlook, stating that the potential jurors “know little of labor unions, and they do not believe in class struggle.” The jury selection process, however, was as lengthy and contested as the selection for the Haymarket trial, although the prosecution had the decided advantage from a secret Pinkerton operative who had infiltrated the defence team and regularly sent reports listing the names of the defence counsel’s top juror choices, thus enabling the prosecution to challenge them with greater ease. Borah sent copies of the embedded Pinkerton reports to President Roosevelt on April 24th to forestall an investigation by the federal land office that connected him, as well as many Idaho elites like former governor Steunenberg and current Governor Gooding, to timber frauds. The President decided to quash the corruption investigation and did not share the information about the imbedded spy to the presiding judge at Haywood’s trial. The secret agent’s role was not publically discovered until after the trial, but class politics played a key role in the jury screening process as the prosecution rejected miners and union members while the defense dismissed businessmen and bankers. After screening more than 250 potential jurors, the final jury was sworn in on June 3rd.

60 The secret agent was known as Operative No. 21, see: McParland Report (April 19, 1907); McParland to Jas. H. Hawley (January 10, 1907) in Pinkerton Reports; Philip S. Foner, History of the Labor Movement in the United States, volume 4 (New York: International Publishers, 1947), 56-57.
63 The jury consisted of O.V. Seben, Thomas B. Gess, Finley McBean, Samuel D. Gilman, Daniel Clark, George Powell, H. F. Messecar, Lee Schrivener, J.A. Robertson, Levi Smith, A. P. Burns, and Samuel F. Russell. As J. Anthony Lukas remarks on their relative homogeneity: “All were or had been farmers. Nine still tilled the land, while one was a real estate agent, one was a business contractor, and one a foremen of fence construction. Eight were Republicans, three were Democrats, and one was a Prohibitionist. All but one were over fifty years old, most were in their late fifties or their sixties.” J.
The prosecution’s case rested on Orchard’s confession, but Pinkerton Detective James McParland struggled to find evidence to corroborate the assassin’s story. He tried his hand at several means of establishing a conspiracy among the WFM members, yet none of them worked as well as he had hoped. One of Orchard’s named accomplices, a miner named Steve Adams, had initially been persuaded by McParland to confess complicity and corroborate some of Orchard’s story, but Adams repudiated his confession and was immediately arrested and charged with the murder of two individuals that he had copped to in part of his “confession.” McParland also repeatedly, but unsuccessfully, tried to turn Charles Moyer against Haywood and Pettibone. The prosecution placed Orchard on the stand for six days of testimony and argued that, although Orchard was a heinous criminal, he was only a pawn in a vicious conspiracy that sought to rule the Western mining regions through terror and assassination. Orchard described how he had killed nineteen men, including Governor Steunenberg, at the behest of Haywood and other members of the WFM inner circle. The prosecution was granted wide leeway in bringing in evidence that was not even tangentially related to the trial, such as copies of Albert Parson’s anarchist newspaper, Alarm, from before the anarchist was executed in 1887. The prosecutors also introduced copies of the Miner’s Magazine into evidence to demonstrate the animosity the WFM had for Steunenberg. The prosecution maintained that Steunenberg had been killed partly in revenge for calling in federal soldiers to pacify the 1899 Coeur d’Alene labor dispute and partly to instil fear in other prominent officials. The Outlook legitimated Orchard’s courtroom composure “with every appearance of exactness and truthfulness, and in the most cold-blooded and callous

Anthony Lukas, Big Trouble: A Murder in a Small Western Town Sets Off a Struggle for the Soul of America (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1997), 538.

During Adams’ trial he testified that he had been put into a cell with Orchard at Boise and introduced to McPartland, “McPartland [sic] told me that he wanted to convict Moyer, Haywood, Pettibone, St. John, and Simpkins whom he called ‘cut-throats.’ If I did not help I would be taken back to Colorado and either hanged or mobbed. If I did help I would only be taken to Colorado as a witness. When we parted McPartland told me he was my friend. They put me in a cell with Harry Orchard and talked with me about the need for backing up his story. I was frightened. The next day McPartland called again. I said I would do what he wanted me to do.... When the confession was made he led me on step by step and showed me all they wanted me to say.... He wanted the names of the officers of the Federation used as much as possible all through the confession. Two or three days later Warden Whitney brought the confession for me to sign.” Adams was acquitted by a divided jury, rearrested and tried twice again leading to two additional acquittals before he was eventually freed. Grant, “Idaho Murder Trial,” 808; Hawley, “Steve Adams’ Confession,” 16-27; Foner, History of the Labor Movement, 49-50.

way, Orchard told of trafficking in human life at a stipulated price for each victim.”66 Sitting across the courtroom, Haywood commented that Orchard’s testimony “was a revolting story of a callous degenerate, and no one will ever know how much of it was true and how much fabrication.”67

Yet despite McParland’s intensive and widespread search, the prosecution could not produce a witness to corroborate Orchard’s story about a conspiracy involving Haywood. Prosecutor Hawley was quoted in the Denver Post on June 17th, 1907, as saying that “[t]he State has been misled by the Pinkerton detectives who promised to produce indubitable evidence to connect Haywood.”68 While defense attorneys attacked Orchard’s credibility, prosecutor Borah attempted to discredit Clarence Darrow by asserting that, “If Orchard had not turned state’s evidence he would be on trial, and the eminent counsel from Chicago would be defending him with all the eloquence he possessed instead of denouncing him as the most despicable monster on earth.”69 Yet in his closing address, Borah attempted to link Haywood to Orchard’s crimes by raising the spectre of anarchy in Steunenberg’s mangled corpse, when he stated to the jury that in “the stain of his life’s blood upon the whitened earth I saw Idaho dishonoured and disgraced. I saw murder – no, not murder, a thousand times worse than murder – I saw anarchy wave its first bloody triumph in Idaho.”70

Between 1886 and 1908, state prosecutors developed a series of strategies to mute the class-based politics of anarchist’s deeds. Defendants were portrayed as either participants in a vast conspiracy or as misguided tools of anarchist propagandists. Throughout their arguments, prosecutors repeatedly emphasised the apprehended anarchists’ foreignness, idleness, and cowardliness, while stopping short of any claims of insanity. Prosecutors also dramatized the magnitude of these violent crimes to jurors and the newspaper-reading public by spotlighting the blood and gore and claiming that civilization itself was at stake during the trials. But before judgements could be decreed on these crimes, defendants had an opportunity to use the courtroom to support their

68 Cited in Farrell, Clarence Darrow, 171.
70 Cited in Farrell, Clarence Darrow, 181.
beliefs. As we will see, court officials colluded to ensure this was a steadily decreasing opportunity for Propaganda by Word.

**Defendant Performances in the Courtroom**

Despite prosecution strategies to vilify the anarchists, the defendants who spoke up for themselves during their trials attempted to use the opportunity to either articulate critiques of industrial capitalism or situate their violence within the context of class war. Although their trials deprived them of their freedom, it gave the defendants a national and international audience. Therefore, with the eyes of the nation focused on each trial, the accused men had one last chance to clarify their innocence or add propaganda to their deeds. Sometimes they took this opportunity to do both. Anarchists had given some thought towards courtroom conduct. For example the New York-based anarchist Johann Most wrote in his 1885 guide to bomb making, *Military Science for Revolutionaries*: “When there is no hope of escape, the revolutionist has a different duty, the highest duty, to fulfil: he must defend his actions from the revolutionary-anarchist standpoint and convert the prisoners’ dock into a tribune.”\(^71\) In an effort to control the meaning of their trials, the defendants pursued performative strategies to defend their case more before the court of public opinion than before judge and jury. The anarchists in the Haymarket trial developed two diverging courtroom strategies: using the legal system to obtain justice or refusing to appeal to the State for mercy.

For the Haymarket trial, the best occasions for the defendants to articulate their critiques of industrial capitalism came when they testified on their own behalf in July and again in their final statements in October 1886. All eight prisoners availed themselves of this opportunity and used the court as a forum for their ideas. Although most of the men knew each other, it was clear that they disagreed on tactics of Propaganda by Word and Propaganda by Deed. Spies in particular had recently broken with Engel, Fischer, and Lingg, as they moved on to more radical circles that were deeply committed to violent action.\(^72\) The most radical of the Haymarket defendants, and the only anarchist arrested who was known definitively to have made and accumulated bombs, was twenty-one year

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\(^{72}\) Smith, *Urban Disorder*, 327.
old Louis Lingg. Lingg had arrived in America less than a year earlier, spoke little English, and was hardly known to most of the other defendants. Lingg spoke with the most contempt for the proceedings, concluding: “I despise you. I despise your order, your laws, your force-propped authority. HANG ME FOR IT!” Spies argued against the nativist anti-foreignness articulated by the prosecution as a form of patriotism that was “the last refuge of the scoundrel” and in turn emphasised his claim to citizenship in an immigrant city like Chicago, saying “I have been a citizen of this city as long as Mr. Grinnell and am probably as good a citizen as Grinnell.” Michael Schwab attempted to contextualize Propaganda by Deed by stating that all sides in the social struggle used violence, but anarchists only advocated “violence against violence” as a “necessary means of self defense.” Parsons spoke last and longest in his final statement before the court, taking eight hours to explain his entire social vision and denouncing their sentence as “judicial murder.” Parsons defined anarchism, not as violence, but as “the right of the toiler to the free and equal use of tools of production, and the right of the producers to their product.” Further, while Parsons was one of the two defendants born in the United States, he attempted to counteract the prosecution’s arguments of foreignness “as though it was a crime to be born in some other country” by stating that he was “an Internationalist” and his loyalties extended “beyond the boundary lines of a single state. The world is my country, all mankind my countrymen.” Although Judge Gary provided wide latitude in allowing the anarchists to use the courtroom for their own propaganda, he commented with concern that these words “may
come to the knowledge of and be heeded by the ignorant, deluded and misguided men who have listened to your counsels and followed your advice.”

The Haymarket trial marked the last time a judge would allow the courtroom to become a site of anarchist propaganda. Judges in Berkman, Czolgosz, and Ali’a’s trials curtailed the defendants’ statements. Fears that the mass distribution of anarchists’ ideas would contribute to martyrdom of the defendants led to a very close cloistering of anarchists while they were in custody and journalist access to the defendants was also dramatically reduced between 1886 and 1908.

After the Haymarket defendants were found guilty, their defense counsel immediately appealed the ruling, arguing a writ of error in addressing the law of conspiracy, the state’s inability to prove the existence of such a conspiracy, and that the jury had not been impartial. The Supreme Court of Illinois ultimately upheld the verdict of the lower court on September 14th, 1887. A final appeal to the United States Supreme Court was denied on November 2nd.

E. L. Godkin, editor of the New York-based Nation, scoffed at the anarchists who were pinning their hopes on legal procedures, writing: “The appeal of an Anarchist to the Supreme Court, or to any court, is a grotesque mixture of opposing ideas and conceptions of the social status.” But not all of the Haymarket defendants believed in using the legal system to their advantage. Of all the incarcerated men, Lingg was most opposed to petitions and appeals and his signature on the appeal to the Illinois Supreme Court had been obtained with difficulty, while the one on the appeal to the United States Supreme Court was never obtained because he had renounced any further recourse to capitalist justice. After the complications of the Haymarket trial, other self-described anarchists who had been tried for their political violence upheld a principal of refusing to participate in what they deemed the courtroom farce or the appeals process. Since appeals were normally used by those convicted of crimes to reduce their sentences, for anarchists this would entail using, and thus

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81 Avrich, Haymarket Tragedy, 360.
legitimating, the apparatus of the State for their benefit. If propaganda was the end result of the anarchist violence then the rejection of the clemency of the State in the face of death emphasized the sacrifice of the body to the ideal. Thus, Lingg, Berkman, Czolgosz, and Alia did not actively participate in their trials, but nonetheless attempted to use their trials to justify their actions.

Following in the revolutionary tradition of explaining his motives, Alexander Berkman patiently awaited the opportunity to speak in his 1892 trial. Twenty years later, Berkman articulated in his memoir that his Propaganda by Deed was “not complete without my explanation... I must use the trial to talk to the people.... It offers me a rare opportunity for a broader agitation of our ideas.” After the prosecution closed its case, Berkman stated, “I am not guilty, I have a defence” and rose to address the court. With the assistance of a German interpreter, Berkman began to read from a prepared statement covering forty closely written pages, but after thirty minutes Judge McClung interrupted the defendant. The Pittsburgh Press emphasized Berkman’s foreignness while narrating the exchange for those outside the courtroom:

“Mr. Berkman you will have to conclude what you have to say by 1 p.m.”
“I have the right to speak as long as I wish,” responded the anarchist, in very bad English.
“No you haven’t. We will teach you different. You can’t run us,” said the Judge.

Several newspapers, like the Boston Herald, gave voice to Berkman’s politics, quoting the defendants speech:

I claim a right to make a full defense as I have no attorney and no witnesses. I know an example will be made of me for my act, and little concern will be had of it, as little as the murder of John Brown and the murder of the five men on the Chicago gallows in 1888 [sic]. The injustice of the ruling classes is to blame for this. They oppress the working men. I belong to those who were murdered at Chicago. That crime made me think and brood.

83 Berkman had refused to answer any questions for reporters or police before the trial, “When I am tried I will tell all, my real name, my family – all, all.” “A Most Foul Deed: H.C. Frick Laid Low by a Would-Be Assassin’s Hand,” Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette (July 25, 1892): 1.
The *New York Times* reprinted slightly more of Berkman’s comments:

This is the beginning of the end. It is now a war against the present condition of affairs. The rich grow richer, and the poor grow poorer, and the end is near. These small strikes will soon end in a large one, and freedom to all workmen of the world will follow, and this great strike is not so far away as you think. In all lands preparation is being made for it.  

With national media focused on him, Berkman attempted to transform the trial into propaganda for his anarchist beliefs. Judge McClung, however, had far less patience than had Judge Gary in the Haymarket trial, and Berkman’s testimony was indeed cut short. As Frick’s would-be assassin recalled: “my speech, too, failed. They tricked me… it was maddening the way the prosecuting attorney and the judge kept interrupting me. I did not even read a third of my statement.” Like the Haymarket anarchists, Berkman attempted to use the proceedings for political purposes, but court officials were vigilant to silence the defendant and proceeded to judgement. Therefore, unlike the prolonged Haymarket trial that demonstrated the possibility that anarchists could use the trial as a platform to propagate their opinions, Berkman’s was expeditious and the assailant was silenced in the process.

Similarly, court officials systematically shushed Leon Czolgosz in his 1901 trial. Czolgosz was also following in the revolutionary tradition by not participating in his murder trial. After stating that he was guilty, which was disregarded by the court, Czolgosz was silent and largely ignored until the moment for the defendant’s speech arrived. The trial transcript documents the following exchange:

Mr. Penny: Do you have any reason to tell the court why you should not now be sentenced – say anything to the Judge. Have you anything to say to the Judge before your sentence? Say yes or no, if you have.
The Defendant: Yes
Mr. Penny: Make your statement then.
The Court: In that behalf, Czolgosz, What you have a right to say --
The Defendant: I want to say this much --
The Court: Wait a moment.

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88 The *New York Times* noted that during the jury selection Czolgosz “evinced no interest whatever in the proceedings, but as the testimony was introduced he paid more attention to what was said and looked at the various witnesses closely.” “Assassin Czolgosz on Trial in Buffalo,” *New York Times* (September 24, 1901): 1.
Judge Truman White went on to place severe limits as to what Czolgosz was permitted to say in the courtroom. As a result, the defendant’s final statement at trial was reduced to an attempt to refute the prosecutions misguided tool arguments: “I would like to say this much; that the crime was committed by no one else but me; no one told me to do it and I never told anybody to do it.” By 1901, the revolutionary tradition of using the defendant’s seat to disseminate anarchist propaganda faced far more restrictions than in the Haymarket conspiracy trial of 1886-1887.

By 1908, Alia was not even called to testify at his own trial. His state-appointed defense attorney simply called two doctors to testify that the anarchist might be insane, particularly as no other motive was given for the crime. Despite the assassin’s initial declarations to police and journalists that he was an anarchist, the *Idaho Daily Statesman* noted, “No evidence that Alia was an anarchist or that he had ever been a member of any society or even that he had been a reader of anarchistic literature has been addressed during the trial.” Alia’s trial was almost as successful as the deaths of Averbuch and Silverstein in completely silencing political explanations for their crimes or even the existence of an anarchist movement.

While the trials of Berkman, Czolgosz, and Alia were remarkably short and their opportunity to testify was significantly curtailed in comparison to the Haymarket trial, William Haywood’s trial is the exception and had several similarities to the first landmark trial. Like the Haymarket trial, the defense had been able to articulate critiques of industrial capitalism as both Haywood and Clarence Darrow kept the class conflict at the center of the proceedings. Darrow went in-depth to the plight of miners in the recently industrialized west, citing unsafe working conditions, exhaustingly long hours, and exploitive company housing and stores. Darrow used vivid language in an effort to sway the jury, describing the plight of miners: “Their teeth fell out, their bones twisted,

89 *People of the State of New York*, 133-134.
90 Ibid., 135.
they became helpless, crippled and paralytic. The machinery was unsafe, the smelters vomited forth poison and death.”

In his closing argument, Darrow returned to the class conflict in the United States, stating that his impassioned pleas were not just for Haywood, but “I speak for the poor, for the weak, for the weary, for that long line of men who, in darkness and despair, have borne the labors of the human race.” When Haywood took the stand, he also testified about the exploitive conditions of the mining industry in the West. Upon cross-examination, the prosecution attempted to get Haywood to admit that he had a personal quarrel or hostility towards Steunenberg, to which Haywood responded “Never…. I regard him the same as any other politician that was being swayed by capitalist interests.”

Both Haywood and Darrow argued that as miners organized to secure better working conditions, mine owners pooled resources to defeat the workers’ unions, and this conflict was only tangentially related to the crimes of Harry Orchard.

Darrow’s depictions of Orchard were very similar to prosecution depictions of anarchists, particularly through familiar class and gendered critiques. Darrow claimed that the assassin was a “cheap soldier of fortune – a shoestring gambler who never degraded himself by work.” Further, Orchard had “fixed this bomb and it was exploded in the most cowardly way that a coward could kill a man.” Haywood gloated years later over the way Darrow, “tore the degenerate Orchard to fragments.” The defense team provided two alternative theories for Orchard’s true motive: first, that the illegal proceedings were the result of a conspiracy between state officials and mine owners to punish innocent men and destroy the WFM, but second, that Orchard had personal grievances against Steunenberg. The defence proved that Orchard had been paid by Pinkertons employed by the Mine Owner’s Association at the time of some of his earlier crimes, produced witnesses to contradict Orchard’s statements, and charged that Detective James McParland had deliberately "fixed" Orchard's confession to throw blame

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93 Cited in Farrell, *Clarence Darrow*, 172.
94 Ibid., 179.
95 Carlson, *Roughneck*, 127.
96 Cited in Farrell, *Clarence Darrow*, 172.
97 Ibid., 173.
for the murder on the WFM. Darrow’s surprise witness was a former Pinkerton Agent and McParland’s stenographer, Morris Friedman, whose industry exposé *The Pinkerton Labor Spy*, had just been published by the socialist Wilshire Book Company earlier that year. Friedman’s book and testimony detailed the use of spies by mining companies to infiltrate the WFM and demonstrated an organized conspiracy against labor unions.  

The defence then presented a second theory that Steunenberg had been killed by Orchard because of a personal grievance against the former governor. The defence demonstrated that during the 1893 strike Orchard had been forced to flee the Coeur d’Alene region, selling his one-sixteenth interest in the Hercules Mine for $300. Shortly before Steunenberg’s murder, however, Orchard had learned that the mine had become a rich ore-producer.  

The defense argued that Orchard’s attempts to tie the WFM to his crimes was merely an attempt to save his own life and potentially reduce his sentence. Although defendants differed in their level of participation in the legal proceedings, most attempted to use the trials to articulate a critique of industrial capitalism and the turbulent class relations in this period. However, over time, and with the notable exception of the Haywood trial, the defendants had less and less of an opportunity to carry out Propaganda by Word. But silencing defendants in the courtroom was only one piece of the legal puzzle that was put together to reorder the meaning of acts of anarchist terror. Judges and juries were tasked with deciphering guilt from innocence and meting out punishments. Harsh sentences seemed to be the ideal means to suppress further acts of anarchist terror, however, both death sentences and long prison terms were not certain once pronounced.

**Sentencing and its complications**

The nature of the courtroom and its attendant rituals between prosecutors and defenders forced them into strikingly opposing groups, pitting them against one another and providing a place in which to enact the drama of judgement. Anarchists often refused to play their proscribed roles but used their appearance in the courtroom as one last effort

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101 McParland was understandably stressed about the effect this motive would have on the jury after learning of this defense strategy through his spy, see: McParland Report (May 16, 1906); Foner, *Labor Movement*, 58.

to control the meanings of Propaganda by Deed as the state sought to condemn the anarchists through the rule of law. The judge and jury weighed the arguments of the defense and prosecution before verdicts were given and punishments were handed down. However, the state’s ability to impose punishments was not without further complications. Long prison sentences were not definite because convicts could be pardoned, have their sentences reduced, or liberate themselves in dramatic escapes. In addition, it was sometimes difficult to keep the condemned men alive long enough to face their death sentences, and even successful executions ran the risk of turning defendants into martyrs for the anarchist cause — challenges that will be explored in greater depth in Chapter Four.

As the Haymarket defendants ended their speeches and Judge Gary began to pronounce their sentences, the judge commented on the fact that their words had attracted a great amount of publicity: “I am quite well aware that what you have said, although addressed to me, has been said to the world; yet nothing has been said which weakens the force of the proof, or the conclusions therefrom upon which the verdict is based.” It seems that Gary thought it was his turn to speak to the world outside the courtroom, reassuring them that the trial had been conducted fairly. Despite the prosecution’s failure to establish who had thrown the bomb in the 1886 Haymarket trial, Gary positioned the meaning of conspiracy so distantly from the act of using the bomb that the defendants’ ideas alone sealed their guilt. After eight weeks in the courtroom, the Haymarket conspiracy trial concluded on August 20th when the jury found the defendants guilty; George Engel, Samuel Fielden, Adolph Fischer, Louis Lingg, Albert Parsons, August Spies, and Michael Schwab were sentenced to death, while Carl Neebe received a 15-year sentence in prison. However, the Governor of Illinois, Richard Oglesby, commuted the death sentences of Samuel Fielden and Michael Schwab, who had appealed to him, to life imprisonment. The remaining condemned men — Engle, Fisher,
Lingg, Parsons, and Spies – refused to appeal to the Governor and prepared for their deaths. The execution date was set for November 11th, 1887.

Fielden, Neebe, and Schwab were serving their prison sentences when the Homestead Lockout prompted Alexander Berkman to attack Frick in 1892, but Berkman did not face the death penalty because Frick had survived the assassination attempt. The proceedings lasted four hours and the jury did not even leave their seats to render a verdict of guilty. Judge Samuel McClung promptly sentenced Berkman to the full sentence for each charge to be served in secession for a prison term of twenty-two years. In effect, Judge McClung sentenced Berkman to more than three times the contemporary maximum sentence for attempted murder.106 The Pittsburgh Dispatch justified the manipulation of existing laws to prolong Berkman’s sentence:

Justice is to be congratulated on this victory in the sentence of the Anarchist assailant of Mr. Frick. It is not a whit too severe, for it is time that a statutory lesson was given to these enemies of society; and, yet, it is leniency, compared to their own summary methods.107

When, immediately after sentencing, Berkman’s mental fitness came into question and raised the spectre of an insanity defense, the Dispatch lamented to readers: “It is doubtful if he will ever serve his full term. His actions of the last couple days lead those who have any connection with him to believe that the man’s mind is weakening by degrees.”108 The National Labor Tribune mockingly compared Berkman whose “defence consist[ed] of the reading of a rambling discourse in favour of anarchy,” to the Carnegie Steel Company’s hiring of Pinkertons, especially noting that “the chief difference in their practice, however, seems to be that while the individual lunatic is pursued by the law the

106 The full sentence was seven years for felonious assault and battery on Frick, five years for the intent to kill Mr. Leishman, three years for each of the three incitements for entering a building with felonious intent, and one year in the workhouse for carrying concealed weapons. “Frick’s Assailant Sentenced: Berkman Will Wear Stripes for Twenty-Two Years,” New York Times (September 20, 1892): 1; Arthur G. Burgoyne, The Homestead Strike of 1892 (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1979 [1893]), 159-161.


company idiots pose as virtuous citizens.” Berkman’s suspected “co-conspirators,” two anarchists caught up in the police raids, Henry Bauer and Carl Nold, were successfully prosecuted for conspiracy on September 19th and sentenced to five years in prison. The trials of Berkman, Bauer, and Nold differed from the Haymarket conspiracy trial in that they were much shorter and separate proceedings that spent far less time in the national spotlight. However, Bauer and Nold received substantially shorter sentences than Oscar Neebe’s 15 years and the life sentences Samuel Fielden and Michael Schwab had received in 1887 because they had been tried separately from Berkman rather than as a group.

There were two anxieties about the anarchist as prisoner: that his sentence would be shortened or that he might liberate himself from confinement. The former came to fruition in the story of the Haymarket conspirators. On June 25th, 1893 the new governor of Illinois, John Peter Altgeld, issued a pardon to the incarcerated Haymarket anarchists. In Altgeld’s long and detailed opinion the jurors had been legally incompetent, the judge partial, and the evidence insufficient. Altgeld hypothesized that the bomb was the work of a single person provoked less by anarchist rhetoric than the activities of the Pinkerton Detective Agency and Chicago’s police force, concluding, “Captain Bonfield is the man who is really responsible for the death of the police officers.” Clarence Darrow, Haywood’s defense attorney, had urged his friend Altgeld to correct the injustice done to the anarchists, but he opposed the severity with which the governor had come down on Judge Gary. Writing in his 1932 autobiography, Darrow stated that he was angrier at the United States Supreme Court than he was at Gary, since the justices had refused to

110 Police were unable to find any evidence connecting Bauer to the assault on Frick, to which they attributed to not finding any mail from the past six weeks as it had been “destroyed in anticipation that a general search for damaging documents would follow the assassination of Mr. Frick.” “Millionaires Marked: The Hellish Plot of the Anarchists,” Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette (July 27, 1892): 2; Berkman, Prison Memoirs, 179-180.
111 Altgeld was a Chicago attorney and was a colleague of Gary on the Superior Court of Cook County from his election in the fall of 1886 until his resignation in July of 1891. Altgeld was the first Democrat elected as Governor of Illinois since 1856, and had won the 1892 election with an aggressive campaign that successfully brought together workers, ethnic groups, and moderates. On the lengthy history behind the pardon, see: Harry Barnard, Eagle Forgotten: The Life of John Peter Altgeld (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1938), 132, 156-162, 183-267; Russell Fraser, “John Peter Altgeld: Governor for the People,” in Harvey Goldberg, American Radicals: Some Problems and Personalities (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1957), 127-144.
review the case even though they had the luxury of considering it collectively far from the scene and after a good deal of time had elapsed from the moment of initial terror over the bomb. Darrow continued: “To severely blame Judge Gary meant blaming a judge for not being one in ten thousand and few men can be that and live.” Responding to the criticisms of his conduct during the Haymarket trial, Judge Gary wrote “if I had a little strained the law, or administered it with great vigor against them, I was to be commended for my courage in so doing. I protest against such commendation, and deny utterly that I have done anything that should subject me to it.” Ultimately, Altgeld released Samuel Fielden, Oscar Neebe, and Michael Schwab from Joliet prison where they had been incarcerated for seven years. To alleviate public fears about these dangerous men who would leave prison, the New York Times reassured its readers that the anarchists had been reformed and that “they obeyed all orders of the guards, and worked hard and faithfully during the entire term.”

Altgeld, however, drew harsh criticism. The New York Times warned its readers that the pardon demonstrated the governor’s “un-Americanism which unfits him for the office which he holds, or even for citizenship. He cannot forget that he is of foreign birth, and foreign ideas are at all times dominant in his mind.” While the New York Times emphasized Altgeld’s foreignness, the newspaper also attempted to confuse the class implications of the pardon by commenting on ethnic divisions in the United States: “The American portion of this community feels outraged by the Governor’s action. Irishmen are indignant because most of the policemen who were killed and injured were Irishmen.” Another editorial lamented that the pardon undermined a case that was a “vindication of established authority... [and] had a most salutary effect in subduing the

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113 Darrow, Story of My Life, 102.
116 The article went on to undermine Altgeld’s allegiance to socialism by stressing his capitalist successes in real estate. “It is probable that the Governor would have developed into an out-and-out Anarchist if his lucky real estate speculations had not turned the course of his natural tendencies.... He grew rich by hoarding his money and investing luckily. He has never been known as a generous man.” “They Call Altgeld an Alien: His Right to the Governorship of Illinois Questioned,” New York Times (June 29, 1893): 1.
spirit of anarchism not only in Chicago but throughout the land, and in teaching the
lesson of submission to the laws provided for the protection of society.” 118 New York
County District Attorney Delancey Nicoll declared that Altgeld’s actions were
“outrageous and extreme,” and that the decision “is bound to do great harm in Chicago
and elsewhere by encouraging Anarchists to feel that they have a powerful friend at
court.” 119 In the fall elections, the Chicago Daily Tribune celebrated the victory of the
Republican nominees, including Judge Gary, who cast Altgeld “into outermost political
darkness... with his mob of Socialists, Anarchists, single-taxers, and office-holding louts
at his heels.” 120 Pardoning the Haymarket anarchists had destroyed John Altgeld’s
political career. It also led to very real concerns that convictions in anarchist trials
could be overturned and, no doubt played a role in court officials’ approaches to the 1901
Czolgosz trial and 1908 Alia trial. The impact of the pardon, however, had the most
resonance in the 1907 WFM trials.

After the pardon of the surviving Haymarket defendants, Alexander Berkman
remained one of the most notorious anarchists behind bars. Fears of his escaping surfaced
shortly after he arrived at the Western Penitentiary in Allegheny County, Pennsylvania, in
October 1892. The New York World published a sensational account that the anarchist
had made “a dash for liberty,” climbed the prison wall, and

[j]umped, landing on the brick pavement forty-five feet below, apparently unhurt.
As he picked himself up and tried to stagger away, Guard Young fired and hit him
in the leg bringing him down. Several stone-masons working on some new building
opposite saw the prisoner jump and rushing over held the anarchist until the officers
came around by way of the gate. Berkman, it is said, is now in the hospital with a
broken leg. The prison officials deny that any attempt to escape was made, and say
Berkman is in the hospital sick, but the story given above comes from good
authority. 121

Although uncorroborated by Berkman, prison documents, or other newspapers, this
sensational story demonstrated fears that anarchists could escape. However, the article

119 “Lawyers and Judges Amazed: Gov. Altgeld’s Criticisms Said to be Preposterous – A Dangerous Step
Knopf, 1937), 377-378; Avrich, Haymarket Tragedy, 339; Smith, Urban Disorder, 170-171.
121 “Berkman’s Break for Liberty,” New York World (October 13, 1892), in Homestead Strike Scrapbook,
The Carnegie Steel Co., Ltd., Strike and Riot of 1892, vol. 3, (August 16 – October 18, 1892), 291, Helen
Clay Frick Foundation Archives, Archives Service Centre, University of Pittsburgh, Pittsburgh, PA.
also resolved the escape attempt through members of the community, in this case working-class stonemasons, who helped the state in keeping the anarchist behind bars. This story also serves to downplay anarchists’ appeals to working-class consciousness, since it was workers who detained the anarchist until prison officials arrived. Although the 1892 escape attempt was journalistic fiction, fears of escape were again raised almost eight years into Berkman’s sentence when a tunnel was discovered outside and underneath the Western Penitentiary. On July 26th, 1900, a local resident alerted prison officials to suspicious activities in a house that was across the street from the prison.

Jennie McCarthy, in expanding on her suspicions to the *Pittsburgh Daily Dispatch*, stated: “I thought of the stuff I had seen taken into the house and began to put two and two together. I figured out that the men were making a tunnel.... I worried over the matter for a long time. I was afraid that they would blow the place up.”

Director of the Allegheny Department of Public Works, Robert McAfee, opened up Stirling Street to discover the path of a tunnel that began in the cellar of a leased house at 28 Sterling Street and extended 200 feet to end inside the prison walls, just inches shy of the surface where prisoners laboured at breaking rocks. Crowds gathered to watch the work as a reporter for the *Pittsburgh Daily Dispatch* noted: “their attitude was one of expectancy, as though a dynamite bomb, or a dead conspirator, or a live convict was about to be dragged out of the earth.”

The police discovered upon interviewing neighbours that two men and one woman had been in the residence for over two months. The woman of the house was known by all the neighbours as a splendid singer and piano player, which had evidently masked the sound of the digging during the day. A search of the home revealed “Secret ciphers, mysterious symbols, strange diagrams and bundles of anarchist literature,” as well as an invitation card from a Socialist Federation in Chicago, leading police to infer

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122 Neighbors informed reporters that “odd-looking” furniture had been moved into the house as well as a large load of boards and galvanized tin spouting, see: “Neighbors Said Little of the Conspiracy,” *Pittsburgh Daily Dispatch* (July 27, 1900): 2.


“that the parties belong to a gang of Chicago Anarchists seeking to deliver Berkman.”125 Neighbours described one of the men as Carl Nold, who had been released from the prison in 1896 after serving a term for assisting Berkman, and a quick consultation of the prison’s rouges gallery corroborated his identification. Stories ran that Emma Goldman, Henry Bauer, and the editor of a New York-based, Yiddish language anarchist newspaper had raised $5,000 for the plot to bribe the jailers and tunnel under the jail. At the time of the incident, Goldman was out of the country and Bauer could not be found for comment.126 An editorial in the Pittsburgh Daily Dispatch conceded that, “The chances seem remote for obtaining any further knowledge of the persons engaged in the attempt or what they intended to do after getting inside the prison.”127 After prison officials held an extensive review of their staff, George A. Kelly, President of the Board of Inspectors of the Western Penitentiary, agreed three days later that “there is a possibility that the mystery will never be cleared.”128 In the next year, during the mass arrests that followed McKinley’s assassination, the police came perilously close to finding incriminating evidence about Berkman’s attempted escape. When Chicago police raided the home of Abe and Mary Isaak, editors of Free Society, Mary hastily gathered correspondence from “a group of anarchists that had tried to free Alexander Berkman from prison.” Concealing

126 “A Startling Anarchist Plot Going the Rounds: Goldman, Bauer and a Yiddish Editor Said to Be in the Tunnel Job,” Pittsburgh Daily Dispatch (August 3, 1900): 3. Although prison officials were convinced that Berkman was the convict the tunnel was dug for, local police and the press suggested J.C. Boyd, currently serving a twelve-year sentence for forgery, Warden E. S. Wright was willing to believe that the two prisoners had “a union of interests… Boyd’s people had the money – Berkmann’s people were to do the work.” “An Astounding Theory in the Tunnel Mystery: Warden Wright Now Believes That the Prodigious Attempt Was Made to Liberate Both Berkman and Boyd,” Pittsburgh Daily Dispatch (July 28, 1900): 1; “Placed in the Hands of Allegheny Police: Warden Wright and North side Officers Disagree on the Subject of the Liberation,” Pittsburgh Daily Dispatch (July 27, 1900): 2; “Tunnel Mystery: Warden Wright Now Believes That the Prodigious Attempt Was Made to Liberate Both Berkman and Boyd,” Pittsburgh Daily Dispatch (July 28, 1900): 1-2; “New Theory Propounded in the Tunnel Case: Connellsville Man Who Knows Boyd Tells Something of Him and a Prison Guard,” Pittsburgh Daily Dispatch (August 4, 1900): 3.
the incriminating letters rolled into her skirt, Mary evaded the police just long enough to put the letters in the furnace, where they “weren’t burned but only mixed up with the rest of the trash in the furnace.”\(^{129}\) The critical evidence about Berkman’s attempted prison escape was disposed of right under the eyes of the police. Both Berkman and Goldman would later write about their involvement in the escape attempt and tie the events to prominent anarchist prison escapes across Europe.\(^{130}\)

By the time Czolgosz was being sentenced in 1901, fears that convictions could be pardoned or even dramatic prison escapes arranged were very real anxieties. Less than eight hours into Czolgosz’s trial for the murder of President McKinley, Judge White instructed the jury on rendering their decision; the jury returned with a verdict of guilty in just thirty-five minutes.\(^{131}\) Proclaiming that the defendant had “committed a crime which shocked and outraged the moral sense of the civilized world,” Judge White sentenced the convicted assassin to execution at the Auburn Prison on October 28th, 1901, which was the earliest possible day under State law.\(^{132}\) The press celebrated the success of Czolgosz’s trial proclaiming: “the wheels of justice moved swiftly.”\(^{133}\) With the trial closed, District Attorney Penney sealed his case files, including Czolgosz’s confession and “refused it to anyone who asked,” only admitting that “he wished to say as little as possible, that he believed any writing or talking on this matter only kept it before the


\(^{132}\) New York law did not allow the execution of a capital sentence less than thirty days of its passage, People of the State of New York, 136.

public and it has been his plan to suppress all that was possible, believing that Czolgosz was sane and an anarchist without question.” Even after Czolgosz’s execution, Penney would not take any chances to undermine the judgement of McKinley’s assassin by talking about the trial publically.

Following the precedent of Berkman’s trial, suspected co-conspirators in the Presidential assassination were tried separately. However, police in several cities had encountered difficulty in finding any evidence to connect Czolgosz to the anarchists they had rounded up in their raids. Only the State of New York would proceed with a trial against Johann Most for re-publishing an essay by Karl Heinzen, titled, “Murder Against Murder” in the anarchist periodical Freiheit on the day of McKinley’s assassination. In the absence of anti-anarchy laws, Most was tried under a vague section of the New York state penal code that made it a misdemeanour “to commit an act which seriously disturbs or endangers the public peace or openly outrages a public decency.” Tried and found guilty on October 14th, Most was sentenced to a year on Blackwell’s Island, which was a far shorter sentence than those received by the Haymarket “conspirators” or Bauer and Nold. At the same time that anarchist violence appeared to be on the rise in the United States, the legal system increasingly proved inadequate in prosecuting anarchist conspiracies.

While fears of pardon or escape had been substantiated, another crack in the state’s ability to punish anarchists appeared in 1906 when Berkman was released early from prison after only serving fourteen years of his twenty-two year sentence. The shortened incarceration came as a result of sentence commutation laws in Pennsylvania.

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134 Briggs notes, set 1, page 25, in Dr. Walter Channings Papers, Box 15, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, MA. Writing in 1936, a local Buffalo researcher noted that “the records, of the District-Attorney, after the president was shot Mr. Penney was sent for, and accompanied by his stenographer, he went to the Temple of Music to take statements of the witnesses, and then he went to Police headquarters to interview Czolgosz. At the trial of Czolgosz this same stenographer took down every word. All these papers were signed and sworn to. After all was over, this man obtained permission to have all these records bound. After this someone neglected to take proper care of these records, so a few years ago when everything was moved into the new City Hall from the old City and County Hall, these old dusty books were thrown into a pile of rubbish. They were rescued just in time, and they repose now in a vault. (This story Mr. Bingham refuses to let me tell) He is afraid it might cause trouble. Most of the records in these two books are typewritten, but Czolgosz made his confession before The District-Attorney and the Superintendent of Police and a few others, this confession was written by Frank T. Haggerty with a pen, and signed by Czolgosz.” Mrs. Nathaniel Patch to Mr. Charles W. Thompson (December 14, 1936), Papers of Mrs. Ethel Chaplin (Nathaniel) Patch, Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society, Buffalo, NY.

However, the *Pittsburgh Dispatch* attempted to put a positive spin on the development by reporting that Berkman’s sentence had been reduced for “good behaviour” and added that the anarchist, “wants to leave Pittsburgh quietly and try and forget his past life.”136 This narrative of the reformed prisoner is similar to press characterizations of Samuel Fielden, Oscar Neebe, and Michael Schwab after they were pardoned in 1893. However, the same article also offered Berkman’s own criticisms of his time in jail:

Berkman made a written statement yesterday in which he denounces the officials of the penitentiary and the treatment to which the prisoners are subjected. He says the institution is a veritable Hades. 137

Berkman promised further Propaganda by Word when he informed journalist that he planned to write a book about the assassination attempt and subsequent prison experience. Adding to the fears that incarcerated anarchists could have their sentences reduced, receive a pardon, or escape from prison, was a new fear that anarchists would emerge from prison as more dangerous and committed to revolutionary objectives than when they had entered.

As the trial of William Haywood came to a close in July 1907, after seven weeks of testimony, the stakes were very similar to the Haymarket trial. Journalist Luke Grant commented in the *Outlook* that the central contest before the jury was whether it would end with a

Dramatic climax of a series of murders planned in wholesale fashion by men of power and influence in the world of labor, or will it result in disclosing a plot on the part of men influential in the world of finance to send to the gallows the leaders of those who have thwarted them in their plans.138

The jurors, none of whom had ever been a union member or worked in a mine, all farmers over the age of fifty, deliberated for a full twenty hours before returning a verdict

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136 The *Pittsburgh Dispatch* also suggested that as a result of his prison stay Berkman, “is in excellent health and gained considerably in weight since he was placed in prison.” “Prison Doors Will Open For Berkman To-Day: Anarchist Will Leave for St. Louis and Publish Book Bearing Upon His Prison Life,” *Pittsburgh Dispatch* (May 18, 1906): 3.


of ‘not guilty’ on July 26th. Thus, the Haywood trial ended dramatically different than the Haymarket conspiracy trial twenty years earlier. Commenting on this verdict, President Theodore Roosevelt wrote to Whitelaw Reid, the American Ambassador to England: “There has been a gross miscarriage of justice, to my mind, out in Idaho in the acquittal of Haywood. It is not a pleasant matter from any standpoint.” In contrast, the International Socialist Review referred to the trial as “an epochal event in the history of the working class in the United States.” George Pettibone was acquitted in January 1908 and Charles Moyer was also released on bail and never brought to trial. From the anarchist perspective, Berkman commented on the relation between the Haymarket and WFM trials with venomous contempt in 1909:

The American proletariat must feel their cheeks burn at the mention of the Chicago Anarchists: the workingmen of this country can never be forgiven the cowardice of passively witnessing the legal murder of their most devoted champions. They could have most easily foiled the conspiracy of greed, as they did years later in the case of Moyer, Haywood, and Pettibone.

Even Harry Orchard, who was tried and found guilty for the confessed murder of Frank Steunenberg and sentenced to death, had his punishment commuted to life imprisonment in the Idaho State Penitentiary in exchange for his testimony against the WFM. Although unsuccessful in implicating the WFM leaders, Orchard received preferential treatment in prison, including a private bungalow in the prison yard. A 1950 article in Life Magazine told its readers that “the prison keeps him busy tending its strawberry patch and collecting hens’ eggs, regards him as a model prisoner and occasionally allows him to indulge his one passion: eating ice cream.”

While Orchard escaped his death sentence, Giuseppe Alia was found guilty for the murder of Father Leo Heinrichs after a quick trial that lasted three and a half days. The Idaho Daily Statesman commented on March 12th, 1908, that “this waif from Italy, an

140 President Theodore Roosevelt to Whitelaw Reid (July 29, 1907) Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Library of Congress, Washington, DC.
alleged but not proven, anarchist heard his doom.”144 Judge Greeley W. Whitford pronounced a death sentence and set the date for execution by hanging in the week of July 16th, 1908.145 The Idaho Daily Statesman quickly compared the Alia trial to the unsuccessful prosecution of Haywood:

Do Colorado courts act more swiftly than others, have they been stripped of the means of endless delays to retard justice, or is there the other side to it that this anarchist had no friends with money to interfere in his behalf, no powerful organizations back of him to fight every step taken by authorities against him? Is there, after all, in spite of our boasted civilization, two kinds of justice in this country – one for the man without influence or money and the other for him who has both?146

While elites in Idaho were contemplating the class implications of the justice system, prison officials in Denver had their hands full ensuring that Alia did not escape his death sentence. A few days after the trial, Alia attempted to escape from jail by attacking another prisoner who had been charged to clean the cells and tried to flee through his open cell door. The Warden had assigned Guy Sexton, a ‘trusty” inmate who was serving a short term for a petty theft, to watch Alia while he ate his meals “[f]or fear he would attempt to end his own life with a spoon or fork.”147 Alia slashed Sexton’s neck with a razor and dashed for the door where he ran into deputy warden Peter Carpen. Alia fought with both Carpen and the wounded Sexton. The Idaho Daily Statesman reported: “Even with the two men against him, Alia struggled like a wild man to escape and had to be beaten almost to unconsciousness before he would give up.”148 While some, like the Italian consul Baron Tosti, argued that the violent outbreak was further proof of the assassin’s insanity, Alia’s state-appointed attorney, Robert H. Widdicombe, stated, “I have always regarded the prisoner as a dangerous man, and even while I defended him. I

144 “Slayer of Priest to Go to Gallows,” Idaho Daily Statesman (March 13, 1908): 1.
had no belief that he was insane. I have always regarded him a desperate and sane man
who would not stop at anything to carry out his ideas.”

Tosti countered:

I am more than ever convinced that the man is insane. However, I have no intention
of appealing to the Italian government or of trying to make this an international
affair. It is purely a local matter. Alia is here, his deed was committed in this
country and he must be dealt with under the laws of Colorado. I have formed no
plan for attempting to secure his release even though I am convinced he should be
in an asylum.

The Governor of Colorado, Henry Buchtel, did intervene, not to assist Alia but to pardon
Sexton for his crimes of petty theft because of “his heroism in overpowering Giuseppe
Alia.” Alia, along with Czolgosz, Engle, Fisher, Lingg, Parsons, and Spies would face
the death penalty; the complications of state-imposed death will be explored in greater
depth in Chapter Four.

From the 1886 Haymarket conspiracy trial to the 1908 Alia murder trial, the
violence of Propaganda by Deed was reordered within the civilized display of the
courtroom. The trials of the anarchists implicated in these acts of terror demonstrated
how existing statues were manipulated to discipline future acts of class violence: the
looseness of Judge Gary’s interpretation of the Illinois conspiracy laws led to the
Haymarket convictions, Judge McClung’s successive sentences of Berkman totalled more
than three times the maximum sentence for attempted murder, while Czolgosz and Alia
were sentenced to death for their individual murders; the most violent defendant in this
series of crimes, Harry Orchard, confessed murderer of nineteen people, had his death
sentence commuted because he testified for the state. But it was not just Orchard who
evaded the justice meted out to him. Two of the Haymarket defendants, Samuel Fielden
and Michael Schwab, also had their death sentences commuted to life in prison when
they appealed for clemency in 1887 and were subsequently pardoned, along with Oscar
Neebe, by Governor Peter Altgeld in 1893. Although Alexander Berkman received a
lengthy sentence, the anarchist nearly escaped in 1900 and was released early in 1906 due
to Pennsylvania’s commutation laws. William Haywood, Charles Moyer, and George

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Pettibone were found innocent of any complicity in the death of Frank Steunenburg. While the rushed Haymarket trial led to a conviction despite the fact that the bomber was not known by the prosecutors, somewhat ironically the WFM trials lead to acquittals even when the bomber testified for the prosecution. Over time, the trials allowed less and less room for anarchists’ dissenting voices to emerge while serving to create vicious stereotypes of foreign agitators that were widely circulated by the press. Yet the courtroom was not the only place to reorder the propaganda of anarchist violence. Interspersed amongst the individual trials, state and federal legislative proposals were drafted to curb the tide of anarchist activity.

**Legislating Against the Anarchist Peril**

Beginning in the 1880s, Congress and state legislatures crafted statutes that specifically or indirectly targeted the perceived threat of widespread anarchist terrorism. An editorial in the *Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette* justified the need for such legal amendments in the name of American republican traditions on July 26th, 1892: “The founders of the government never dreamed that bands of seditious, revolutionary and atheistic subjects of foreign nations would make the United States an Asylum.”

This incipient crisis needed novel solutions and several legislative projects gained momentum between the 1880s and 1908, reforming existing immigration, naturalization, and deportation laws, but also drafting new laws that focused on the suppression of free speech, public assembly and the right to bear arms. Advocating for legislative changes along these lines amounted to a two-fold plan to solve the problem of anarchy. On the one hand, the augmented powers of local and state police would silence and suppress anarchists within the United States by punishing those who broke the existing laws. On the other hand, federal agencies would cut off anarchism from its “foreign” sources by preventing more anarchists from entering the country and expelling those already present from American soil through immigration and naturalization laws. However, despite the construction of anarchism’s foreign roots, deep-seated xenophobia prevented the United States from cooperating internationally to suppress the global threat of anarchist violence.

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The first tentative legislative solution that addressed growing fears of anarchist violence in the United States was to place limitations on certain kinds of public gatherings, particularly when the participants were armed. In the turbulent industrial relations of the 1870s, while state governments built up and modernized their National Guard units and private companies like the Pinkerton Detective Agency were supplying organized groups of armed men to business owners, many militant labor organizations did the same. Worker-militias such as the Lehr-und-Wehr Verein, the Bohemian Sharpshooters, and the Irish Labor Guards began to march and train openly in the streets of American cities.\textsuperscript{153} The increase in armed workingmen’s militias alarmed state officials and created tension among Labor and Socialist allies. In the first legislation that limited the freedom of assembly and right to bear arms, elected officials in the state of Illinois tried to outlaw the more militant worker militias in 1879 by passing a law that forbade companies of armed men that were not authorized by the Governor from drilling and parading in public. The Supreme Court of the United States upheld states’ ability to control and regulate armed military groups who were not part of “the regular organized volunteer militia of the State of Illinois, or the troops of the United States” in the 1886 \textit{Presser v. Illinois} case. The court disposed of freedom of assembly guaranteed by the First Amendment and the Second Amendment’s right to keep and bear arms by arguing:

The right voluntarily to associate together as a military company or organization or to drill or parade with arms, without, and independent of, an act of Congress or law of the State authorizing the same, is not an attribute of national citizenship. Military organizations and military drill and parade under arms are subjects especially under the control of the government of every country. They cannot be claimed as a right independent of law.\textsuperscript{154}

Writing at the time of the Haymarket bombing, reformer Richard T. Ely commented that this “was class legislation” since:

It has not suppressed the Lehr-und-Wehr Verein of Chicago, and no one knows how many more may be drilling in secret, though the fact that it has produced

\textsuperscript{153} Avrich, \textit{Haymarket Tragedy}, 43-46.
\textsuperscript{154} Herman Presser had been charged on September 24, 1879, for marching with the Chicago based Lehr und Wehr Verein. Stephen P. Halbrook, “Right of Workers to Assemble and to Bear Arms: \textit{Presser v. Illinois}, One of the Last Holdouts Against Application of the Bill of Rights to the States,” \textit{University of Detroit Mercy Law Review} 76 (Summer 1999): 943-989.
bitterness and intensified discontent is undeniable. It is a bad law and a bad precedent.”\textsuperscript{155}

Indeed, one of the more terrifying discoveries during the police investigation after the Haymarket bombing was reported in the \textit{Chicago Daily Tribune}: in “a small hall apparently used for meetings, a trap door was found leading into a tunnel, at one end of which badly-bruised targets were revealed. The tunnel had been used by the Anarchists as a place for rifle-practice below the street level, and where the sound of the shots would not attract attention.”\textsuperscript{156} Workers’ militias literally went underground. While employers were increasing appealing to the state to use the militia to protect their interests in labor unrest, workers’ ability to organize their own militias to counteract employers’ display of force became illegal. This initial legislative foray into suppressing the freedom of assembly by the State of Illinois focused narrowly on groups of armed men and may have even contributed to the Haymarket bombing by pushing militant working-class organizations underground.

While the Illinois law was an early attempt to curtail the freedom of assembly and the rights of certain groups to bear arms, it was not until McKinley’s assassination that numerous legislative proposals to supress the freedom of speech and assembly of anarchist agitators specifically emerged. The State of New York was the first to pass laws of this sort, in the form of the Criminal Anarchy Law, enacted on April 3\textsuperscript{rd}, 1902. The legislation defined anarchism as a doctrine holding that “organized government should be overthrown by force or violence or by assassination of the executive head or of any of the elected officials of government, or by any unlawful means.”\textsuperscript{157} The Criminal Anarchy Law specifically targeted persons who advocated such doctrines orally or in writing, who helped disseminate such doctrines, or who organized, joined, or “voluntarily” assembled publicly in groups to promote them. Individuals caught engaging in these ideas faced up to ten years in jail and a fine of $5,000. The legislation also curtailed freedom of assembly by outlawing any assemblage of two or more persons for the purpose of


\textsuperscript{157} The New York Laws were re-printed in \textit{Mother Earth} 1:10 (1906); and are reprinted in: Peter Glassgold, ed., \textit{Anarchy: An Anthology of Emma Goldman’s Mother Earth} (Washington, DC: Counterpoint, 2001), 6-8.
advocating anarchism; any person knowingly allowing such meetings on their property, and even those in positions such as janitors, faced arrest. Laws drafted on the New York model were also enacted in New Jersey and Wisconsin in May 1902.\footnote{Sidney Fine, “Anarchism and the Assassination of McKinley,” \textit{American Historical Review} 60:4 (July 1955): 794.}

With these successes at the state level, the death of President McKinley further prompted the federal government to develop legislative proposals to suppress the growing tide of anarchist violence. When McKinley died on September 14\textsuperscript{th}, the United States saw its third president in less than forty years fall victim to an assassin’s bullet. Alexander Berkman was fond of pointing out the irony that the two previous Presidential assassins did not have anarchist sympathies by underscoring that “Lincoln was shot in 1865, by John Wilkes Booth, who was a southern Democrat; Garfield in 1888, by Charles Guiteau, a Republican.”\footnote{Alexander Berkman, \textit{Now and After: The ABC of Communist Anarchism} (New York: Vanguard Press, 1929), 175.} In 1901, bipartisan groups in Congress initially collaborated to plan legislative proposals that they hoped would deter anarchists and protect public officials. Politicians argued for laws that dealt severely with those who by spoken or written word advocated violence and the assassination of public officials or urged the overthrow of the government by force; some suggested a complete ban on anarchist publications and suppression of all anarchist meetings.\footnote{Fine, “Anarchism and the Assassination of McKinley,” 788-789.} But it was not long before the proposals drew heavy criticisms along partisan lines. Southern Democrats in particular were concerned and implied that by including officers of the government of the United States in the law’s coverage, one could even be punished for striking or assaulting a Negro postmaster. Although both the House and Senate had separately approved bills designed to deal with one or another aspect of the problem of anarchy, the two houses were unable to agree on a compromise measure before the closing hours of the session.\footnote{Ibid., 790-792; Richard B. Sherman, “Presidential Protection during the Progressive Era: The Aftermath of the McKinley Assassination,” \textit{The Historian} 46:1 (November 1983): 3-12; See: “Editorial,” \textit{Virginian-Pilot} of Norfolk (May 6, 1902) reprinted in \textit{Congressional Record} 57\textsuperscript{th} Congress, 1\textsuperscript{st} session, 19-21.} While the complicated racial politics of the turn of the century thwarted the federal government’s ability to enact legislation to suppress anarchist’s speech and assembly, Congress was far more effective in legislating against anarchists through immigration, naturalization, and deportation laws.
In a period when the United States was receiving an unprecedented number of immigrants, the idea of restriction was already open for debate. Many of the most outspoken proponents of racial segregation and imperialism, such as Alabama Senator John Tyler Morgan, were equally concerned that “[t]his country had become the dumping ground for anarchists.”\textsuperscript{162} The Federal government had jurisdiction over immigration, naturalization, and deportation. It acted on that power as early as 1882, when Congress approved a series of restrictive measures against Chinese immigrants. The Chinese Exclusion Act marked the first time in American history that the United States restricted an immigrant group because of its race and class. The Act prohibited laborers from entering the U.S., but merchants, teachers, students, diplomats, and travelers were ‘exempt’ from exclusion.\textsuperscript{163} Other attempts at immigration restriction met with varying success. The Immigration Act of 1882 successfully imposed a 50 cent head tax on all immigrants and excluded lunatics, idiots, convicts, women suspected of prostitution, persons likely to become a public charge, and people with loathsome or dangerous contagious diseases. However, an early attempt to impose a literacy test on new immigrants was vetoed by outgoing President Cleveland in 1897, partially because the Democrats needed the support of immigrants who had recently gained citizenship through liberal naturalization and voting laws.\textsuperscript{164} Comprehensive federal immigration restriction would await the 1920s, but anarchists emerged as a special group whose exclusion could not wait any longer.

Throughout this period, journalists and politicians called for barring foreign radicals from the possibility of permanent residence and citizenship. In 1886 a writer for the \textit{Atlantic Monthly} declared that anarchists “are at odds with society from the foundations upward. They deny the justice and the desirability of any existing institutions.... The anarchists are not regarded as fair material for citizenship.”\textsuperscript{165} In the wake of the Haymarket trial and executions, Republican Congressman from Illinois Henry Cullen Adams proposed a resolution to the House of Representatives in 1888 for

\textsuperscript{165} George Frederic Parsons, “The Labor Question,” \textit{Atlantic Monthly} (July 1886): 111-112.
“the removal of dangerous aliens from the United States.” Following closely on his legislative heels, in 1889, Oregon Republican Senator John Mitchell introduced a bill to exclude any “avowed anarchist or nihilist or one who is personally hostile to the principles of the Constitution of the United States or to the forms of Government” from entering the country. The Arena, echoing these views of foreign invasion in 1890, lamented that “we have already within our borders a fair supply of anarchists, communists, nihilists, and all that ilk.” Concerned about the impact of unchecked immigration “upon the character of our people,” and their ability to “develop the highest type of civilization,” the Arena continued, “should not a sense of duty and responsibility to ourselves and our children, as well as the human race, impel us to close the doors entirely for a time, or at least to make the attempt?” After Berkman attacked Frick, the Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette printed that the time had come when “the anarchistic classes cannot be longer tolerated with safety.”

The massive number of immigrants arriving in the United States prompted Congress to fund a reception centre on the east coast to screen new immigrants for undesirable qualities. In 1892, Ellis Island, located in New York harbor, opened its doors. Although the entry point at Ellis Island symbolized anxieties about the influx of immigrants, initially, immigration inspectors did not receive any policy guidance on screening for foreign radicals. Proposals in 1895 and 1897 for new legislation that would exclude alien anarchists, initiated by Senator William Chandler (R- New Hampshire), never left the committee table. After McKinley’s assassination, the New York Times warned that even immigration screening would not stem the tide of undesirables because “an Anarchist who took the simple precaution to keep his mouth shut would easily escape

169 The author was equally concerned about immigrants converting to Mormonism as to anarchism, “the twin relic of barbarism.” Ibid., 269-277.
detection and be free to continue his insane dreaming and his plotting.”

It is somewhat ironic that although Czolgosz was born and raised in the United States, the implications of his Propaganda by Deed had the deepest resonance in the intensification of screening new immigrants, in no small part due to the efforts by journalists, police, and court officials to attribute his crime to foreign influences.

The success of the Spanish-American War and the nation’s new imperial possessions seemed to offer a novel solution to address this issue of what to do with domestic anarchists. As Robert Pinkerton suggested in the aftermath of McKinley’s assassination:

I would advocate the establishment of an anarchist colony, a place where every person who wants anarchy can have it. Let the government set aside one of the islands of the Philippines, equip it thoroughly with appliances for tilling the soil, erect comfortable houses, and provide other necessary conveniences, even to the extent of expensive comforts; then to this place let us send everybody who wants anarchy; put them all on one island, and let them work it out among themselves. Have no restrictions at all; let them govern themselves, or refrain from governing themselves, as they see fit. Leave them severely alone on their island, taking care only that they remain there by establishing a system of patrol boats around it.

Even reform minded clergyman Samuel Fallows echoed this unrealistic recommendation that “Perhaps all governments may unite to establish an island colony where those who hold and promulgate the doctrine of anarchy can be compelled to go and live together as best they may.” Suggestions along these lines were in abundance in 1901 as the Federal government prepared for a definitive legislative solution.

After McKinley’s assassination, Congress finally took decisive action on the idea of excluding foreign anarchists. Immigration Commissioner Thomas Fitchie, moved by the president’s death, publicly pleaded for enhanced screening of all immigrants, “particularly those whom we have reason to suspect of being Anarchists, and provide that every such be at once sent back at the expense of the steam ship company bringing him here.” McKinley’s murder elevated Theodore Roosevelt to the White House and the

new president sought to solidify his authority by targeting anarchists in his December 3rd 1901 message to Congress:

Our present immigration laws are unsatisfactory… we should aim to exclude absolutely not only all persons who are known to be believers in anarchistic principles or members of anarchistic societies, but also all persons who are of a low moral tendency or of unsavoury reputation.175

Linking anarchism with criminality, Roosevelt was echoing a view that had gained steady ground since the bombing in Haymarket Square – that “the anarchist is the enemy of humanity, the enemy of all mankind, and his is a deeper degree of criminality than any other.”176 Roosevelt additionally argued that anarchists “should be kept out of this country, and if found here they should be promptly deported to the country whence they came.”177 Historian Gary Gerstle noted Roosevelt’s deep-seated loathing of anarchists, pointing out that “he had never hesitated to deny them a place in his nation.”178 Within weeks of Roosevelt’s message to Congress, Immigration Commissioner Fitchie was facing scrutiny from the new President, who was concerned about the rampant corruption among immigration officials at Ellis Island and “dissatisfied with conditions existing on the island, and with methods prevalent there.”179 In the meantime, Congress began work on the Immigration Act of 1903. Initially, the bill contained wide-reaching restrictions such as a literacy test, due to the effective lobbying of nativists, such as the Immigration Restriction League, as well as organized labor, particularly the American Federation of Labor, who feared that unchecked immigration led to more competition amongst workers and a decline in wages. However, railroad and steamship interests lobbied against severe immigration restriction, as did many westerners and southerners who depended on

176 Ibid., 535.
177 Ibid., 535.
179 “Commissioner Fitchie May Soon Be Removed; Belief that that Local Immigration Bureau Will Have New Head. President Roosevelt Said to be Dissatisfied with Conditions Existing on Ellis Island,” New York Times (December 21, 1901): 1.
immigrant labor for their regions’ economic development. As a result, the literacy test was dropped from the bill and restriction was narrowed to very specific undesirables. \(^{180}\)

The Immigration Act that Congress passed in 1903 added to the growing list of excludable immigrants anarchists or anyone who displayed the hint of a desire to overthrow governments or their institutions by violence or assassination. \(^{181}\) Two sections of this Act are particularly worthy of note. Section 38 stipulated that any alien who slipped into the country as an anarchist or became one after he or she arrived was deportable if arrested within three years of the date of entry. Section 39 prohibited the naturalization of those designated in Section 38 for exclusion and deportation. Combined, these two clauses meant that a foreign-born anarchist who resided in the United States for more than three years would become a perpetual noncitizen resident who could be neither deported nor naturalized even if he or she remained an anarchist. \(^{182}\) The Immigration Act of 1903 marked the first time that Congress had determined citizenship in terms of a belief since the imposition of a loyalty oath for former Confederates at the end of the Civil War. Further, not since the short-lived 1798 Alien and Sedition Acts had the United States excluded certain immigrants because of their beliefs and associations.

In October 1903, these new laws were enforced on the English anarchist and trade unionist John Turner, who had been in New York for 10 days. Turner had delivered a lecture in New York City on October 23\(^{rd}\), in which he declared himself an anarchist and argued for the general strike. After a secret hearing during which Turner was denied a lawyer, he was ordered to be deported by the Secretary of Commerce and Labor, who was none other than President McKinley’s former personal secretary, George B. Cortelyou. Opposition to Cortelyou’s decision escalated all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court. Many anarchists, like Emma Goldman, debated whether to support legal appeals as to the constitutionality of the 1903 law. “[W]hile I had no illusions about what the Supreme Court was likely to do, I felt that the fight for Turner would be splendid propaganda by bringing the absurd law to the attention of the intelligent public,” Goldman recalled in her memoirs. She continued, “[I]t would serve to awaken many

181 Fine, “Anarchism and the Assassination of McKinley,” 792.
Americans to the fact that the liberties guaranteed in the United States… had become nothing but empty phrases to be used as fire-crackers on the Fourth of July.”

On October 24th, 1903, the U.S. Supreme Court Board of Inquiry met to review deportation laws. The Supreme Court upheld these new limitations placed on the constitutional right of freedom of speech on April 6th, 1904. The presiding judge ruled that the 1903 Act would be constitutional even if Turner were only a philosophical anarchist, since “an alien... who avows himself an Anarchist... accepts the definition” of the 1903 law. The Supreme Court thereby upheld Congress’ right to limit the advocacy of “such views [as] are so dangerous to the public weal that aliens who hold and advocate them would be undesirable additions to our population.” The Court sidestepped the free speech issue by stating that an alien “does not become one of the people to whom these things (i.e. freedoms guaranteed by the First Amendment) are secured by the constitution.” Governments need not tolerate unlawful acts by foreigners, said the court: “as long as human governments endure they cannot be denied the power of self preservation.”

Following on the Immigration Act of 1903, the federal government began to investigate the administration of naturalization laws in order to eliminate the terrifying possibility that anarchists could become citizens of the United States. The first Naturalization Act of 1790 had allowed admission of “any alien, being a free white person” who swore to support the Constitution, and who had resided in the country for two years. This law had remained in place with few alterations except that the residency requirement had been increased from two to five years, that applicants needed provide a declaration of intention, and that they must present proof of attachment to the principles of the Constitution as well as good moral character. Following the Civil War and end of slavery in the United States, the Naturalization Act of 1870 expanded the definition of eligible groups to include “aliens of African nativity and to persons of African

183 Goldman, Living My Life, 347.
184 Fine, “Anarchism and the Assassination of McKinley,” 798; Preston, Aliens and Dissenters, 32.
185 Margaret A. Blanchard, Revolutionary Sparks: Freedom of Expression in Modern America (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 41.
186 The only significant deviation was the temporary Naturalization Act of 1798 that identified foreigners as potential subversives. As part of their anti-alien policy, the Federalists raised the residence requirement from five to fourteen years, claiming that it took “at least this long to transform rebels and incendiaries into respectable, peace-loving American citizens.” Preston, Aliens and Dissenters, 65.
However, by 1905, an investigation into the abuses of the naturalization process prompted President Roosevelt to demand “immediate attention of the Congress” to the inquiry’s discovery of widespread “forgeries and perjuries of shameless and flagrant characters.” Warning of “undesirable citizens,” Roosevelt argued that through the current lax naturalization process, “we poison the sources of our national character and strength at the foundation,” and appointed a special commission to tighten up the system. The Naturalization Law of 1906 added clauses dealing with alien radicals. According to the 1906 law, an applicant for citizenship had to produce two credible citizen witnesses to testify that the alien had for a five-year period “behaved as a man of good moral character attached to principles of the Constitution of the United States, and well disposed to the good order and happiness of the same” and that the petitioner swear that she or he was “not a disbeliever in or opposed to organized government or a member of or affiliated with any organization or body of persons teaching disbelief in or opposed to organized government.” Just one year later, President Roosevelt expounded on his definition of “undesirable citizens” by declaring that Haywood, Moyer, and Pettibone were such, implying their guilt before their trials even began. When pressed for further clarification, Roosevelt argued that the labor leaders “habitually appear as guilty of incitement or apology for, bloodshed and violence. If that does not constitute undesirable citizenship, then there can never be any undesirable citizenship.” While tightening up Immigration and Naturalization laws made post-migration adoption of anarchist beliefs a deportable offense, new immigration laws placing anarchists alongside Asians, lunatics, prostitutes, and carriers of infectious disease in the first caste of illegal immigrants. As Mai Ngai has argued, immigration restriction “produced the illegal alien as a new legal and political subject, whose inclusion within the nation was simultaneously a social

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189 Ibid., 658-660.
reality and a legal impossibility – a subject barred from citizenship and without rights.”

Indeed, on the day Haywood’s not guilty verdict was announced, President Roosevelt received a telegram from Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman: “Undesirable citizens victorious. Rejoice.”

The larger problem remained of how to get the existing anarchists out of the country.

With stricter immigration laws supposedly keeping anarchists from entering the country and more stringent naturalization laws preventing foreign radicals from becoming citizens, deportation procedures were also employed to remove existing alien anarchists from the United States. In the last decade of the nineteenth century, deportation emerged as a more malleable administrative tool than court cases. Owing in large part to the 1893 decision in *Fong Yue Ting v. United States*, the Supreme Court determined the future pattern of expulsion by simply interpreting that deportation was not a punishment for crime but merely an administrative process for the return of unwelcome and undesirable alien residents to their own countries. The United States deported aliens on the grounds of expediency, not as punishment but only because their “presence is deemed inconsistent with public welfare.”

In the 1903 *Japanese Immigration Case*, the Supreme Court reaffirmed the power of Congress to deport aliens summarily by administrative fiat, and for any reason at any time, as “an inherent and inalienable right of every sovereign and independent nation.”

The result was that deportation became much simpler than court proceedings because the rights of a criminal trial did not apply. Cases were handled by immigration officials who heard evidence and rendered decisions in the absence of a formal indictment, the right to counsel, the right to a speedy trial, the

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194 Supreme Court Justice David J. Brewer dissented: “Deportation is punishment. It involves first an arrest, a deprival of liberty; second, a removal from the home, from family, from business, from property.” He added that “everyone knows that to be forcibly taken away from home and family... and sent across the ocean to a distant land is punishment; and that oftentimes the most severe and cruel.” cited in Preston, *Aliens and Dissenters*, 12.
right to trial by jury, or the right to appeal to a court from the decision rendered. In short, immigrants became an exception to the Fourteenth Amendment protections that guaranteed all persons due process of the law. The possibility of deportation had a profound effect on working-class immigrant communities. As David Montgomery writes, deportation “strongly reinforced the authority of employers by imposing legal sanctions on those who, willingly or unwillingly, stepped out from under the discipline of the job.” That the Immigration Act of 1903 allowed for the deportation of any immigrant found to express the doctrine of anarchism within three years of their date of entry allowed for the possibility of a large-scale purge of the hordes of anarchists residing in the United States. Given the difficulties of successfully prosecuting conspiracy trials and the possibility that these radicals could be pardoned, have their sentences reduced or worse yet, escape, deportation seemed like a useful tool to suppress anarchism.

The opportunity to press for the mass deportation of anarchists arrived during the 1908 anarchist scare. On March 3rd, Secretary of Commerce and Labor Oscar Straus ordered immigration inspectors across the country to cooperate with local police officials and use deportation laws “in an effort to rid the country of alien anarchists and criminals.” The Cleveland Plain Dealer boasted, “War on alien Anarchists is to be waged by the United States government as a result of the attack on Chief of Police Shippy in Chicago and the murder of Father Leo in Denver.” Secretary Straus bragged that deportations had increased fifty percent during the last year, and added, “I feel able to promise that the next annual report of the commissioner of immigration will show a

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196 To mitigate government fears that the police might release deportable alien criminals before a written application for a warrant of arrest was received at Washington and returned to the local inspector, beginning in 1908 the Immigration Bureau approved telegraphic warrants, circumventing a process of evidence exposure, for aliens with criminal records and anarchists “in rare instances” of certain deportability. Oscar Straus and F. P. Sargent to all Commissioners of Immigration and Immigrant Inspectors in Charge (March 23, 1908), IN File 51924/30; Preston, Aliens and Dissenters, 13-14.

197 David Montgomery, Workers' Control in America: Studies in the History of Work, Technology, and Labor Struggles (Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 159. Daniel Kanstroom shows that deportation has long been a legal tool to control immigrants’ lives by connecting the deportation of aliens with other removal practices in American history; the warning out of the poor, native-Americans removal, and the Fugitive Slave Law; revealing the development of a second system within immigration politics of exclusion and expulsion, see: Daniel Kanstroom, Deportation Nation: Outsiders in American History (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008).


remarkable percentage of increase.” He continued: “each added crime and outbreak on the part of foreign born criminals and revolutionary malcontents forces the necessity for a strong, clean and withal sanely considered movement to stamp out this ferment of crime and violence fastening itself on our social structure.” Furthermore, Straus promised, “no stone will be left unturned” to exclude and deport “the morally depraved, the criminal and those who are unable to value and appreciate the benefits of a free country.” Under the 1903 law, federal officials in Chicago announced the establishment of an “immigration bureau” in the city to keep track of all foreigners and gather evidence for possible deportation proceedings. Police Chief George Shippy happily declared: “Chicago is going to witness a weeding out of undesirable citizens,” while Chicago papers reported that anarchism was to be “exterminated root and branch” in the “most determined warfare against anarchy since the time of the Haymarket riot.”

However, the results of the combined effort of federal immigration stations, the Secret Service, and local police agencies did not meet Secretary Straus’ expectations. An exhaustive survey of every major immigration station conducted by the Department of Commerce and Labor in 1908 disclosed that in twenty-three areas, there were no anarchists to be found, while in four districts the handful of anarchists who could be identified had already lived in the United States for longer than three years. Historian Sidney Fine notes: “the criminal anarchy law turned out to be of singularly little significance as an anti-anarchist measure” since the United States excluded only thirty-eight people for holding anarchist beliefs between 1903 and 1921 and deported a mere fourteen anarchist aliens between 1911 and 1919. The government’s own institutions of surveillance seemed to show that the threat of foreign anarchists had been greatly exaggerated in newspapers, courtrooms, and legislatures.

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203 Annual Report of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1957), 52; Preston, Aliens and Dissenters, 33; these findings matched a July 1907 report from the Chief of the Secret Service, John Wilkie, that he could not find “the slightest suggestion of a ‘plot’ against the President or any cabinet officer” by anarchist societies or the radical Western Federation of Miners, see: John E. Wilkie to William Loeb, Jr., (July 31, 1907), reel 75, Theodore Roosevelt Papers, Library of Congress, Manuscript Division, Washington, DC; Sherman, “Presidential Protection,” 14.
204 Fine, “Anarchism and the Assassination of McKinley,” 793.
205 Preston, Aliens and Dissenters, 33, 292 fn 72; as Preston notes, the deportation figures per year are: 1911, 0; 1912, 4; 1913, 4; 1914, 3; 1915, 1; 1916, 0; 1917, 0; 1918, 2.
Despite attempts made in the press to link anarchist violence and foreignness, the United States government was reluctant to cooperate, in what would have likely been a beneficial relationship, with European nations in sharing information and policing anarchist violence. In 1892 a *New York Times* editorial had suggested “an international convention… putting anarchists on the same legal footing with pirates.” The assassination of French President Carnot in 1894, Spanish Prime Minister Castillo in 1897, and Empress Elizabeth of Austria in 1898 led European governments to organize their own international conference “for the Social Defence Against Anarchists” in Rome in 1898. The United States declined an invitation to attend. However, after McKinley was assassinated in 1901, President Roosevelt suggested to Congress that “treaties should be drawn up making anarchy an offence against the law of nations similar to piracy and the slave trade.” When European nations met again in St. Petersburg in 1904, ten countries agreed to a “Secret Protocol for the International War on Anarchism.” However, despite a proliferation of rhetoric to the contrary, the United States again declined to participate in the proceedings. Again in 1908 the United States did not sign an international treaty against anarchism that had been agreed to by Germany, Austria-Hungary, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Russia, Rumania, Serbia, Bulgaria, the Ottoman Empire, Spain, and Portugal. Historian Richard Bach Jensen has argued that the United States’ aloofness from such international commitments was the result of several factors, including a long American tradition of isolationism, fear of entanglement with the Old World, dread of European-style secret policing, antipathy toward signing clandestine agreements, strained diplomatic relations with Germany and Russia, and the lack of a national police force. Since many policemen, legislators, and journalists in America attributed anarchist violence to foreigners, few wanted to look to foreigners for aid or advice in dealing with the recurring menace of anarchist violence within the bounds of their own country.
Conclusion

This chapter has focused on court and state responses to anarchist violence between the 1880s and 1908. On April 9th, 1908 President Roosevelt sent a special message to Congress displaying continued urgency in dealing with the “anarchist problem,” declaring, “When compared with the suppression of anarchy, every other question sinks into insignificance. The Anarchist is the enemy of humanity, the enemy of all mankind, and his is a deeper degree of criminality than any other.” Roosevelt celebrated recent legislative victories that meant that “no immigrant is allowed to come to our shores if he is an anarchist” but appealed for Congressional action to place further restrictions on the freedom of speech, arguing that “no paper published here or abroad should be permitted circulation in this country if it propagates anarchist opinions.”

This new legislative project built on prosecution strategies in the Haymarket conspiracy trial of 1886, Alexander Berkman’s trial for felonious assault in 1892, Leon Czolgosz’s 1901 murder trial, the WFM conspiracy trials in 1907, and Alia’s 1908 murder trial. Prosecutors in those proceedings had repeatedly made reference to the misguided tools who carried out acts of anarchist terrorism. Just as the legal system developed mechanisms for suppressing anarchist voices in the trials, so too did state and federal governments attempt to supress Propaganda by Word by targeting anarchist publications. However, just as trials were not always successful, death sentences could turn anarchists into martyrs and long prison sentences could be reduced or anarchists could escape from captivity, federal legislative and executive ambitions also had their limits – as seen with the failed 1908 search for deportable anarchists and the failure of the United States to participate in anti-anarchist measures with other European countries demonstrates.

Between 1886 and 1908, the federal government attempted to prevent further social damage perpetrated by anarchists by excluding them from the country, while state and federal agencies simultaneously conspired to purge and silence those within. Combined, the federal and state laws enacted to address anarchy between 1902 and 1906 were significant for several reasons. Prior to this period, direct government involvement in political repression usually occurred only when business interests were not able to

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handle the situation by itself and, therefore, called in local, state, and federal police forces. However, these laws reflected willingness by the federal government to take on a more prominent role in shaping society by defining and even selecting for desirable citizens. The new laws also ended America’s history as an “asylum” for all persons, regardless of their political beliefs, and signalled the start of a new means of assault on American radicals – an attempt to destroy them by completely cutting off their foreign sources of recruitment. After McKinley’s assassination, for aliens specifically, merely believing in anarchy became a crime and barring immigrants because of their beliefs and associations became a form of legislative thought-control with the intended effect of rooting out anarchists and casting off undesirables. It is not surprising that the federal government constructed anarchist violence as a product of unchecked immigration while refusing to participate in international efforts to suppress anarchism. As discussed in Chapter Two, the absence of a national police force through much of this period also necessitated that the government agencies address anarchism through available state-level organizations. However, as historian Erika Lee demonstrates, the federal government had developed a growing national bureaucracy in the form of the immigration service from the 1880s onwards that was in place to enforce exclusionary legislation like the 1903 Immigration Act. Thus, without intending to restrict all immigration, the U.S. took a hesitant step to control it. Fear of anarchist violence was utilized to justify the repression that social elites – certainly elites such as Theodore Roosevelt – thought was intrinsic to constructing the nation.

Consistent efforts in the United States to track and suppress anarchism occurred in various arenas from the courtroom to the legislature as the violence of Propaganda by Deed was stripped of its class connotations and connections to American industrial capitalism and reconstructed as foreign to American civilization. Legislative solutions seemed the most appropriate protection against the disorderly and chaotic attacks of radical anarchists. Yet, such solutions would not in themselves satisfy some Americans.

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211 Fine, “Anarchism and the Assassination of McKinley,” 792; as Preston articulates the shift, “Immigration inspectors were apparently prepared to become America’s first thought police,” Preston, Aliens and Dissenters, 84.
212 Lee, At America’s Gates, 77-109.
Five of the eight Haymarket defendants, Leon Czolgosz, and Giuseppe Alia had been tried and sentenced to death. In sharp contrast to their private punishments, many Americans asserted their own needs to participate in public displays of mourning for the victims of anarchist terror and in violent spectacles to mark the deaths of anarchists that were themselves displays of a militant citizenship.
Chapter Four
Rituals of Mourning, Spectacles of Death

Between 1886 and 1908, government officials and industrial elites in the United States were affected by a recurring cadence of domestic terrorism. Police investigations often attributed these bombings and assassinations to omnipresent anarchist conspiracies that were orchestrated by cowardly and indolent foreigners. While prosecutors did not always succeed in proving charges of conspiracy to juries, quick trials that passed judgement on single perpetrators were far more successful in frustrating anarchists’ abilities to use the courtroom for their own propaganda. Police investigations, court cases, and mainstream newspaper coverage repeatedly emphasised anarchism as foreign to the United States and, as a result, legislative solutions to the anarchist peril centered on the tools of immigration restriction, naturalization, and deportation. Throughout the investigations and legal proceedings that followed attacks of anarchist violence, the disparity between public rituals that surrounded the deaths of victims and the absence of public participation in the deaths of the perpetrators led to unsanctioned, and often spontaneous, spectacles of popular violence. The rituals of mourning helped the public, concerned with the threat of violent unrest, to cope with the loss or injury of prominent public officials. In contrast, the punishment of the perpetrators took place behind prison walls and far removed from public view in an effort to downplay the symbolic power of executing high profile criminals.

Public displays of mourning for the victims of anarchist violence demonstrated state officials’ abilities to use rituals to reaffirm orderly social relations in the midst of chaos. The bombing that targeted policemen in Chicago was followed by relatively low key funerals in 1886, but also led to the commemoration of the fallen officers with a statue on the site of the Haymarket riot in 1889. However, the monument would become a highly contentious place in the nineteenth century when it repeatedly became a site of protest. In dramatic contrast to the quiet and sombre police funerals, the elaborate state-sponsored funerals of President William McKinley were designed to allow for a wide segment of American society to participate in the official rituals of mourning. Those who could not directly participate in the events could read about them in mass-circulated publications or see the funerals through the budding medium of motion picture films. The enactments of
mourning that followed the deaths of former Governor Frank Steunenberg and Father Leo Heinrichs were similar to McKinley’s commemoration, but on a smaller and more localised scale. While industrialist Henry Clay Frick and Chicago Police Chief George Shippy survived their anarchist attacks, they were both valorized in the press for their resilient manhood in the face of the anarchist peril. The combined effect of these rituals of mourning and veneration of anarchism’s victims gave the public a chance to participate in a series of shared experiences that emphasized social cohesion and symbolized the transition back to normal, civilized life.

In drastic contrast, when the suspected perpetrators of violence were executed, their deaths were not directly accessible for public viewing. While Lazarus Averbuch and Selig Silverstein died before entering a prison, five of the eight Haymarket defendants, Leon Czolgosz, and Giuseppe Alia all died within the modern American penitentiary, where their deaths were well removed from public view. Elun Gabriel argues that the shift from public to private executions, which began during the 1830s, happened because criminals’ deaths were socially contentious events: “the early modern spectacle of public execution had given way to the containment of punishment behind prison walls, in some measure because of the ways public executions were fraught with inevitable contestations over their meaning.”

While the shift from public to private executions was intended to give authorities greater control over the meaning of the anarchists’ deaths, historian Louis Masur argues that the privatization had additional effects:

In principle, private executions were supposed to protect the sensibilities of all citizens, eliminate a scene of public chaos and confusion, and permit the prisoner to die quietly penitent; in practice, they became a theatrical event for an assembly of

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elite men who attended the execution by invitation while the community at large was excluded.\textsuperscript{2}

Despite their seclusion, violent spectacles accompanied executions and newspapers narrated the events in great detail as well as with a remarkable preoccupation with the macabre atmosphere and suffering of the condemned men. The Haymarket execution had demonstrated that even though their killings had been conducted privately, the anarchists’ funerals became an alternative site for the public ritual of mourning. In the eyes of state officials, an undesirable amount of notoriety seemed to transform the executed criminals into martyrs for the anarchist cause. Although the anarchists had been made bereft of their lives in relative isolation in order to reduce contestations over the meanings of their deaths, it became clear that state officials also needed to maintain control over their corpses. While public participation in the executions was repeatedly denied, newspapers picked up parallel stories of spontaneous violent public displays and vigilantism, both of which occurred outside state control.

The juxtaposition between the mourning of victims of anarchist violence and the vengeful punishments that followed these crimes further illustrate how the tensions caused by the anarchist peril were mediated through American conceptions of manhood and citizenship. Historian Cecilia O’Leary has written that increasingly in the period after the Civil War, citizenship was largely defined as male, primarily through the vote and military service.\textsuperscript{3} At times, this male-dominated conception of citizenship was accompanied by violent displays in which men engaged in retributive symbolic violence against outsiders, in this case anarchists and their sympathisers, to reassert national honor. Gail Bederman argues that through the ideological process of manhood, “individuals are positioned and are positioning themselves as men” and that during this period white men made claims to be both civilized and savage at once.\textsuperscript{4} Well before the Haymarket bombing, newspapers invoked American traditions of vigilantism as an

\textsuperscript{2} Masur, \textit{Rites of Execution}, 8, 111.
appropriate response to foreign radicalism. In November 1875, the *Chicago Daily Tribune* issued the following warning to foreign-born agitators:

If the communist in this country are counting on the looseness of our police system and the tendency to proceed against criminals by due process of law, and hope on that account to receive more leniency than in Europe, they have ignored some of the most significant episodes in American history. There are no people so prone as the American to take the law into their own hands when the sanctity of human life is threatened and the rights of property invaded in a manner that cannot be adequately reached and punished by the tortuous course of the law. Judge Lynch is an American by birth and character. The Vigilance Committee is a particularly American institution.

By the turn of the century, Theodore Roosevelt emerged as a key figure in linking the conception of a “civilized manliness” with the necessary continuance of a “primitive masculinity.” When very real incidents of domestic terrorism occurred between 1886 and 1908, state officials found themselves working against this tradition of primitive masculinity and American vigilantism in order to maintain order. Desire for death spectacles involving anarchists took many forms from many segments of American society, including pleas to witness the executions, mock lynching of effigies, vigilante violence against anarchist sympathizers, and lucrative attempts to provide public spectacles to eager audiences in the capitalist marketplace.

This chapter, therefore, contrasts the rituals of mourning with narratives of punishment extracted from the anarchist body alongside a proliferation of violent spectacles of citizenship in the Gilded Age and Progressive Era. Writing in 1975, Clifford Geertz demonstrated how public rituals, such as the ones under consideration in this chapter, could reveal solidarities and tensions in social relations. While acts of anarchist violence were intended to weaken the social cohesion of industrial capitalism, the public displays of mourning for victims of anarchist violence, the highly controlled executions

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7 Bederman, *Manliness & Civilization*, 13, 44.

of anarchists, and the attendant vigilante violence all served to counteract the Propaganda by Deed.

**Mourning of Victims**

Public rituals that sought to reaffirm social solidarities while obscuring class tensions were central to mourning for the victims of anarchist violence. The first casualties of the anarchist peril in the United States were the police and civilians in Haymarket Square in 1886 and public participation in the mourning rituals that followed the deaths of the police officers was rather limited. The fallen officers were commemorated with a statue that celebrated the victim’s ultimate sacrifice to law, order, and social control; however, the statue became a highly contested site in the legacy of the bombing. In quite stark contrast, President McKinley’s death was commemorated with three massive state-sponsored funerals and public participation was extended across the nation through newspapers, books, and films. Aspects of McKinley’s death rituals reappeared in the form of public participation in the honoring of Frank Steunenberg in 1905 and Father Leo Heinrichs in 1908. Industrialist Henry Clay Frick and Chicago Police Chief George Shippy survived their anarchist attacks in 1892 and 1908, but they were valorized in the press for their resilient manhood in the face of the barbaric violence of anarchists. In all of these examples, rituals of mourning played a key role in reaffirming the power of the state, which was necessary since the violent attacks had given the perception of its vulnerability.

The shocking deaths of Chicago police officers in 1886 offers an early example of the role ritual played in mourning the victims of anarchist violence as well as how contentious commemoration could become. Patrolman Mathias Degan was the first to die in the Desplaines Street police station, surrounded by his injured comrades, as a result of a bomb fragment that had severed an artery in his thigh. Captain Michael Schaack described the grotesque and chaotic scene at the station in his 1889 publication, *Anarchy and Anarchists: A History of the Red Terror and the Social Revolution in America and Europe*:

> Every available place in the building was utilized, and one could scarcely move about the various rooms without fear of accidentally touching a wound or jarring a fractured limb. In many instances mangled Anarchists were placed side by side
with injured officers. The floors literally ran with blood dripping and flowing from lacerated bodies of the victims of the riot. The air was filled with moans from the dying and groans of anguish from the wounded.\(^9\)

When Degan’s death was followed by the expiration of officers George Mueller and John J. Barrett on May 6\(^{th}\), the *Chicago Daily Tribune* headline mourned: “Two More Dead Heroes.”\(^{10}\) In the weeks and months that followed, four additional officers succumbed to their wounds: Timothy Flavin on May 8\(^{th}\), Michael Sheehan on May 9\(^{th}\), Thomas Redden on May 16\(^{th}\), and Nils Hansen on June 14\(^{th}\), a week before the Haymarket conspiracy trial began. Officer Timothy Sullivan died two years later from complications due to his Haymarket wounds.\(^{11}\) Schaack also published a list of an additional sixty-eight wounded officers, with a description of their injuries in detail, noting that as the police force in Chicago recovered,

> Throughout the city for days and weeks the one inquiry, the one great sympathy, was with reference to the wounded officers and their condition. The whole heart of the city was centered in their recovery. Everywhere the living as well as the dead heroes were accorded the highest praise.\(^{12}\)

Schaack’s description was effectively emotive and added to the already shocked and saddened feelings of the public at-large and the police force, who were at a loss in their grief over the deaths of good, strong American men. In contrast to his sympathetic description of the dead police officers, his account of the losses of anarchists was much more callous:

> The Anarchists have never attempted to give a correct list, or even an approximate estimate, of the men wounded or killed on their side. The number, however, was largely in excess of that on the side of the police. After the moment’s bewilderment, the officers dashed on the enemy and fired round after round. Being good marksmen, they fired to kill, and many revolutionists must have gone home, either assisted by comrades or unassisted, with wounds that resulted fatally or maimed them for life.\(^{13}\)


\(^{13}\) Ibid., 155.
Thus, his account praised the numerous deaths of anarchists and glorified the police force’s violent retaliation and addition to the anarchist body count. Furthermore, Schaack commented on the contrastingly secret observation of rituals of mourning in observance of the dead anarchists:

It is known that many secret funerals were held from Anarchist localities in the dead hour of night. The anarchists probably reasoned that if it was known that many more of their number had fallen than on the side of the police, it would not only tend to diminish the faith of their adherents in the real virtues of dynamite, but would prove that the police were more than able to cope with the Social Revolution, even though the revolutionists depended on that powerful agency.14

For Schaack, the anarchists did not deserve to be cared for in death, and his assertion of the anarchist families’ own shame in burying their dead, evidenced by their completing these actions in secret and at night, supported his personal idea of worthy versus unworthy mourning rites.

The memorials that surrounded the death of Chicago’s police officers also celebrated their courage and civilized manliness. In their history of the Chicago police published a year after the bombing, John Flinn and John Wilkie declared that “the police of the United States have marched with measured tread into the very jaws of death and proved themselves not only to be peace preservers but warriors, fearless as any soldiers on any field.”15 However, Flinn and Wilkie continued, the conduct of the Chicago police had been a thankless bravery:

Their heroism is all the more ennobling for the reason that their greatest deeds of valor are not seen of men, are not accomplished under the inspiration of patriotic cheers, are not destined to bring down the light of glory on their heads – are done simply in the discharge of their duty.16

In praising the police as brave heroes and martyrs, the contemporary author George McLean stated that the nation needed more of these types of “strong men, wise and calm in the midst of her greatest storms.”17

14 Ibid., 155.
15 John J. Flinn and John E. Wilkie, History of the Chicago Police: From the Settlement of the Community to the Present Time (Chicago, IL: W. B. Conkey, 1887), xiii.
16 Ibid., xiv.
Despite a proliferation of their heroic statures in print, the personal ceremonies that followed the deaths of Chicago’s police officers remained relatively private. The funerals of the fallen officers were surprisingly subdued in contrast to the sensationalism of the bombing and investigation. Officer Mathias Degan died at the age of thirty-four, survived by his wife and young son. A modest funeral was held at his residence and he was buried with only family, friends, and a few police department representatives in attendance. John Barrett, also killed by wounds inflicted at Haymarket, was twenty-five and mourned in a “short and solemn” funeral service conducted in a small room of his third-floor flat; the only policemen in attendance were six patrolmen from the Desplaines Street Station who were Barrett’s pallbearers. 18 Twenty-eight-year-old George Mueller, who, according to the Chicago Daily Tribune was “most horribly torn by the destructive bomb” and died after suffering “such torture from his injuries that death came as a release to him,” was not buried in Chicago but in his hometown of Oswego, New York. 19 Their families memorialized the victims privately, who were celebrated as heroes in print, until several affluent citizens of Chicago commissioned a public monument in their honour.

Thirteen years after their deaths, on Memorial Day 1889, the police causalities of Haymarket were commemorated with a bronzed statute that was erected in Haymarket Square. Like all public monuments, the statue would become a contentious site for the memorialization of the Haymarket violence. Before a crowd of 2,000 onlookers, the son of Mathias Degan unveiled a statue of a Chicago policeman with his hand raised to command peace. The statue had been paid for by Chicago businessmen grateful for the policemen’s sacrifice and was dedicated in the city’s name “to her defenders in the riot.” 20 In 1901, the surviving policemen formed an association dedicated to keeping alive the memory of their brave, fallen brothers. The bronzed patrolman vigilantly watched

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20 The model for the statue was Chicago Patrolman Thomas J. Birmingham, during the Chicago’s World Fair in 1893; Birmingham was stationed in the Haymarket to describe the bombing to thousands of visitors. However, a few years later, Birmingham was dismissed from the force for consortin with known criminals and trafficking in stolen goods, dying a pauper in Cook County Hospital in 1912, William J. Adelman, Haymarket Revisited: A Tour Guide of Labor History Sites and Ethnic Neighborhoods Connected with the Haymarket Affair (Chicago, IL: Illinois Labor History Society, 1976), 39; Avrich, Haymarket Tragedy, 430-431.
over the Haymarket until 1925 when it was knocked over by a streetcar. Moved to Union Park, the statue became a site of annual commemorations each May as representatives from civic groups and descendants of Haymarket police veterans, joined by an honor guard that included an officer in period dress, posed proudly for photographers beside the police statue.21

The statue also played a symbolic role in numerous protests and it was repeatedly defaced and damaged over the years, most prominently during public disturbances surrounding the 1968 Democratic National Convention and subsequent to the conspiracy trial of the Chicago Seven in 1969.22 On May 4th, 1968, the 82nd anniversary of the Haymarket bombing, the statue was defaced with black paint after a clash between anti-war protestors and police. More alarming to proponents of law and order, the monument was destroyed by explosives on October 6th, 1969, with the Weatherman faction of the Students for a Democratic Society claiming responsibility for the bombing.23 The City of Chicago promptly rebuilt the monument, only to see it blown up a second time on October 5th, 1970. Repaired once more, the statue was moved to its current, and presumably safer, home in a locked interior courtyard of the Chicago police academy.24

In comparison to the Chicago police’s attempts at controlling the highly contentious site for mourning the police victims of the Haymarket riot and to those victims’ private funeral ceremonies, the mourning rituals that surrounded President McKinley’s death were crafted to convey a more unified message of social stability to a

much larger audience. When President McKinley died on September 14th, 1901, the void left by his sudden passing was filled by commodification and a massive public funeral procession. Both offered the opportunity for a public outlet for grief to an American and world audience through newspapers, books, and films. Even before the President died, every item remotely related to the shooting became a highly desired commodity. The *Buffalo Express* explained:

> The shooting had a marvellous effect on prices. The demand for souvenirs with a picture of the Temple of Music or of the President was tremendous. Pictures of President McKinley that usually sold for 5 cents, were selling for 25 cents at 5 o’clock, and by 7 o’clock the price had risen to 50 cents. At 8 o’clock they could not be bought for love or money. Little trays, ornamented with pictures of the Temple of Music, went like hot cakes.²⁵

This trend only intensified after the President’s death. The *New York Times* reported on September 15th that those who manufactured these goods “put extra men to work but with all their efforts were unable to meet the demand” while those who distributed them sold “their pictures for anything they can get, probably today for anywhere from 50 cents to $1.50 for pictures for which they paid a few cents.”²⁶ As word of President McKinley’s death spread, flags across the country dropped to half-mast and public buildings were draped in black bunting. The *New York Times* elaborated on the boom in business as a result of the tragedy: “It was not long after the flags had been unfurled before crape began to be draped upon buildings… the market in these goods took an unprecedented bound.”²⁷ Superintendent of the Buffalo Police William Bull, in the department’s annual report, noted the need for extra measures of safety as well:

> It was necessary to maintain a police detail at the Milburn house from the time the President’s remains were moved until the first of December. From day light until dark, every day, the camera and Kodak fiends were out in force, and the souvenir hunter was ready to destroy the house. Pebbles from the driveway were picked up, leaves that dropped from the trees were taken, and one souvenir hunter with more nerve than the others appeared with a mallet and chisel and requested the officer on duty that he be allowed to remove a few bricks from the building. It is unnecessary to say this request was denied, and nothing was destroyed either upon the grounds or about the house.”²⁸

²⁵ “Midway Was Open: Demand for Souvenirs,” *Buffalo Express* (September 8, 1901).
²⁷ “Mourning in all the City’s Homes,” *New York Times* (September 15, 1901): 8.
Since public desire for items commemorating McKinley extended beyond those available in the market place, some devotees saw mild looting as their last recourse for a souvenir of McKinley’s death, demonstrating an acute social need for commemoration of this tragic event.

McKinley’s passing was also commemorated through state-controlled rituals of mourning that were designed to re-affirm the public’s belief in the power structure that had been shaken during his attack. Elaborate state-sponsored funerals could create shared mourning experiences and there was a wealth of precedent from the events that had followed the assassinations of Abraham Lincoln in 1865 and James Garfield in 1881.29 Barry Schwartz, in his close investigation of how Lincoln’s funerals “rationalized beliefs” and “unified people,” argued that the key to understanding this process is “not by the act of assassination but in the ritual actions the act produced.”30 McKinley was venerated through ritual actions that included three public funerals and a funeral train that carried his body through the northeastern United States. Public participation began on September 15th at Buffalo City Hall where Superintendent Bull estimated “that between ninety and one hundred thousand people had passed the remains of the President.”31 Throughout the funeral procession, symbols of a strong state, such as the military and political elites, accompanied the body as it traveled.

The President’s casket was carried in a special glass-domed train car, which made numerous stops, thereby extending direct visual participation in the funeral procession to hundreds of thousands. Along the route, the funeral train was greeted by the ringing of church bells, the firing of cannons, and the rustle of buildings draped in black cloth. Once the body returned to Washington D.C., a second ceremony took place in the rotunda of


the Capitol Building where the President’s body was displayed at the seat of federal power. The crowds that emerged to participate in the mourning ritual were so vast that there was not enough time for the hundreds of thousands who lined the streets of Washington in the autumn rain to view the President’s body. When the viewing was abruptly ended, those who were denied participation in the ritual created what one reporter from the New York Times called “an incipient riot.”  

On September 18th the President’s body finally arrived in Canton, Ohio, returning along the same rail lines that had borne him to office in 1896. After this third public viewing in Ohio, McKinley was laid to rest in Westlawn Cemetery on September 19th. The tomb was guarded by a contingent of eighty federal soldiers stationed in wooden barracks erected in the cemetery. This precaution was motivated in part by a foiled 1876 grave-robbing plot to steal Abraham Lincoln’s remains and hold them for ransom. After thirty days of state-level displays of public mourning, on October 14th, flags across the nation rose with the sun to full-mast and government buildings, which had been reduced to half staff, were once again fully open for business. Over the following six years the number of guards was reduced until 1907, when the President’s coffin was relocated to the McKinley National Monument situated at the highest point of Canton, Ohio, which became a tourist attraction at the Museum of History, Science, and Industry and Discovery World complex. One contemporary observer, Richard Barry who wrote a history of the dead president, described the various emotions accompanying the public mourning rituals: “the spectacle was both inspiring and depressing, both subdued and bold.”

While the funeral services and protection of the President’s remains were intended to provide unifying rituals of mourning to hundreds of thousands of citizens, the use of newspapers, books, and films extended these rituals to millions more. For those

36 Richard H. Barry, The True Story of the Assassination of President McKinley at Buffalo (Buffalo, NY: Robert Allan Reid, 1901), 46.
who could not participate in the funerals, newspapers relayed the proceedings to citizens across the nation. President McKinley was remembered and commodified through numerous books that were available in time for the approaching Christmas season. The Library of Congress lists over a dozen memorial books about McKinley registered for copyright by the end of 1901.\(^{37}\) This abundance of literature transformed McKinley into an object of knowledge that could be consumed. A common theme in the memorial books was to reassure readers of the longevity of the government: “Government will continue as long as man endures.”\(^ {38}\) A new economy of meaning was extended to these commodities to the point that even holding them allowed the public to substantiate the reality of the events.

The incipient film industry added another, novel layer of texture to public participation in mourning rituals. McKinley’s front porch campaign of 1896 had been the first to incorporate the developing medium of film into an electoral campaign. As Jonathan Auerbach argues, early films were often interpreted as “virtual newspapers” that exhibited a powerful mass media effect by allowing the public to participate in newsworthy events.\(^ {39}\) On Thursday September 26\(^ {\text{th}}\), 1901, the tension-filled day of Czolgosz’s sentencing in Buffalo, the Edison Manufacturing Company released films documenting the President’s trip to the Pan-American Exposition and his elaborate funeral procession. A camera crew had been at the Exposition to document the President’s attendance and captured two events on film before the assassination:

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\(^{38}\) Barry, *True Story of the Assassination*, 17.

President McKinley Reviewing Troops at the Pan-American Exposition and President McKinley’s Speech at the Pan-American Exposition.\(^{40}\) After McKinley’s death, the camera crew followed the funeral procession to document the solemn rituals in Buffalo, Washington D.C., and Canton. The funeral films were innovative, even for the novel medium of film, through their use of multiple cameras and panning shots to capture the event.\(^{41}\) Viewers of the final series of these films, *The Complete Funeral Cortege at Canton, Ohio*, witnessed a succession of scenes, creating a soundless narrative of the funeral train arriving at the station, McKinley’s casket leaving the train, the new President Theodore Roosevelt at the station, followed by a panorama of McKinley’s modest house, and finally the casket leaving his home and church before entering Westlawn Cemetery. Perhaps the most important shot was a close up of Roosevelt’s face, which created a clear iconic link of the succession of power to audiences across America.\(^{42}\) Jonathan Auerbach contends that the films demonstrated how this new technology “could help shape a national imagery.”\(^{43}\) These funeral films were immensely successful, not just in expanding McKinley’s funeral ritual in flowing detail to hundreds of thousands who could not personally experience it, but also for theatres and vaudeville houses that showed them. Exhibitors enjoyed a financial windfall as people flocked to see the McKinley Exposition films. Thomas Edison likewise benefited, as Charles Musser’s research concludes, between October and December 1901 when these films were in greatest demand. The motion picture department of Edison’s Manufacturing Company set a sales record unmatched during any other three-month period between 1900 and 1904.\(^{44}\)

\(^{40}\) President McKinley Reviewing Troops at the Pan-American Exposition (Buffalo, NY: Thomas A. Edison, 11 September 1901); President McKinley’s Speech at the Pan-American Exposition (Buffalo, NY: Thomas A. Edison, 11 September 1901).


\(^{42}\) *Arrival Of McKinley’s Funeral Train at Canton Ohio* (Canton, OH: Thomas A. Edison, 26 September 1901); *Taking President McKinley’s Body From Train at Canto, Ohio* (Canton, OH: Thomas A. Edison, 26 September 1901); *President Roosevelt at the Canton Station* (Canton, OH: Thomas A. Edison, 26 September 1901); *Panoramic View of the President’s House at Canton, Ohio* (Canton, OH: Thomas A. Edison, 26 September 1901); *Funeral Leaving the President’s House and the Church at Canton, Ohio* (Canton, OH: Thomas A. Edison, 26 September 1901); *McKinley’s Funeral Entering Westlawn Cemetery Canton* (Canton, OH: Thomas A. Edison, 26 September 1901).

\(^{43}\) Auerbach, “McKinley at Home,” 801.

\(^{44}\) Musser points out that the Edison Manufacturing Company was “anxious to get these groupings of moving snapshots on the market” that in their haste they “released unedited camera rushes that included flash frames.” Musser, *Before Nickelodeon*, 184-186.
While ultimately hundreds of thousands of Americans participated directly in the rituals surrounding the President, millions more consumed the rituals of mourning through newspapers, books, and films. The effect of public mourning produced a conformity and uniformity of reactions to McKinley’s death. As Jonathan Auerbach writes, “focused mourning in print and on film worked to erase differences (if only temporarily) and provide a semblance of national unity.”\(^{45}\) Only in death did the widespread criticism of McKinley as a puppet to moneyed interests dissipate to be replaced by a symbol of a faithful public servant who above all else represented the good of the nation.\(^{46}\) Even Roosevelt emphasized the re-invention of McKinley as he addressed Congress on December 3\(^{rd}\), 1901: “It is not too much to say that at the time of President McKinley’s death he was the most widely loved man in all the United States; while we have never had any public man of his position who has been so wholly free from the bitter animosities incident to public life.”\(^{47}\) Thus, discourse on McKinley was tailored to fit the needs of public commemoration and reassured the public that they had a stake in society through the ritualization of their dead president. The elaborate use of ritual transformed McKinley into a unifying symbol and reassured an uneasy population who could at times turn their mourning into rioting, as they did in Washington D.C., when they were denied participation in McKinley’s funeral. The rituals of mourning that followed McKinley’s death were far more elaborate than those that followed the deaths of Chicago’s police officers and allowed a greater role for public participation. Frank Steunenberg’s funeral in 1906 also became a public ritual.

After Harry Orchard’s bomb killed former Governor Steunenberg on December 30\(^{th}\), 1905, the town of Caldwell publically displayed its mourning, as had many cities after McKinley’s death. Schools, public offices, and businesses closed, flags were lowered to half-mast, and black bunting was draped from storefronts and light posts.

\(^{45}\) Auerbach, “McKinley at Home,” 820.  
Although Steunenberg’s widow, Belle, would have preferred a small private funeral, much like those that followed the deaths of Chicago police officers in 1886, Steunenberg’s sister Jo noted that “the public demand that they be admitted.”

The governor’s body was laid out in state at the First Christian Church, the largest church in town, to include as many people as possible. Governor Gooding sent a telegram to “mayors of all Idaho cities that flags are to be half-masted on all public buildings and schools” and further the Idaho Daily Statesman disseminated Gooding’s “desire that all private institutions of the state and of Boise in particular, which have flags will, in respect for the memory of our martyred ex-governor, place their flags at half mast today.”

A special train was commissioned out of Boise to Caldwell because “all offices of the capital building will be closed today and all employees of the state will be given an opportunity to attend the funeral.”

However, so many out-of-town dignitaries and Caldwell citizens attended the funeral that the church filled and a crowd of hundreds huddled in the snow outside hoping to catch some of the service through the doors that were left open despite the cold weather. During the solemn proceedings, Republican lawyer William E. Borah, who would play a prominent role prosecuting the WFM, addressed the assembled mourners: “Idaho consecrates her soil today with all that is mortal of her first martyr.” He concluded:

Frank Steunenberg was of the rarest type of manhood. Open, sincere, modest and unassuming – he was in his purposes and plans as inflexible as honor itself. Rugged in body, resolute in mind, almost massive in the strength of his convictions – he was of the granite hewn.

Thus, Borah demonstrated how these traits of civilized manliness could be made larger in death than they had been in life. In December 1925, Steunenberg was immortalized in stone and bronze with a monument directly across the street from the Idaho Capital Building in Boise. An engraving on the back reads “Law and Order,” in remembrance of

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51 “Sorrowing Citizens Pay Last Tribute to Dead: Solemn and Impressive Services for Former Governor Are Held,” Idaho Daily Statesman (January 3, 1906), 1-2.
52 “Borah’s Tribute to Ex-Governor,” Idaho Daily Statesman (January 3, 1906), 2.
his role in early twentieth-century labor unrest. The statue was dedicated by the prosecution lawyer in the Haywood case, James Hawley, who stated that “This monument… more firmly cements the very foundation of our Government, strengthens the devotion of our people to our free institutions and insures their permanency for the succeeding generations.”

Similarly, Father Leo Heinrichs’ funeral in Denver witnessed an outpouring of public participation. While only members of St. Elizabeth’s parish were permitted into the church, newspapers noted that “for three blocks people were massed in the streets near the church.” The Pennsylvania newspaper Wilkes-Barre Times Leader reported on the links between civic participation in the funeral and the shadow of vigilante violence: “Sorrow, not anger against the twisted bit of humanity, was the dominant note of the funeral service. In the crowd of men and women gathered near the church, unable to gain entrance, were many of those who on Sunday gathered about the jail, demanding the blood of the murderer.” The article went so far as to claim that the funeral had such a sorrowful tone that it had satiated public demands for vengeance: “had the Italian been marched down the street, no demonstration would have been made against him.” A second funeral was held in Paterson, New Jersey, where “The body will lie in state at the… church from two o’clock to-morrow afternoon until ten o’clock to-morrow night. The body will be guarded in relays by members of the various societies throughout the city.” Approximately ten thousand people looked on the face of Father Leo in Paterson, where “the martyred priest wore the plain brown garb of his order, the feet being enclosed in sandals.” As the Idaho Daily Statesman reported “So great was the throng that a detail of fifty policemen was required to maintain the formation of two lines that extended for blocks.” Although public rituals of mourning had been slight in the aftermath of the Haymarket bombing, the increase in incidents of anarchist terror through the first decade of the twentieth century was followed by substantially more public participation in the funerals that celebrated civilized manliness of the victims.

53 James H. Hawley, “Address By Ex-Governor James H. Hawley,” in Steunenberg Memorial Booklet (Boise, ID: Steunenberg Memorial Association, 1927), 23.
55 Ibid.
56 “Murdered Priest Brought to Jersey,” Trenton Evening Times (March 1, 1908): 8.
Even those who survived their attacks, Henry Clay Frick in 1892 and George Shippy in 1908, were also celebrated in this cult of manhood. Days before the assassination attempt, criticisms of Frick’s use of violence to suppress workers in Homestead were widespread. After his assault, however, his public image shifted. As Frick recovered from his wounds, the *New York Times* depicted him as “a man of undoubted strong personal courage,” and as “a man of iron will,” printing that “he has shown that he is brave and fearless.”\(^5^8\)\(^5^9\) Shortly after the anarchist attack, public animosity over responsibility for the violence in the Homestead lockout also began to shift from Frick, who had contracted with the Pinkertons, to the absentee Andrew Carnegie, perhaps because it would not have been socially prudent to vilify the victim of anarchist violence. An editorial in the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* began: “Say what you will of Frick, he is a brave man” and concluded with: “Say what you will of Carnegie, he is a coward. And god and men hate cowards.”\(^6^0\) Similarly, as Shippy, along with his son and driver, recovered from their wounds in 1908, the press noted that it was their “bravery” that had spared their lives.\(^6^1\) Despite the fact that Shippy had killed Averbuch on his doorstep and that Frick’s policies were directly responsible for the violence in Homestead, the rituals that surrounded victims of anarchist violence temporarily absolved them of responsibility of their own crimes in the court of public opinion.

The rituals attending victims of bombings and assassinations served an important social function by giving the public an emotional outlet in the time of terror and social crisis that resulted from anarchist violence. As the Chicago police officers’ casualties transformed them into ideal versions of manliness, their families commemorated their deaths with subdued private ceremonies and their memories were eventually immortalized in bronze by a publicly-erected statue that celebrated not only the fallen officers, but the very idea that policemen daily sacrificed their lives for the public good and wellbeing. McKinley’s mourning rituals, by contrast, engaged various types of veneration: the commodification of his death with trinkets and memorial objects, the

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vigilant and dutiful watch kept over his body, and the proliferation of various media from books to films. These events and objects gave millions nationwide and worldwide the chance to experience and express their loss. On a comparatively smaller scale, friends, family, and strangers alike paid their respects to Steunenberg in Idaho, and the Steunenberg memorial carried the same message of “Law and Order” as the Haymarket monument. Similarly, Father Heinrichs was commemorated through large funerals in Denver and Patterson. Finally, Frick and Shippy, who both survived their assaults of anarchist violence, were also glorified to an extent almost equal to that of those who had died. All of these versions of public mourning offered an alleviation of the social stress caused by somewhat unexpected violent outbursts. In stark contrast to the valorization of the fallen Haymarket police officers, McKinley, Steunenberg, Henrichs, Frick, and Shippy, the attending rites for the perpetrators of violence were private and sometimes even covert.

Controlling Spectacles of Violence
While the grieving for victims of anarchist violence enabled a space for public participation, the execution of anarchists was very much a private spectacle between the defendants and a tiny audience of social elites, although newspapers narrated anarchists’ suffering to the larger audience that was excluded from the death chamber. State authorities insisted that the condemned men be kept alive until they could be killed in an orderly fashion. However, anarchists could be agents in their own deaths and in some cases robbed the state of its chance for vengeance. State officials desired jurisdiction over the death process because they wanted to control the meaning of anarchists’ executions. When condemned men did have large funerals, as was the case with the Haymarket anarchists, in the eyes of state officials this attracted an undesirable amount of notoriety that seemed to transform the executed criminals into martyrs for the anarchist cause. Yet, while state officials executed anarchists in relative isolation they were successful in reducing contestations over the meanings of their deaths. However, control over the meaning of anarchist deaths also necessitated control over their corpses.

As George Engle, Adolph Fisher, Louis Lingg, Albert Parsons, and August Spies waited for their executions in Cook County Jail after the delivery of a guilty verdict in the
Haymarket conspiracy trial, prison officials, reporters, and the public at large exhibited concern that their deaths must not come at their own hands. This fear dramatically materialized on November 6th, 1887 when four bombs were discovered in a wooden cigar box with a false bottom in Louis Lingg’s cell. Initially, the startling discovery led to speculation that the prisoners had meant to destroy the jail, force an escape, or go down fighting rather than submit to the executioner. However, the bombs were constructed of narrow pipe seven inches long and less than one inch in diameter and with an inch-long fuse at one end, designed for self-destruction as a means to escape the gallows. The day after the discovery of the bombs, another disturbing story broke; George Engel attempted to commit suicide by overdosing on 16 morphine pills, which he had smuggled into prison, and 6 to 8 teaspoons of laudanum, which had been supplied by a prison doctor. At news that doctors had managed to nurse the condemned man back to consciousness, an editorial in the *New York Times* feigned sympathy at Engle’s actions: “Nobody can find it in his heart to blame a poor wretch condemned to die for trying to cheat the gallows, and to substitute a euthanasia for shameful and terrifying death to which he is sentenced.” Press coverage linked the impending death of the anarchists to concerns about the emergence of a cult of the martyr. A *New York Times* editorial compared the “cowardly” suicide attempts of Lingg and Engel:

> It appears that neither of these two coveted the honor of martyrdom. One of them meant to escape his sentence by suicide and the other to signalize its execution by promiscuous murder. It is difficult even for anarchists to canonize a man who passes his last days in plots, not against the organization of society, but against the lives of his fellow men.

The *New York Times* editorial, however, was incorrect in assuming that Lingg had aspired to harm others, as the author wrongly presumed that death on the scaffold was the only path to martyrdom within the culture of revolutionary anarchism. The editor misunderstood that both Lingg’s bombs and Engle’s near overdose were attempts to deny the state its orderly spectacle of violence by tainting it with chaos.

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65 Ibid.
After bombs were found in Lingg’s cell, on November 9th, without Lingg’s knowledge or consent, a delegation of Haymarket Amnesty Association members went before Judge Richard J. Prendergast of the County Court in Chicago and filed a petition to test the young man’s sanity to confirm that he had been mentally fit for trial. Among the witnesses was Dr. James G. Kiernan, an expert for the defence at the trial of Charles Guiteau, the assassin of President Garfield, who maintained that Lingg’s was a “case of paranoia.” Having heard the arguments, Judge Prendergast ruled that he had no jurisdiction in the matter. The next day the same petition was presented to Judge Frank Baker of the Court of Appeals, once again without result. While contemporary commentators freely used insanity to dismiss crimes of anarchist violence, insanity was a slippery slope in legal terms, as prosecutors knew full well. They did all in their power to prevent anarchists from using the insanity defense to escape the retributive justice of the state.

Louis Lingg did find a way to cheat the hangman’s noose. The morning before the execution, Lingg was observed calmly smoking a cigar in his cell when a sharp explosion resonated through the prison. The guards rushed in to find Lingg slumped on his cot in a pool of blood. Newspapers circulated the story on their front pages, showing an unparalleled attention to blood and gore. The New York Times reported that “the bed, the pillow, the walls, and floor of the cell were spattered with blood, flesh, teeth, and bits of bone.” Lingg, however, was not dead and “through the awful, gaping wound the breath of life was coming and going with a ghastly, sickening gurgle.” Chicago Police Captain Michael Schaack described the wounds, with unsettling detail, in his 1889 book:

The lower jaw had been almost entirely blown away, the upper lip was completely torn to shreds, the greater part of his nose was in tatters, only a fragment of his tongue remained, and every vestige of front teeth had disappeared. What remained of his cheeks looked like flesh torn by vultures, and every jagged part bled profusely. The inside of his upper jaw was horribly lacerated. It looked as though no man could survive such a wound for a moment after its infliction. And yet the bomb-maker was alive and breathing regularly.

69 Schaack, Anarchy and Anarchists, 634-635.
A reporter for the *Chicago Daily Tribune*, standing in the vestibule of the Cook County Jail overheard chilling remarks from a cluster of police officers: “Damn that coward, he promised he would die game, and now he cheats us of our fun tomorrow.”70 As one of the surgeon’s assistants hurried past with some medical supplies a police sergeant caught him by the arm exclaiming: “Say, fix that ---- up in shape so that he can get the rope tomorrow.” Lingg was carried into a large bathroom near the Jailor’s office, where emergency surgery was performed. The doctors experienced great difficulty in stopping the bleeding and preventing the blood from running down the man’s throat; a surgeon passed a ligature through what remained of the tongue to pull it forward so that breathing could be carried on without grave difficulty. After this, the doctors did what little they could and administered injections of brandy and water as well as warm salt water. Captain Schaack narrated in awe: “Now and then he coughed, and with each spell emitted large quantities of blood. The pallet upon which he rested, and the floor underneath, were saturated with blood, and its strong flow attested a superb physical condition – a wonderful vitality.”72 For nearly six hours Lingg clung to life before dying at 2:50 pm.73

After Lingg’s death, many concerned citizens asked how the condemned anarchist had managed to keep a bomb after he had been searched and moved to a cell closer to supervision. According to the *New York Times*, prison officials “had no explanation to offer, but inclined to the belief that he had it for some time, and that when searched Sunday, after the bombs were found in his cell, he concealed it in his bushy hair or about his person.”74 Newspaper reporters, in their clamour to interview the condemned men, had created a situation in which the anarchists had enjoyed the freedom of daily receptions with anybody who might call on them. They had been separated from visitors only by a loosely woven wire screen and had received almost daily baskets of fruit and food, which had been subject to very little examination. The *New York Times* scolded: “It

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71 Ibid.
72 Schaack, *Anarchy and Anarchists*, 635.
73 Although Schaack maintained that Lingg’s “remains were placed in a neat coffin,” according to one witness his body was “thrown into a filthy bath tub to await the death of the others.” Henry F. Charles, “A Voice from America: The Suicide of Lingg,” *Commonweal* 3:102 (December 24, 1887): 413; Schaack, *Anarchy and Anarchists*, 635-636.
is to be hoped that the Sheriff of Chicago… will be moved to examine the hampers and barrels and crates sent to his prisoners by sympathizing friends. He does not appear to have paid even a casual attention to them heretofore.”

Some supporters of the imprisoned anarchists maintained that the police, who were apprehensive about the clemency movement, had planted the bombs that had been found in Lingg’s cell. Lucy Parsons, the wife of Albert Parsons, went on record with the Chicago Daily Tribune claiming just that: “I know how they got there. They were placed there by jail officials who would do anything to stem the tide of public opinion which is now in favour of commuting the sentence of the Anarchists.”

The British Socialist periodical Commonweal echoed this sentiment: “the finding of the bombs was a miserable police plot to make sure of hanging Lingg, whom they hated most.”

Decades later Alexander Berkman wrote to Emma Goldman and, musing about whether Lingg’s death had been at the hands of the police, he wrote: “About that story re Lingg, I don’t think it plausible. They knew well enough that Lingg would have to hang. Why then should they want to kill him before that? On the other hand Lingg was probably the kind of man who’d prefer to die by his own hand.”

Unsurprisingly, the fellow militant anarchist recognized Lingg’s bold evasion of the hangman’s noose. While the discovery of the bombs in Lingg’s cell on November 6th remained suspicious, Lingg’s death on November 10th was less likely a conspiracy.

Lingg’s gruesome self-inflicted death did not temper the State of Illinois’s desire to extract an orderly spectacle of violence from the remaining anarchists. On November 11th, 1887, having exhausted all legal appeals to the Illinois Supreme Court and the United States Supreme Court, George Engel, Adolph Fischer, Albert Parsons, and August Spies were prepared by the prison guards for their private execution before a limited audience of the jurors, doctors, a few other prominent guests, and journalists who were present in order to report the events to a wider audience. Newspapers narrated the execution in meticulous detail: each condemned man had his wrists handcuffed behind

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76 “Some Crazy Fanatics Say Lingg was murdered: Spread like Wildfire,” Chicago Daily Tribune (November 11, 1887): 1.
78 Alexander Berkman to Emma Goldman, June 21, 1934, quoted in: Avrich, Haymarket Tragedy, 376.
his back, arms fastened to his sides with a broad leather strap, and a white shroud placed over his bound body. The four men were taken to the gallows and stationed in a row over the trap door, where leather leg straps were placed around their knees, nooses were slipped over their heads and the knot was drawn tight behind the left ear. Finally, a white hood was pulled over each of the men’s face and each in turn projected their last words:

There will come a time when our silence will be more powerful than the voices you strangle today. – August Spies
Hurrah for Anarchy! – George Engle
Hurrah for Anarchy! This is the happiest moment of my life – Adolph Fischer
Let me speak, oh men of America! Will you let me speak, Sheriff Matson! Let the voice of the people be heard! Oh - . – Albert Parsons

Their words were cut short when the trap door suddenly opened and the four men fell to the length of the rope. However, death was not instantaneous for any of them. Their autopsies would later confirm that their necks had not been broken by the fall; they had all died of strangulation, and the press reported their slow agonizing deaths:

Their violent struggles and slow death were due to the fact that the rope slipped in every case above the trachea… death comes partly from asphyxia and partly through congestion of the brain, and comes slowly for the reason that more or less air is admitted to the lungs, and death comes by degrees. In this case air in no small quantities was admitted, and in consequence death was slow marked by terrible gasps, struggles, and muscular contortions.

The Commonweal noted with disdain the effect of the press coverage of the executions on the general public: “Specials were issued every minute; the people were mobbing the newspaper boys. In fact the headings of the newspapers, the thirst of the populace for sensational news, indicate that they were not to be content short of gladiator scenes.”

While the Commonweal commented with distain about the circus atmosphere of mainstream press coverage of the executions as typified by the New York Times and Chicago Daily Tribune, social elites and their journalist allies would soon learn how hard it was to control the meaning of the anarchist’s deaths.

81 Charles, “Voice From America,” 418.
Alternative interpretations of the executions also surfaced in opposition to the mainstream press coverage that accentuated the pain and suffering of the condemned anarchists up to their last living moments. Even those who opposed the anarchists were impressed by their valour on the gallows. Grand Master Workman of the Knights of Labor, Terence V. Powderly, no friend to the anarchists, wrote in a private letter to John Hay, General-Secretary of the Knights of Labor, about his conflicted feelings toward the anarchists’ execution: “Four of the poor fellows walked the plank today in Chicago. I have never felt so stirred before. I have more respect for Parsons, Fisher, Engle and Spies than ever. They were sincere and say what they will of Lingg by heaven, he died true to his teachings even though they were damn bad teachings.”82 The executions were supposed to complete the orderly process of state judgement, but what the state lacked was complete control over the meaning of the anarchist’s deaths. Thus, even with the anarchists dead, debate remained about what would happen to their bodies. Anxieties about the dead men becoming martyrs were further accentuated by plans for rituals of mourning and a public funeral.

However, many segments of society were decidedly opposed to allowing the mourning of the executed men to become a public event because they feared that the commemoration of the anarchists would inspire others to Propaganda by Deed. Even before the execution, the press had been fuelling anxieties about what would happen to the anarchists’ bodies after they had been hanged. As early as November 7th the New York Times postulated:

The Sheriff, following precedents will probably turn over the bodies to the families, in such a case it is their intention to have a tremendous public funeral, at which not only the local Anarchists but as many as can come from other cities will be in attendance to make an imposing display.83

An editorial on November 9th, 1887 further elaborated on these fears:

The delivery of the corpses in this case would be an outrage upon public decency. Now that criminals in general and Anarchists in particular have outgrown the old sentiment about the value of a burial in consecrated ground, it does not add anything to the wholesome terror of the law inspired by capital punishment to threaten to deprive a murderer of decent burial, and no harm is done by giving up

his body to his friends when it is to be interred privately and quietly…. [But] It would be a great outrage if the ministers of the law should furnish them with the material for such a demonstration, and their ought to be such an expression of opinion in Chicago as will effectually prevent such an outrage… to make the Anarchist funeral procession a spectacle.  

Nonetheless, the corpses of Spies, Parsons, Engle, and Fisher were lowered into coffins and returned to their families, along with the body of Louis Lingg who, according to the Chicago Daily Tribune, presented a most revolting sight: “his gray eyes were wide open and an immense bloody hole marked the mouth. Heavy bandages prevented all that was left of his chin and lower jaw from dropping down on his neck.” The rituals of mourning that could potentially transform the dead men into martyrs for the anarchist cause proceeded in spite of naysayers.

The massive public funeral for the anarchists took place on Sunday, November 13th, 1887. A solemn procession of twenty thousand workers, with several times that many spectators, gathered the coffins of the dead men one-by-one from their families’ homes. Under the vigilant eye of the authorities, the funeral march escorted the bodies through the streets of Chicago to the Wisconsin Central Railroad terminal for the ten-mile journey to Waldheim Cemetery, where more than twenty thousand people gathered to witness the anarchists’ burial. Not missing the opportunity to belittle the solemn occasion, the New York Times noted “the crowds tempted out by the splendid weather were in the main of the same class who pack the street when Barnum’s or Forepaugh’s cavalcade provides free show.” Editorials commented with scorn on the public funeral where “these monsters were to be honoured as heroes and martyrs.” Despite press attempts to counteract the rituals of mourning for the executed anarchists, the public funeral gave the anarchists a site where they could be commemorated as martyrs. While the supporters of the hangings held their ceremonies in May near the site of the bombing, marked by the statue of a Chicago policeman with his hand raised that had been unveiled in 1889, the friends of the anarchists remembered their cause in November, on the

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86 “A Great Public Funeral,” Chicago Daily Tribune (November 12, 1887), 1; Avrich, Haymarket Tragedy, 411, 395-396; Smith, Urban Disorder, 125.
anniversary of their deaths at the graves at Waldheim cemetery. On June 25th, 1893, the
day the surviving Haymarket anarchists were pardoned by Governor Peter Altgeld, Albert
Parsons, Jr. unveiled a memorial statue over the graves of his father and his comrades.
August Spies’ last words shouted from the gallows were inscribed on the Waldheim
monument: “The time will come when our silence will be more powerful than the voices
you strangle today.” With this, their martyr status was sealed.

Although some historians have taken the executions of the Haymarket anarchists
as a sign of the death of anarchism in America, the executions motivated a new
generation of anarchists and revolutionary unionists, such as Emma Goldman and
Alexander Berkman as well as labor activists and later founders of the Industrial Workers
of the World (IWW), like Bill Haywood, to persist in revolutionary tradition and
sometimes to aim for the martyr’s goal.89 Goldman noted in her 1931 autobiography that
Haymarket was the catalyst for “a determination to dedicate myself to the memory of my
martyred comrades, to make their cause my own.”90 For Goldman, Lingg stood out as:
The sublime hero among the eight. His unbending spirit, his utter contempt for his
accusers and judges, his will-power, which made him rob his enemies of their prey
and die by his own hand – everything about that boy of twenty-two lent romance
and beauty to his personality. He became the beacon of our lives.91

Alexander Berkman, as he prepared to assassinate Henry Clay Frick in 1892, vowed that
he too would die by his own hand, “like Lingg.”92 Berkman wrote in his memoir about
his own hopes for martyrdom:

Could anything be nobler than to die for a grand, a sublime Cause? 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. And what could be higher in life
than to be a true revolutionist? It is to be a man, a complete MAN.93

89 Salvatore Salerno, Red November, Black November: Culture and Community in the Industrial Workers of
91 Ibid., 42.
92 Ibid., 87.
93 Berkman elaborated on the gendered identity of anarchists: “a revolutionist is the truly moral man: to him
the interests of humanity are supreme, to advance them, his sole aim in life.” When Berkman recklessly
rebutted police investigators, accidentally allowing personal information to slip, “yet somehow I feel I
have acted like a man.” Alexander Berkman, Prison Memoirs of an Anarchist (New York: Mother Earth
Press, 1912), 11, 71, 18.
Like Lingg, Berkman attempted to commit suicide after his arrest by setting off an explosion in his mouth. In his 1908 novel *The Bomb*, Frank Harris portrayed Lingg as the supreme martyr amongst the defendants, one who offered a valorized paradigm for radical anarchists who were thinking about this ultimate sacrifice. Harris stated that, “He had the martyr’s pity for men, the martyr’s sympathy with suffering and destitution, the martyr’s burning contempt for greed and meanness, the martyr’s hope in the future, the martyr’s belief in the ultimate perfectibility of man.”\(^9^4\) The contemporary scholar and critic of anarchism, Felix DuBois, who felt the growing current toward the glorification of anarchist insurrection, noted in 1894: “The almost religious veneration in which the victims to the cause are held at present was unknown before the quadruple execution at Chicago in 1887. Previous to this date there had been no symbolical manifestations of the doctrine.”\(^9^5\) In historian Blain McKinley’s words, the men’s deaths “became a crucial shared experience for later anarchists. By reliving the martyrdom, the anarchists could see themselves as participants in, and successors to, a noble sacrifice.”\(^9^6\) Those who were ready for the anarchist’s death had examples to follow and would be in good company once they attained their status of martyrs. Over two decades after the Haymarket executions, Lucy Parsons published a volume containing the complete texts of the anarchists’ three days of courtroom speeches, which sold over ten thousand copies in its first year and a half of print.\(^9^7\) Waldheim Cemetery became a sacred site, where diverse anarchists and fellow travellers chose to be buried, among whom were prominent anarchists such as Emma Goldman and Voltairine De Cleyre, as well as IWW figures William Haywood, Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, and some of Joe Hill’s ashes.\(^9^8\)

While the executions of the Haymarket anarchists completed the orderly process of judgement imposed by the state, prison officials also learned a very important lesson about control over the executed bodies of anarchists and the dangerous role of mourning rituals in challenging the meaning of anarchist’s deaths. Fortunately for Pittsburgh officials, Alexander Berkman failed to take his own life after his likewise unsuccessful


\(^{9^8}\) Adelman, *Haymarket Revisited*, 40-42.
assassination of Frick in 1892. However, the assassination of Italian King Umberto I by Gaetano Bresci on July 29th, 1900 offered some interesting insights to American audiences. Bresci received a life sentence in an Italian prison, but committed suicide less than one month into his incarceration. In stark contrast to the coverage of Lingg’s suicide and Berkman’s suicide attempt, the New York Times argued that the Italian solution was a splendid one, as anarchists dying in solitary silence meant that there was no opportunity for a gallows speech and martyrdom; the editorial quoted Montaigne: “There is nothing more disagreeable, than to be obscurely hanged.” 99 Auburn prison officials would take these words to heart in 1901 when they were tasked with the execution of Leon Czolgosz.

Czolgosz’s execution offered a chance for state officials and their allies in the press to refine their approach to disposing of anarchists in a controlled manner. Even before Czolgosz’s trial began in 1901, journalists, who were the main vehicles for publishing criminal’s words and deeds, ironically justified the silence that shrouded the assassin:

The ideal punishment of an Anarchist assassin would be that, from the time the hand of the law fell upon him, he should never be heard of more. It would need a very considerable change in the methods of our criminal jurisprudence. But it seems that the absolute denial to Anarchist assassins of the notoriety, which they seek, is essential to the protection of the society against which the wretches are arrayed. 100

In stark contrast to press access to the condemned Haymarket anarchists, the Warden of Auburn Prison, J. Warren Mead, picked up precisely this challenge and announced a policy to “deprive Czolgosz living of any notoriety... to deprive Czolgosz dead of any notoriety… I cannot allow anything to go away from the prison that will in any way continue this man’s identity or notoriety.” 101 Guards were stationed in front of Czolgosz’s cell to continuously watch over the prisoner and prevent any attempted suicide.

Since New York State had abolished hanging in 1886 in search of a better way to kill condemned men, Czolgosz’s would be the fifteenth life to end in the modern and

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humane instrument of death - the electrical chair. At 7:10 a.m. on October 29th, 1901 Czolgosz was escorted into the death chamber. Similar to the execution of the Haymarket anarchists, the audience was limited to a select group, this time 26 witnesses, including Warden Mead, the attending physicians, several prominent New York State officials, and three delegates from respective press associations. As the straps were being tightened around the condemned man, he spoke his last words to the witnesses: “I killed the President because he was an enemy of the good people – of the good working people. I am not sorry for my crime.” A signal from Mead brought 1,700 volts of electricity coursing through the assassin’s body, draining it of visible signs of life. At 7:15 a.m. Warden Mead turned to the witnesses and in a sombre voice said, “Gentlemen, the prisoner is dead.” It only took five minutes to remove all signs of life from the body of Leon Czolgosz, but the Warden of Auburn Prison was not yet finished with McKinley’s assassin.

Immediately after the execution, the assassin’s body underwent an autopsy to evaluate Czolgosz’s physical condition. Prior to the first incision of the autopsy, however, the attending physicians were surprised to find that Warden Mead had “stationed his most trust worthy guard over them with instructions to ‘run them out’ if they attempted to secret or carry away an atom of the remains of Czolgosz.” Under the direction of Drs. MacDonald and Gerin, Mr. Edward A. Spitzka, a fourth year medical student from New York, performed the autopsy. Although, it was unusual for a student to conduct such a high profile autopsy when other experts were close at hand, Spitzka had been chosen based on his wide-ranging research on the brain, especially with the

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102 On August 6, 1890, William Kemmler was the first criminal to be executed in the electric chair at Auburn prison, see: Richard Moran, Executioner’s Current: Thomas Edison, George Westinghouse, and the Invention of the Electric Chair (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2002); Mark Essig, Edison and the Electric Chair: A Story of Light and Death (New York: Walker and Company, 2003).
103 Carlos F. MacDonald, “The Trial, Execution, Autopsy and Mental Status of Leon F. Czolgosz, Alias Fred Nieman, the Assassin of President McKinley,” American Journal of Insanity 58:3 (January 1902): 375.
104 “Assassin Czolgosz is Executed at Auburn,” New York Times (October 30, 1901): 5; Interview between L. Vernon Briggs and Warden J. Warren Mead, Briggs notes, set 1, page 11, in Dr. Walter Channings Papers, Box 15, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, MA.
105 MacDonald, “Trial, Execution, Autopsy,” 367-386.
106 Interview between L. Vernon Briggs and Warden J. Warren Mead, Briggs notes, set 1, in Dr. Walter Channings Papers, Box 15, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, MA.
American Anthropometric Society (AAS). In addition, Spitzka’s father, Edward Charles Spitzka, was a prominent New York neurologist of significant reputation and founding member of the AAS, all of which helped to place the young student behind the scalpel at Czolgosz’s autopsy.

The autopsy report on Czolgosz and the concluding analysis of his corpse contained several examples of judgement against his body and were accompanied by explanations of his physicality that were rooted in the dominant trends of social propriety. Spitzka noted, “The arms were not muscular. Evidently he was not a man who had cultivated his muscles by exercise or expanded them by labor. The arms were of a young man of leisure – smooth, round and fair.” Even the autopsy report described the assassin’s body in a way that distanced the anarchist from the working-class, the “good people,” that his violence sought to liberate. The autopsy, based only on observations of the body and organs, concluded that Czolgosz was “socially diseased and perverted, but not mentally diseased.” Other medical experts and court officials who examined Czolgosz articulated this conclusion, which used the word disease to describe his motivations and distinguish between flawed social views and mental insanity. The medical panel assembled by the prosecution prior to the trial argued that Czolgosz’s social disease must have been what caused his “false beliefs” that were “the result of false teaching.” For District Attorney Penney, the causes of the assassination were “embedded in his diseased heart,” and the medical expert for the defense, Dr. Carlos MacDonald, alluded to a

107 The American Anthropometric Society collected the brains of the intellectual elite such as poets, physicians and scientists, for the purpose of studying what made these individuals great. In 1900 the collection boasted only eight brains including the gray matter of American poet Walt Whitman.
109 Edward Anthony Spitzka, “The Post-Mortem Examination of Leon F. Czolgosz, the Assassin of President William McKinley,” American Journal of Insanity 58:3 (January 1902): 398.
110 Ibid., 396, 400; investigation of the external body concluded perfect health with the exception of electrical burns on the right leg and head where the electrodes had been placed. An examination of the stomach revealed that it contained only a small amount of food from the evening before the execution, “the ‘hearty breakfast’ so graphically described in most newspapers was but a figment of the imagination.” Photographs of the plaster cast are found in Edward Anthony Spitzka, “The Post-Mortem Examination of Leon F. Czolgosz, The Assassin of President William McKinley,” Philadelphia Medical Journal (January 4, 1902): 37.
112 People of the State of New York against Leon F. Czolgosz, Supreme Court, Erie County, New York, (September 23-26, 1901), 119.
“social disease, Anarchy, of which he was a victim.” A leading publisher of the day, Henry Holt, founder of Holt, Rinehart & Winston, grappled with the disturbing implications of a politically-inspired assassination: “We are left in the dark, still wondering how such a deed could have been done by a man in his sound and sober senses in fair and free America and appalled at the possibility of a sane man murdering an American President.” The use of disease as a metaphor to discredit social explanations for the crime, such as Czolgosz’s arguments about class disparity, was short lived, since after the execution medical doctors would turn in earnest to the task of bringing the assassin’s sanity into disrepute.

Prison officials in Auburn also feared the repetition of the public demonstration that had followed the Haymarket anarchists to their graves in 1886, so they took several precautions to ensure that rituals of mourning would not follow Leon Czolgosz after his death. To thwart this possibility, Warden Mead conspired to secure the body of the assassin and circumvent the wishes of the Czolgosz family even before the execution. Leon’s younger brother Waldeck represented the Czolgosz family in Auburn and requested the remains for a proper burial back in Cleveland. On the morning of the execution, Waldeck Czolgosz was given the run around, initially informed that he could see his brother’s body right after the electrocution; this was delayed until after the autopsy. Prison officials presented Waldeck with several arguments for surrendering the murderer’s body to Auburn Prison, beginning with the implicit threat of mob vengeance that would surely attack the cadaver if it left the sanctuary of the high stone walls. The Warden’s influence extended to the Buffalo crematory, whose staff refused to run the risk

113 MacDonald, “Trial, Execution, Autopsy,” 380.
of cremating the assassin’s body in their facility. In a further attempt at obfuscation, Waldeck was then bluntly accused of wanting the body for financial gain, and prison officials declared to the press they “would refuse to surrender it, law or no law.” Newspapers subsequently circulated a copy of the resulting agreement between the Czolgosz family and the prison officials which stipulated that, “no part of the remains will be given to any person or society, but that the entire body will be buried in accordance with the law in the cemetery attached to the prison.” However, as psychologists began to investigate Czolgosz’s past after his hasty death, an interview between Dr. L. Vernon Briggs and Waldeck Czolgosz revealed:

He had had all he wanted of doctors; they had treated him badly in Buffalo and Auburn…they telegraphed his father saying that Waldeck would sign a release to them of the body, if his father would. At the same time they telegraphed him from Cleveland that his father would sign the release of the body if Waldeck would. Then Waldeck got with his father he found that it was all fixed up, as neither of them had agreed to do it until they heard from the other.

But by this time it was already too late. Leon Czolgosz’s body had been destroyed inside Auburn prison. When Waldeck returned to the penitentiary around noon and again asked to view the body, the Warden hastily sent him away with a death certificate. Waldeck did not believe that his brother had been buried. In an interview with Vernon Briggs, he simply stated: “I did not see it and I don’t believe what I don’t see.”

The disposal of Leon Czolgosz’s body did take place on October 29th. Waldeck had to learn the details when newspapers presented it to their readers. After the autopsy, the body of Czolgosz had been placed into an unmarked grave in the cemetery that adjoined Auburn prison. Rather than douse the body in quicklime, as was customary, a carboy of acid was poured into the grave. The change of policy resulted from an experiment by Warden Mead, who had doused twelve pounds of meat in quicklime in a glass jar a few days earlier. By the morning of Czolgosz’s execution the meat had not dissolved. After a brief consultation with the attending physicians, they decided that acid

118 Interview between L. Vernon Briggs and Waldeck Czolgosz, Briggs notes, set 2, page 17, 26, in Dr. Walter Channings Papers, Box 15, Massachusetts Historical Society, Boston, MA.
119 Ibid.
would be more effective to decompose the assassin’s corpse. The Warden justified this unusual change of prison procedure to the press by stating: “the purpose of the law was the destruction of the body, and that it was not necessary to confine themselves to the use of quicklime.”

Straw was placed in the four corners of the unmarked grave to allow the gasses to escape and the physicians hypothesized that the acid would completely dissolve the assassin’s body within 12 hours. Prison officials took the extra precaution of burning “the clothing and letters of the murderer to prevent the exhibition of relics by those who pander [to] the morbid,” and supplied a guard to stand over the grave as the body evaporated. In sharp contrast to the Haymarket executions, prison authorities had managed to execute Czolgosz and keep his body, thereby successfully preventing the ritual of mourning that had accompanied the Haymarket anarchists to their graves. Czolgosz’s body, therefore, had been punished, and the press had relayed this information to the public. Yet the American people had been denied participation in the spectacle of the assassin’s death, something that, as we will explore in the next section, they would attempt to satiate with or without state permission.

Rituals of mourning did not follow the remaining criminals implicated in anarchist violence to their graves. Orchard had escaped his death sentence by its commutation to life imprisonment in 1907 for his testimony against the WFM. However, Guiseppe Alia also attempted to end his life before the state could take it. The Cleveland Plain Dealer reported on March 21st, the day Judge Greely W. Whitney denied the motion for a new trial, that “[l]ast night Alia made repeated attempts to commit suicide by beating his head against the iron bars of his cell. His head was covered with bruises when he was brought to court today and he was so weak he had to be supported by officers.”

As Alia was awaiting his execution date, the Colorado Springs Gazette hopefully noted that “the law requires that a certain number of witnesses be present at the time and in previous cases it has happened that a certain number of newspapermen have

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121 “Plans for Execution of Assassin Czolgosz,” New York Times (October 28, 1901): 1; a chilling turn of events as one recalls George Orwell’s ominous words about how the state created an unperson, “Above all we do not allow the dead to rise up against us. You must stop imagining that posterity will vindicate you. Posterity will never hear you out. You will be lifted clean out from the stream of history. We shall turn you into gas and pour you into the stratosphere.” George Orwell, Nineteen Eighty-Four (London: Penguin Books, 2000 [1948]), 266.
been named in this capacity.”\textsuperscript{123} The silence that shrouded Czolgosz’s death was extended to Alia, as the \textit{Cleveland Plain Dealer} reported, “No information will be given out by the prison officials as to the day or hour of Alia’s execution, but it is believed that the sentence will be carried out until the last of the present week.”\textsuperscript{124} Despite the secrecy, Alia was hanged for the murder of Father Leo Heinrich on July 16\textsuperscript{th}, 1908. The \textit{Idaho Daily Statesman} told its readers that:

Perhaps a more sensational and thrilling scene was never beheld by any of the 16 persons present, than the executing of this misguided Italian murderer, whose cries and screams were only hushed by the automatic springing of the mechanism which forever silenced the tongue that cried for vengeance.\textsuperscript{125}

The \textit{Colorado Springs Gazette}, among others, almost gloated: “Unfortunately his neck was not broken, owing to the slipping of the rope, and he died of strangulation. After 19 minutes Alia’s body was cut down and he was pronounced dead.”\textsuperscript{126} Alia was quickly and quietly buried. Even Selig Silverstein’s funeral, who died after a month of agony in a New York hospital on April 28\textsuperscript{th} as a result of injuries sustained while trying to throw a bomb at police in New York’s Times Square, saw police intervention to supress any rituals of mourning.\textsuperscript{127} New York police feared a demonstration after the burial of Silverstein. As one newspaper warned, “while no definite arrangements for the funeral have yet been made, it is known that many of his former associates will follow the body to the grave and the police are today taking precautionary measures to prevent any outbreak on the day of the funeral.”\textsuperscript{128}

Lazarus Averbuch was almost the exception to the rule of depriving an alleged anarchist of notoriety when a public mourning ritual that could have rivalled the Haymarket anarchists was narrowly averted. After Police Chief George Shippy killed Averbuch, his corpse underwent an autopsy and hasty burial in Chicago’s potters field. The \textit{Colorado Springs Gazette} reported that as Olga Averbuch was being released as a suspect in the crime, “her resources exhausted” she “gave reluctant consent to interment

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by the county” and noted that the burial took place “in the darkness of night, with a dreary rain pouring down, unaccompanied by friend or relative.” However, challenges to Shippy’s explanations led to an exhumation of Averbuch’s body for a second autopsy. When it was discovered that the coroner’s report had been in error and that Averbuch had been buried without his brain and thus in violation of Jewish burial custom, state officials were concerned that the reburial of Averbuch would be accompanied by large public rituals of mourning. However, progressive reformer Jane Addams cooperated with city officials to keep the funeral a secret in order to avoid a demonstration by the radicalized Jewish community. When Averbuch’s body was reburied, it received appropriate Jewish rites, but this was done with the utmost secrecy. Although Addams justified her actions as preventing a possible altercation between immigrant communities and the Chicago police, she and the settlement house with which she was involved received some harsh criticism for its role in the private burial. In the progressive journal *Charities and Commons*, she commented “it was indeed a somewhat ironic situation, a leading newspaper calling the settlement people ‘socialist’ and ‘disturbers of the peace’ at the very moment when they were being denounced by socialists themselves as ‘cowards’ and ‘bourgeoisie.’” Thus, the mainstream press vilified Addams for her role in challenging Shippy’s story, while those in radical circles criticised Addams for thwarting their ability to use public rituals of mourning for their own propaganda.

The public rituals of mourning that followed the Haymarket executions were not repeated after the deaths of Czolgosz, Alia, Silverstein, and Averbuch because state officials became much more savvy about the cult of the martyr in the anarchist movement. Haymarket demonstrated how contentious a death sentence could be, particularly when the condemned men’s corpses were released from state control. However, due to the transition from public to private punishment, the deaths of suspected perpetrators of anarchist violence were not directly accessible for public viewing. While this shift had been intended to lend authorities greater control of the meaning of the anarchists’ deaths, journalists’ narrations of the deaths evoked violent emotions in a wide

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segment of American society. At the same time, newspapers also picked up parallel stories of violent public spectacles and vigilantism that occurred outside state control.

**Spectacles of Retributive Violence**

The shift from public to private executions was resisted by a wide spectrum of American society. Unlike the newspaper accounts of the funerals for victims of these violent acts, which had been abundantly substantiated by the thousands who had participated directly in the rituals, news accounts of anarchists’ deaths were impossible to corroborate. While citizens inundated prison and court officials with requests to view the executions, state representatives did not accommodate these desires. Public demands for death spectacles involving anarchists were, therefore, fulfilled by a number of independent phenomena such as the lynching of effigies, random acts of violence between citizens, the spectacular public execution of Jumbo the elephant, and several films related to the execution of Leon Czolgosz. Between 1886 and 1908, anarchists and their sympathizers frequently found themselves targeted by real and symbolic acts of vigilante violence, many of which can be interpreted as retaliatory actions in the class war and performances of a primitive masculinity to re-establish the civilized state.

One of the ways that citizens expressed their desire to participate in spectacles of death was to appeal to state authorities to allow them to witness the executions of condemned anarchists. Prior to the execution of the Haymarket anarchists, newspapers reported that the governor of Illinois had received numerous letters asking to observe the hangings, including a morbid letter from an M. P. O’Keefe of Cheyenne, Wyoming Territory, who offered $20 a head for the privilege of hanging the anarchists himself.131 Around the same time, a theatre manager in Chicago, hoping to capitalize financially on the event, wrote to Judge Gary proposing to hang each of the condemned anarchists on his stage for a public and paying audience.132 Similarly, after the assassination of President McKinley in 1901, Secret Service Agent Albert Gallagher, who had received a beating when he was mistaken for the assassin in the confusion immediately after the

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shooting, wrote to the Chief of the Secret Service as “Friend Wilkie” on October 12th, 1901:

I am going to ask a favour of you and one that I think I am entitled to; I would like to see Leon F. Czolgosz, the assassin of President William McKinley, electrocuted. I would like to say more about the villain, but I am familiar with the postal laws. I still have the marks of the kicking I received, say nothing about the choking and I feel that the only satisfaction I can get out of it will be to see the “curr” in the chair. Mr. George B. Cortelyou the President’s Secretary, saw it all and will tell you the part I took. I don’t want this Service to stand any unnecessary expense to gratify my pleasure in this matter but I firmly believe that Mr. Cortelyou will willingly arrange it so that my transportation and subsistence for this trip will not be charged to this Service.133

Agent Gallagher was one of over a hundred citizens who, less than a week after the President’s death, requested from Warden Mead the opportunity to enter the death chamber to witness the end of the life of a prisoner who would not even arrive at Auburn for another five days.134 By October 21st, Auburn had received 1,200 requests, but the prison officials held firm: “there will be but twenty-six witnesses admitted, the law limiting the number.”135 The law demanded a private execution, yet the public repeatedly requested inclusion. Those had been denied the opportunity to witness the executions yearned for spectacles of death involving the anarchists.

In the absence of state-sponsored death spectacles of anarchists some citizens turned to acts of violence as an outlet of social vindication. Between 1886 and 1908, anarchists frequently found themselves targeted by vigilantes. As America changed from a rural nation to an urban and industrial nation after the Civil War, the institution of vigilantism had changed with it. From a generally narrow concern with the classic frontier problems of horse thieves and counterfeiters, vigilantism broadened its scope to include a variety of targets connected with the tensions of the new industrial order: Catholics, Jews, immigrants, labouring men and labor leaders, political radicals, advocates of civil liberties, and nonconformists in general.136 This new urban vigilantism flourished as a symptom of the growing pains of industrial and America, and it often

133 Albert Gallagher to John Wilkie, (October 12, 1901), Buffalo NY, Records of the U.S. Secret Service, Record Group 87, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), College Park, MD.
136 Brown, Strain of Violence, 23.
served as a purging ritual, delivering swift community vengeance while reaffirming power relations. Furthermore, real and symbolic attacks against anarchists were narrated through the press and thus were semi-legitimated as performances of citizenship. If requesting attendance at the executions can be seen as an act of civilized manliness, the spontaneous violence that followed was primitive masculinity that used coercion to reinforce American values.

When the Haymarket anarchists were incarcerated in Cook County Jail, newspapers ran numerous stories that glorified violence against those who sympathized with their cause. The Illinois *Rockford Daily Register* commented after the arrests, that although the “anarchist leaders were… under lock and key[… t]here is intense feeling manifested against them and threats of lynching are frequently heard.”137 For example, the *New York Times* reported on November 8th that a W. R. Robinson was “the centre of attraction” in downtown Chicago when he loudly suggested that the clemency movement should not be allowed to collect signatures in public places, shouting his contempt: “I am an American citizen... and I don’t propose that any…Anarchists shall defend their doctrines or use the streets of Chicago to save a lot of murderers.”138 In front of the growing crowd, Robinson physically assaulted a petition gatherer. When policemen intervened by dragging Robinson to the edge of the crowd, rather than arresting him, they told him to go home. But Robinson stood his ground and continued to accost the petition gatherers who, sensing the growing hostility of the crowd, quickly left. The *New York Times* attributed the violence and demeanour of the crowd to the fact that it was an election day and suggested that many loyal American citizens wanted to ensure the deaths of the anarchists.139 Similarly, Alexander Berkman was the target of unsuccessful vigilantism after he shot Henry Clay Frick in 1892. Journalists narrated the chaotic scene as the police attempted to remove the assailant from Frick’s office building in downtown Pittsburgh to the police station:

A throng of several thousand persons was collected almost in an instant by the noise of the firing... when the crank was brought out of the office by the police there were cries of “Lynch Him!” from the excited crowds, and the officers hustled him around into Smithfield Street in a jiffy, followed by the surging

139 Ibid.
throngs.... The crowd pressed at their heels, and there were cries of “String the – to a lamppost.”

A few days later the *New York Times* published a front-page story under the title of “Hunting for Anarchists” about a suspicious man hanging around the Pittsburgh jail. When questioned about his interest in Berkman, the man replied, “I should like to see him and every one of his kind dangling from telegraph poles.” Police had been successful in securing the anarchist’s body before it could become a site of vigilante violence, yet newspapers were widely circulating and perhaps tacitly justifying the primitive masculinity of retributive violence against anarchists.

With Berkman secluded in his cell away from a shocked and indignant public, a spectacle of punishment was enacted against a Pennsylvania militiaman stationed in Homestead. When word of the assassination attempt on Frick reached the militia camped out in the hot July sun, a young private named William L. Iams looked up from the book he was reading in the shade of a tree and shouted “Three cheers for the man who shot Frick!” Unfortunately for the young Iams, his comment was overheard by his commanding officers and Iams was ordered to apologize to the regiment. When Iams refused, he was placed in the stockade and hung by his thumbs with notice that he would be cut down as soon as he apologized. After 19 minutes Iams passed out and was cut down by the regimental surgeon. When he regained consciousness, the young private was summarily dishonourably discharged, half of his head and face were shaved, his uniform was exchanged for an old pair of overalls, and he was drummed out of the encampment. His commanding officer explained the harsh punishment to reporters: “His crime is that of treason. His conduct was aiding, abetting, and giving comfort to our enemy.” The *Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette* stirred up controversy by printing that “Although Private Iams in the opinion of all may have been guilty of breach of discipline, there are some who question if Col. Streeter would have been so zealous to punish him

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142 In the words of reporter Arthur Burgoyne, Iams was subjected “without the benefit of a trial by court-martial, to the most degrading punishment known under military law.” Arthur G. Burgoyne, *The Homestead Strike of 1892* (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1979 [1893]), 152.
had Iams’ sympathy been with capital.”\textsuperscript{144} The severity of the National Guard’s punishment of Iams may have been prompted by anarchist Propaganda by Word that had circulated through the soldiers’ encampment several days before Berkman shot Frick. The circulars were printed on both sides of poor white paper and addressed to the Militia, headed by the text: “Chose ye this day who ye will serve.” The Homestead strikers denied that they had issued the circulars and stated it was probably the work of local anarchists and General Snowden commented to Pittsburgh daily newspapers, “I’d like to find the men who brought those circulars into camp. He would never do it again.”\textsuperscript{145} As it turned out, General Snowden had something to fear about the loyalty of his troops.

The widely publicised reprimand of Iams is important as a stand-in for bodily punishments unsuccessfully extracted from Berkman for two reasons. Since the small post-Reconstruction regular Army was off fighting Indians on the frontier, the government responded to urban unrest with the citizen soldiers of the National Guard. In contrast, organized labor’s frequent response was an appeal to brotherhood. The severity of the treatment inflicted upon Iams reflected a fear of worker-to-soldier solidarity in the intensifying industrial war. Iams stated his own story to the press: “I had been called out with the national guard twice before on account of labor troubles between Mr. Frick and his men and felt a little sore about two weeks service that the guard had been obliged to give at Homestead, but had not the slightest animus against Mr. Frick.”\textsuperscript{146} However, many remained critical of Iams, such as an editor at the \textit{Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette} who claimed: “He has forfeited his place as a citizen-soldier and earned universal

\textsuperscript{144}“Pronounced Severe: Much Criticism of Private Iam’s Sentence in Congressional and Military Circles,” \textit{Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette} (July 26, 1892): 2.

\textsuperscript{145} The flyers read: “Comrades – We, the workers of Homestead, appeal to you in the sacred name of justice and liberty to help us, your brothers, in our struggle against the tyranny of capitalism. We beseech you not to be the mere tools and playthings of those who falsely call themselves your superiors. Think of those you leave behind – your fathers, mothers, wives, sweethearts, brothers, sisters, and friends – they are our fellow-workers and companions in misfortune.” The circulars continue: “You are not free men, you are mere machines – ‘food for powder’ – nothing more. You are but the instrument by which we and our brothers in all the lands are robbed of the fruits of our toil.” “Anarchists At Work: They Distribute Seditious Circulars Among the Troops in a Cowardly Manner,” \textit{Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette} (July 21, 1892): 1; “Angered the Soldiers, An Anonymous Circular Distributed in Camp Mysteriously,” \textit{Pittsburgh Sun} (July 21, 1892); \textit{Homestead Strike Scrapbook}, page 310, Helen Clay Frick Foundation Archives, Archives Service Centre, University of Pittsburgh, PA.

\textsuperscript{146}“Has He a Case? Friends of Iams Say They Will Make an Investigation,” \textit{Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette} (July 26, 1892): 1.
contempt for his anarchistic cheering.” In contrast, Alexander Berkman wrote about the event to Emma Goldman from his prison cell, which she later published in her autobiography:

He had been greatly cheered by the stand of the militiaman, W.L. Iams. It showed that even American soldiers were waking up. Could I not get in touch with the boy, send him anarchist literature? He would be a valuable asset to the movement.

Iams played into the fear of worker-soldier solidarity and his widely publicized punishment served to cover up native sympathy toward anarchist violence in the context of labor unrest. As Berkman was safely behind bars, Iams was the readily available alternative upon whom violence was used to make claims about acceptable citizenship. But where Berkman’s assault happened in Frick’s private office, Czolgosz’s attack happened in the very public setting of the reception at the Pan-American Exposition.

The first citizen to strike President McKinley’s assassin was James Parker, a tall African-American who had stood behind Czolgosz in the reception line on September 6th, 1901. Parker’s quick reaction had prevented Czolgosz from firing a third shot at the President, but striking a blow against the assassin was not satisfying enough for Parker. As he would later state to the Savannah Tribune, “we would have fixed him good in Georgia.” Leon Czolgosz had also been assaulted by Secret Service Agent George Foster, who wrote in his official report that the events “so enraged me, that I struck him a blow between the eyes, several of the guards caught me but upon assuring them that I was myself again, they took their hands off me.” Foster was not the only Secret Service Agent forced to check his own desires of primitive masculinity and vigilante justice against the assassin. Agent Albert Gallagher, who had received a beating moments after the shots were fired when some around the President mistook him for the assassin, submitted in his report just hours after the shooting, stating:

After seeing the President removed from the building I went to the Ante room where I found the assassin sitting on a bench with a number of people around him.

148 Goldman, Living My Life, 100.
149 “McKinley’s Colored Defender,” Savannah Tribune (September 14, 1901), 1; quoted in Eric Rauchway, Murdering McKinley: The Making of Theodore Roosevelt’s America (New York: Hill and Wang, 2003), 76.
150 George Foster, “Report prepared at request of John Wilkie,” (September 6, 1901) Buffalo, NY, page 15, Records of the U.S. Secret Service, Record Group 87, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), College Park, MD.
his nose was bleeding and he seemed to be in a dazed condition. I raised his head and took a look at him, and felt I ought to kill him, I learned he gave the name of Fred Neiman. There was a terrible crowd gathering on outside of the building threatening to lynch the villain. I told them before they took him out of the building they had better wash the blood off his face; finally a carriage arrived and the assassin was hurriedly put in it, with some city detectives, but the crowd, or mob, made a rush for the carriage and as I was assisting in getting the assassin away, not wanting him mobbed, I was compelled to draw my gun to check the mob from the side of the carriage which I was protecting.151

The Secret Service agents were clearly caught between their own personal conceptions of primitive masculinity that yearned to harm the assassin and the civilized manhood of doing their duty; in short the hard choice between personally satisfying retributive justice and their professional loyalty to the state. Once the assassin was secured in a cell at the station, the police faced the immediate necessity of defending the station from enraged mobs of citizens. Superintendent of Police William Bull noted in the annual report of the Buffalo Police Department that police reserves had to be called upon to protect the assassin:

I ordered a heavy detail of Patrolmen to report to Police Headquarters, where they patrolled and guarded. One or two demonstrations were made to break police lines, and although within the breast of every patrolman was the same feeling that existed with the excited citizens that the assassin should be summarily dealt with, they felt that the majesty of law must be upheld and that the prisoner and the property of the city would be defended at all hazards.152

Bull’s report indicates that the same inner conflict between personal desires for retributive justice and public duties to uphold law and order that was evident in the Secret Service agents was also widespread amongst police. These reports most poignantly demonstrate the tension between primitive masculinity and civilized manliness.

When President McKinley died on September 14th, spectators emptied out of the Pan-American Exposition to join crowds who surrounded the police station with an estimated ten thousand in attendance. A combined force of local police, militia, and

151 Albert Gallagher, “Report prepared at request of John Wilkie,” (September 6, 1901), Buffalo NY, pages 11-13, Records of the U.S. Secret Service, Record Group 87, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), College Park, MD.

federal troops charged the crowd repeatedly, driving it back.\textsuperscript{153} It was clear that Czolgosz’s safety was in jeopardy and that the situation had to be handled with extreme caution. After Czolgosz was sentenced to death, he was taken from the Erie County Jail under the darkness of night surrounded by seventeen guards and placed on a special train to Auburn Prison. When the train arrived at the prison at 3:15 a.m., a menacing crowd of 200 was already waiting. The guards managed to fight back the mob and pushed Czolgosz through the prison gates where he immediately collapsed. The prison physician, Dr. John Gerlin, examined the assassin and gave him a sedative before Czolgosz was dragged to his cell on death row with other condemned prisoners.

Since Czolgosz’s body was not available for vigilante justice, real and symbolic violence provided a cathartic release for many citizens. As early as two days after the President was shot, a crowd of hundreds gathered in Chicago to hang an effigy of Czolgosz from a telephone pole. Police arrived shortly after it was strung up and dispersed the crowd, taking the ravaged remains of Czolgosz’s image into custody. This spectacle repeated itself two hours later.\textsuperscript{154} The day after Czolgosz’s execution in Auburn, he was symbolically hanged in Hempstead, Long Island, when a crowd marched an effigy, made from plaster-of-paris to scale and dressed in black, to a tree in the center of town and hung the image. The representation of Czolgosz then absorbed several pistol shots before being tossed into a fire and reduced to ashes.\textsuperscript{155} Effigies of Czolgosz, however, were not the only targets of public demonstrations as reactions to the assassination of the President resonated in every corner of America. Newspapers like the \textit{New York Times} carried numerous stories documenting violence against outsiders as an enactment of citizenship. Sprinkled through orderly newspaper columns were examples of moral wrongs corrected through force. For example, Charles Richardson, the Democrat mayor of Marietta, Ohio, was throttled in a tavern for rejoicing at the President’s death. In Chicago, police narrowly saved Fred Gardner from an angry mob after he rejoiced at news of the shooting of the President. In Pittsburgh, a man who shouted “Hurrah for the man who shot McKinley” narrowly escaped an angry mob by


jumping onto a streetcar. Police officers in New York roughly handled a fellow patrolman after he had suggested that the President was to blame for his own assassination. A Presbyterian congregation in Omaha, Nebraska briefly suspended its services to ride out a man professing ‘populist’ views on a rail. A man who expressed sympathy with the President’s assassin in Casper, Wyoming found himself tarred and feathered. Mobs seized and burned hundreds of copies of The Press-Post in Columbus, Ohio after reading headlines with offensive comments about the dead President. The editor of the paper left work under heavy police guard. In Kansas City a man who had refused to march in a commemorative parade was stripped and stoned. In New York, a group of young men took it upon themselves to break up an annual Anarchist Ball. A writer for the Buffalo Express warned the police force in Chicago, where several anarchists were being held as suspected conspirators, to be on guard for incidents of vigilante justice: “The crowds were in a dangerous temper and had any of the anarchists, man or woman, been turned loose, a killing would have followed as soon as the crowd could manage it.” The reporter quoted the Chicago Chief of Police as stating: “I can sympathize with anybody who is inclined to avenge the President…. It may be necessary, however, to keep the prisoners locked up until after the President's funeral if he should die. It would be murder to turn them loose unless in the most secret manner.” These stories document but a fraction of the violent displays of primitive masculinity that were as much enactments of citizenship as they were violations of the concept of a civilized society. In covering reprisals against those who revelled in McKinley’s death, newspapers grudgingly admitted to the American populace that opposition existed, but these articles also sent a clear message to their readers about how this opposition could be resolved through collective violence.

163 “Talk of Lynching: Bitter Feeling In Chicago Against Anarchists, But The Police Will Keep The Peace,” Buffalo Express (September 14, 1901).
Even in 1908, the impulse toward collective violence was evident. After the shooting of Father Heinrichs, the *Idaho Statesman* reported that as Alia was apprehended on the steps of St. Elizabeth Catholic Church “[t]he murderer was hurriedly removed to the city jail as threats of summary justice were made by many men in the crowd which quickly gathered in front of the church.”\textsuperscript{164} In response to this display of primitive masculinity, Chief of Police Michael Delaney “called out the reserve force of patrolmen, who were kept on guard day and night.”\textsuperscript{165} The next day Deputy Sheriff Leonard Sanders stated to journalists: “The excitement in Denver was intense. A mob of fully 2,000 men had gathered around the county jail.” Alia was quickly moved out of Denver to nearby Colorado Springs because the local police “thought it best to take the man out of the city in order to avoid any possible effort at mob violence.”\textsuperscript{166}

While reading about and participating spontaneous violence against anarchists and their sympathizers were two means to counteract fears of anarchist conspiracies, public spectacles soon emerged in the capitalist marketplace to substitute the execution experience. Prior to the massive public funeral for the Haymarket anarchists, various parties tried to get their hands on their dead bodies in efforts that also bordered on spectacle. After Lingg’s suicide on November 10\textsuperscript{th}, a road show offered several thousand dollars for the privilege of displaying maimed body in a tour around the country.\textsuperscript{167} The body had been entrusted to the Engel family, who brusquely refused the offer. While attempts to produce death spectacles about the Haymarket anarchists for public consumption were unsuccessful, the execution of a Presidential assassin resulted in a much louder call for spectacles to affirm the assassin’s death, most prominently through the attempted public execution of Jumbo the Elephant and three motion picture films.

Much like President McKinley, the Pan-American Exposition and its glossy celebration of capitalist success never recovered from the assassin’s bullets. As historian Robert Rydell argues, McKinley’s death marred the illusion of limitless American progress and “exposed the ethnic and class rifts in American society,” but it “also

\textsuperscript{165} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{166} “Murderer in Springs: Priest’s Slayer Is Brought Here For Protection,” *Colorado Springs Gazette* (February 24, 1908): 1.
\textsuperscript{167} Avrich, *Haymarket Tragedy*, 315.
underscored the fundamental importance of the exposition for maintaining a shared cultural faith in American progress at a time of acute political crisis.”

Although the Exposition grounds, draped in black bunting, were a ritualistic site of mourning, they were not immune to the wrath of primitive masculinities in search of vengeance and became the scene for one of the more bizarre spectacles of death in the weeks that followed Czolgosz’s execution. On November 3rd, five days after the assassin’s death, mobs swept through the Exposition grounds. The *Buffalo Evening Post* recounted:

> People went mad. They were seized with the desire to destroy. Depredation and destruction were carried on in the boldest manner all along the Midway. Electric light bulbs were jerked from their posts and thousands of them were smashed on the ground…. Windows were shattered and doors kicked down. Policemen were pushed aside as if they were stuffed ornaments.

Superintendent Bull commented on the role of Buffalo city police in suppressing the disturbance and made excuses that the Exposition’s internal police force had “reduced its available force to numbers insufficient to cope with the very disorderly element.” Bull arrived at the Exposition grounds with a body of sixty city policemen where they “found a riotous crowd of some 2,500 men bent upon destroying everything in sight. It required but a few moments to place our men, and at twenty minutes after 1 o’clock, this turbulent element had been cleared from the grounds and order prevailed.” The civilized manhood of the Buffalo police re-established order while officials at the Pan-American Exposition began to contemplate programing that would satiate desires for a public death spectacle, and they turned to the Exposition’s Midway for their condemned criminal.

One of the jewels of the Midway was the regal elephant Rustin Singh, an animal venerated for his service in the British Army during the Indian Mutiny and decorated with the Victoria Cross. In America he was known as Jumbo II. Jumbo was the nine-ton main attraction of the Midway animal show run by Frank Bostock. The elephant

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171 Ibid.
172 “Frank C. Bostock As He Is,” *Buffalo Morning Express* (September 8, 1901); “Bostock’s Big Show,” *Buffalo Morning Express* (September 9, 1901); “Lady Hamilton Wedded In Lions’ Cage At Bostock’s,” *New York Times* (September 29, 1901).
unwittingly joined in the riot that swept through the Exposition grounds after Czolgosz’s death by knocking one of his keepers unconscious. A few days later, Jumbo attacked a second keeper, breaking his arm.\textsuperscript{173} Capitalizing on the mood of the time, Bostock began preparations for a much-needed spectacle and decided to publicly execute Jumbo in the Exposition stadium, selling tickets to the public for 50 cents a seat. Justifying his decision to the press, Bostock stated that Jumbo, was so unruly that he needed to be put down:

\begin{quote}
[He] is what is known as a “rogue” elephant. Elephants go mad in the jungle sometimes, and they become a terror to the country for miles around. A “rogue” elephant is a mad elephant, and Jumbo II is believed to be mad.\textsuperscript{174}
\end{quote}

Bostock’s arguments echoed the “misguided tool” arguments that so often accompanied explanations of anarchist violence. The zoo keeper shared his musings on how the poor creature might be killed, commenting that Jumbo “might be executed by a volley from a platoon of soldiers, but the consent of the Government would have to be obtained first” or “he will be hanged or choked to death, with chains, in which case, if the usual custom is adopted, other elephants will be used.”\textsuperscript{175} These two options seemed to speak to the tension between the civilized display of government controlled executions and the good old-fashioned public hanging in all of its primitive glory. However, after a conference with Exposition officials and a representative of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, a decision was made in keeping with the themes of the Pan-American Exposition that Jumbo would be electrocuted, as had been Czolgosz’s fate. The date of the execution was set for November 9\textsuperscript{th}, despite protests from the Humane Society.\textsuperscript{176}

\textsuperscript{173}“Keeper Attacked: Henry Mullen Was Nearly Killed by Jumbo 2d, Bostock’s Big War Elephant,” \textit{Buffalo Daily Courier} (October 31, 1901); “Unruly Elephant: Jumbo II. Attacked Keeper Miller Yesterday Afternoon, Breaking His Arm,” \textit{Buffalo Morning Express} (November 5, 1901).
\textsuperscript{174}“Jumbo Will Meet Death In Stadium,” \textit{Enquirer} (November 8, 1901); “See The Elephant Die,” \textit{Buffalo Morning Express} (November 9, 1901).
\textsuperscript{175}“Doomed to Death, Frank C. Bostock Decrees that Elephant Jumbo, Who Has Become Dangerous, Must Die,” \textit{Buffalo Commercial Advertiser} (November 7, 1901); “Jumbo II. Condemned To Die: Rustin Singh, The Famous War Elephant, Is to Be Executed Next Saturday,” \textit{Buffalo Commercial Advertiser} (November 7, 1901); “Farewell Jumbo: Bostock’s Famous War Elephant Will Be Publically Executed in Stadium,” \textit{Buffalo Commercial Advertiser} (November 8, 1901); previous elephant executions were “Tip” from New York City’s Park Zoo who had become vicious and was poisoned with huge doses of cyanide of potassium. “Jolly” one of Bostock’s animals, had been badly injured in Baltimore and was hanged by means of a steam derrick. Bostock briefly entertained the idea of having three lions fight Jumbo to the death in the Exposition Stadium, “To The Jungle, Jumbo: Adgie’s Lions are Coming to Make a Sunday Dinner Off Your Frail Frame,” \textit{Buffalo Morning Express} (November 10, 1901).
\textsuperscript{176}“Jumbo Dies Today: Many Objections to the Public Execution of the Bad Elephant: Killing Will Be Humane: But Some Persons Think an Open Spectacle Would Not Be Edifying,” \textit{Buffalo Morning Express}
Over seven thousand people came out to view the spectacle of death. Bostock gave a short speech commenting on Jumbo’s military career, his long journey from Africa to America, and the difficulty in adjusting to his new life as part of the animal show in a foreign land, concluding that the elephant’s experience “had completely altered Jumbo’s sanity. He was a killer and death by electrocution was the only solution.” Bostock’s speech closely mirrored themes of foreignness and insanity that were circulated in the press about the perpetrators of anarchist violence.

Although neither Bostock nor Exposition officials explicitly made the link between Jumbo and Czolgosz’s executions, the parallels were too overt for the audience to have been missed the connection. Eleven days after the body of McKinley’s assassin had absorbed 1,700 volts of electricity, a similar current raced along a wire attached to Jumbo’s leg at the same venue as the assassination. Spectators looked on at the troubling scene of the wired elephant, who stood transfixed with down-turned eyes. The onlookers held their breath in a collective morbid fascination, but nothing happened. The Buffalo Daily Courier reported that the “current did not do more than tickle him…. If Jumbo had been invested with the power of laughing he probably would have laughed.” The Buffalo Morning Express reported that “the crowd began to joke the electricians and cheer the elephant” as they collected their refunds and dispersed from the Pan-American Exposition.

Bostock thus commuted Jumbo’s death sentence, and the animal trainer moved his show on to Charleston and then to Baltimore. While Bostock was

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180 “Where does Bostock Go?” Buffalo Morning Express (October 6, 1901); “Bostock To Go To Baltimore: Animal King Will Go Back There After The Pan-American Exposition is Over,” Buffalo Daily Courier (October 6, 1901). The first elephant to be successfully executed by electrocution was Topsy, a Coney Island circus elephant who was condemned to death in 1903. Her owners proposed hanging her from a scaffold with a huge rope and pulley, but the ASPCA objected. Instead, Topsy was fitted with copper-lined wooden sandals on her right front and back left legs, and the sandals were wired to a dynamo at the local Edison lighting plant. Before a Sunday crowd of 1,500 people, 6,000 volts of electricity stiffened Topsy before she crashed to the ground dead. Cameramen from the Edison Manufacturing Company
unsuccessful in his attempt to glean a profit from the public’s demand for a death spectacle involving the assassin, others would be more fortunate in this market, particularly the Edison Manufacturing Company.

In addition to the Edison films that had documented William McKinley’s funeral, the Edison Manufacturing Company produced three films in connection with the assassination and execution. On September 6th, 1901 a camera crew situated outside the Temple of Music waited for a shot of the President at the public reception. The crew started filming as word of the assassination attempt rippled through the Exposition grounds. From their particular vantage point behind the crowd, the camera lens captured a circular panorama that allowed audiences to witness a slow silent pan of the crowd with their backs turned toward the camera. It is difficult to gauge the emotion of the crowd, but clearly visible in the film is a man with a thick mustache and bowler hat who turns to look directly into the camera lens and smile. The film was copyrighted under the title *The Mob Outside the Temple of Music at the Pan-American Exposition*. Media scholar Jonathan Auerbach argues that,

> By using the highly charged term ‘mob’ to describe the scene, Edison is clearly drawing a parallel between the anarchism of Czolgosz, the intended effect of his action, and the subsequent chaotic reaction of the panicked crowd, who begin calling for the lynching of the assassin…. The term mob may apply to the potential audiences who would watch this film as well as the crowd depicted within it, then the anxiety of Edison’s filmmakers to control the responses of the masses becomes all the more urgent.

From the choice of the film title, the Edison Manufacturing Company was marketing their film within recognizable vigilante traditions, but Edison went one step further bring the private execution to a wider audience.

While the *Mob* film enjoyed moderate success, the most widely consumed cinematic death spectacle came in the form of another Edison film, *The Execution of* __________

caught the execution on film, Mark Essig writes, “as with the Czolgosz film, *Electrocution of an Elephant* was distributed across the country and watched by thousands of viewers eager to see the killing power of electricity.” Mark Essig, *Edison and the Electric Chair: A Story of Light and Death* (New York: Walker and Company, 2003), 279; *Electrocuting an Elephant* (New York: Thomas A. Edison, 12 January 1903), the film was first advertised in the *New York Clipper* (January 17, 1903), 1052, as *Electrocution of the Baby Elephant, ‘Topsy,’* although Topsy was more than thirty years old.


182 Auerbach, “McKinley at Home,” 819.
Historian of early film Charles Musser notes that “executions were still considered a form of entertainment by some turn-of-the-century Americans, and had been popular film subjects during the novelty of cinema.” Motivated in part by the large numbers of people who were denied the opportunity to witness the execution, a camera crew approached Auburn Prison the morning of the planned death and offered $2,000 to film Czolgosz entering the death chamber. Warden Mead, however, held true to his policy of depriving the assassin of any notoriety and rejected their request. The persistent film crew shot a panorama of the exterior of Auburn prison before returning to Edison’s recently completed studio in New York City to stage a re-enactment of the execution based on newspaper accounts. The end product was half truth and half fiction and reached vaudeville stages and theatre houses by early November. The film was shot from the perspective of a witness to the events and the spectacle that the film evoked served to validate the death of the assassin and gave thousands of people the chance to participate in Czolgosz’s destruction. As Richard Porton notes, this film had “a peculiarly cathartic value inasmuch as it reignited Americans’ pleasure at one representative of the anarchist peril being extinguished.”

There was a satisfaction and safety in watching the film. When the clicking of the projector ended, the audience found themselves safely back in the theatre; the spectacle had been a solemn display of civilized manhood and once it was over they could all go home. As Mark Essig writes, this film also served to validate Edison’s support of capital punishment inflicted by the electric chair by bringing “alive the fantasy of the quick,

183 Execution of Czolgosz with Panorama of Auburn Prison (New York: Thomas A. Edison, 9 November 1901); the film was first advertised in the New York Clipper (November 16, 1901), 832; described in the Edison catalogue as: “The picture is in three scenes. First: Panoramic view of Auburn Prison taken the morning of the electrocution. The picture then dissolves into the corridor of murderer’s row. The keepers are seen taking Czolgosz from his cell to the death chamber. The scene next dissolves into the death chamber, and shows State Electrician, Wardens and Doctors making a final test of the chair. Czolgosz is then brought in by the guard and is quickly strapped into the chair. The current is turned on at a signal from the Warden, and the assassin heaves heavily as though the straps would break. He drops prone after the current is turned off. The doctors examine the body and report to the Warden that he is dead, and he in turn officially announces the death to the witnesses.” Edison Films, (September 1902), 91; cited in: Musser, Before Nickelodeon, 188.
184 Musser, Before Nickelodeon, 187.
clean death that supporters of the electric chair had long promoted, while omitting the gruesome details that marked real electrocutions."

The combined success of the Mob and Execution films prompted the Edison Manufacturing Company to develop a third film. The company originally toyed with the idea of recreating the assassination at the Temple of Music but then “thought better of it.” Instead, a film under the title The Martyred Presidents was produced to show still photographs of Lincoln, Garfield, and McKinley fade in and out, framed by the static image of a monument. The second shot showed the assassin kneeling before the throne of justice. As Jonathan Auerbach writes, all of these early films, as well as the films documenting McKinley’s funeral, “helped to restore rules of order by visually organizing figures and space within the frame along familiar lines.” Each of these three films fulfilled a separate role in the process of the public’s coming to grips with the death of the president and his assassin: Mob demonstrated the anxiety over the moment of the assassination, Execution validated the violence of the assassin’s death, and Martyred exhibited the solidity of American governance while it endured loss and maintained justice.

Much like the film, The Execution of Czolgosz with Panorama of Auburn Prison, public knowledge of anarchists’ executions and deaths were a combination of truth and fiction. Since few were allowed to witness the executions, sensationalized narratives of anarchists’ deaths fed the violent desires of primitive masculinity within the orderly columns of newspapers, like the New York Times, and the civilized manhood of its readership. Vigilante violence, like anarchist violence, had the potential to undermine public confidence in the authority of the state. The appearance of symbolic death spectacles in popular culture, like the attempted execution of Jumbo the elephant, the lynching of symbolic effigies, and the Edison films, could either act as a cathartic release that pacified the primitive masculinity of unruly citizens or as a catalysts to further violence that required police intervention to control public dissidence. Nonetheless, these

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186 Essig, Edison and the Electric Chair, 279.
187 A French film company, Pathe, did recreate the assassination; however, copies of this film are no longer available. Cited in: Musser, Before Nickelodeon, 187, 518 fn 85; Auerbach, “McKinley at Home,” 818, fn 72.
188 The Martyred Presidents (New York: Thomas A. Edison, 7 October 1901).
189 Auerbach, “McKinley at Home,” 820.
spectacles, which offered varying levels of participation and represented different segments of society, demonstrated how public spectacles could soothe tensions and reaffirm social relations in the wake of acts of anarchist violence. While acts of anarchist violence were intended to weaken the social cohesion of industrial capitalism, the public displays of mourning for their victims, the highly controlled executions of anarchists, and the vigilante violence all served to counteract the Propaganda by Deed.

**Conclusion**

Public displays of mourning for the victims of anarchist violence demonstrated how state officials developed rituals to reaffirm social order following the chaos of perceived anarchist terrorist attacks. While these rituals were initially muted in the 1886 police funerals, they played an increasingly prominent role in the years that followed, particularly in the veneration of William McKinley, Frank Steunenberg, and Leo Heinrichs. The combined effect of these rituals of mourning gave the public a chance to participate in a series of shared experiences that emphasized social cohesion. In contrast, when suspects were executed, state actors did so through a highly controlled and private spectacle of violence intended to punish the criminal while depriving him of any notoriety. In an effort to deter future acts of anarchist terror, the violence of executions was made public through newspapers that elaborated on the suffering of the condemned men. However, the rituals of mourning and public funeral for the Haymarket anarchists demonstrated that control over the condemned men’s bodies was essential, and the 1887 events were a learning experience for both state officials and the anarchist movement. After the Haymarket funeral, state officials did everything in their power to disrupt the rituals of mourning that followed the execution of anarchists, while anarchists repeatedly tried to rob the state of its vengeance by taking their own lives. The anarchist body was incarcerated and executed in relative isolation as state officials, concerned with the maintenance of social order, appealed to a civilized manliness, but citizens themselves often sought their own form of emotional outlets. Vigilantism flourished as both real and symbolic acts against anarchists and their sympathizers demonstrated citizens’ desires to take matters into their own hands to re-establish social order through a primitive masculinity.
Thus, narratives of punishment extracted from the anarchist body were echoed by violent performances of citizenship. That these violent dramas were enacted primarily between men and among men should not escape our view. The healing of these terrorist wounds on the social body that had been caused by anarchist violence required the soothing balm of re-established gender constructions that valorized the victims while emasculating the assassins. Michael Kimmel argues that “masculinity was increasingly an act, a form of public display; that men felt themselves on display at virtually all times; and that the intensity of the need for such display was increasing.”\footnote{Michael S. Kimmel, \textit{Manhood in America: A Cultural History} (New York: Free Press, 1996), 100.} McKinley and Steunenberg were celebrated in print as venerated displays of civilized manhood, while likewise the Chicago police officers, Shippy, and Frick were all celebrated for their bravery in the face of peril. However, the primitive side of masculinity that embraced violence was also on display. Gender Historian Elliot Gorn suggests that “men tolerated violence – created violence – because high death rates, horrible accidents, and senseless acts of brutality were a psychological burden that only stoicism or bravado helped lighten.”\footnote{Elliot J. Gorn, \textit{The Manly Art: Bare-Knuckle Prize Fighting in America} (Ithaca, NY: Cornell Press, 1996), 144.} Contemporary observer and economist George E. Barnett warned of growing violence in labor relations by 1906: “We must remember that violence is largely an imitative process. Like crimes of other kinds, such as lynching, one set of violence leads someone else to commit another act.”\footnote{Nicholas P. Gilman, George E. Barnett, W. B. Prescott, “Violence in Strikes – Discussion,” \textit{Publications of the American Economic Association} 7:1 (February 1906): 212.} In an era in which “Judge Lynch” presided over many corners of the United States, the press accentuated xenophobic fears by devoting extensive coverage to popular demonstrations against anarchists and their sympathizers. Such acts of violence were grounded in a sense of national honor. As Gorn describes conceptions of manliness at the turn of the century, “only acts of valor, especially violent retribution, expunged the sense of shame, proved one’s mettle, and reasserted one’s claim to honor.”\footnote{Gorn, \textit{Manly Art}, 143.} The evidence from this chapter suggests that the disappearance of public executions was a contested and protracted transition within the persistent phenomenon of American vigilante justice. Yet, one cannot discount the real and symbolic service that
vigilante violence offered as an outlet of primitive masculinity in reaffirming national honor.\textsuperscript{194}

Yet, anarchists also attempted to use gendered language to clarify the honor in their violent deeds. Where Gail Bederman suggests that, “manliness was a standard to live up to, an ideal of male perfectibility to be achieved,”\textsuperscript{195} manliness became for anarchist martyrs a standard to die for, an ideal that could only be achieved through death and ascension to martyrdom. Alexander Berkman was among the most outspoken proponents of this view, undoubtedly because he did not die as a result of his Propaganda by Deed. In his 1912 memoir, published after his release from prison, Berkman recalled the exhilarating summer of 1892, when “The People, the workers of America, have joyously acclaimed the rebellious manhood of Homestead.” When Berkman met a Homestead striker in prison, he gushed, “how proud I should be in his place: to have fought on the barricades, as he did! And then to die for it, - ah could there be a more glorious fate for a man, a real man?”\textsuperscript{196} However, at the very moment when Berkman was attempting to reinsert the primitive masculinity of the anarchist back into the cultural imagination of America, this project was being contested. Berkman asked the Socialist author Jack London to write a preface for the first edition of \textit{Prison Memoirs}, but was shocked to read the first draft:

How can a type of man, too unpractical to be able to kill another man at point blank range with a modern revolver, too unpractical to be able to kill himself with a successfully concealed capsule of modern poison – how can such a type of man be able to build another social order, establish a radically new & working relationship between the millions of common men & women?\textsuperscript{197}

Berkman sought out another author to write the preface for his autobiography, but London’s comments shed some light on how Propaganda by Deed was interpreted


\textsuperscript{195} Bederman, \textit{Manliness & Civilization}, 27.

\textsuperscript{196} Berkman, \textit{Prison Memoirs}, 7, 57.

through a gendered lens on the Left outside of anarchist circles. Berkman’s positioning of manliness struggled to coexist within the shifting ideals of masculinity that were used to contrast the honest and upright citizen with the foreign, dangerous other. Thus, in the period under consideration for this dissertation, middle- and upper-class professionals, with the power and media outlets to broadcast their messages, emphasized the appropriate masculinity of the victims of anarchist violence and vilified the anarchist perpetrators as their polar opposite.
Conclusion
Reverberations of the Anarchist Project of Propaganda by Deed

This dissertation has investigated the phenomenon of anarchist violence in the form of Propaganda by Deed, both real and alleged, in the wake of the second industrial revolution. More than simply increasing manufacturing productivity and reshaping the consumer market, that revolution also resulted in strained relations between workers and employers. As a result, the Gilded Age and Progressive Era were marked by repeated labor unrest that was occasionally accentuated by assassinations and bombings. Foregrounding the perspective of those who willingly participated in these violent acts, as well as reactions from journalists, police, legislators, and other social elites, I have argued that middle- and upper-class professionals rewrote the meaning of anarchist violence along gendered and class lines to emphasise the foreignness of the violence and its perpetrators to the United States. Although historian Robert Wiebe never mentions the anarchist scare of 1908 in his analytical survey of American society from 1877 to 1920, *The Search for Order*, he does note that increasing social and political tensions were widely visible in American society:

Straws in the wind appeared everywhere around 1908. Critics who had only grumbled about national reform now cried “socialism” and “communism.” Organized labor received particularly heavy abuse, with each hint of violence reported as the first gun of civil war…. As always, a rising curve of antiradicalism immediately affected attitudes toward the immigrant. ¹

Thus, while it is possible for historians to omit direct references to the brutal and dramatic anarchist violence that has been described in this manuscript, it remains impossible to ignore the reverberations of those acts of terror as they influenced and reshaped American society at large. The influence of social elites, industrialists, police and military forces, and agents of the news on the American public was undeniable. Bringing to light the complicated history of the role that anarchist violence played in public debates, state formation and popular culture has been a main aim of this dissertation. Thus, what the evidence has shown is that the fear of anarchy was partly due to its unknown nature, which gave a distinct advantage to perpetrators of anarchist violence. In addition, anarchist ideology was particularly dreaded because, by advocating

atheism, anarchism, and collectivism, this revolutionary movement declared war on God, the State, and private property, in short, the very foundations of civilization.

Anarchists were particularly feared because they did not adhere to American conceptions of civilization. Most immigrants did not arrive in the New World with American attitudes regarding racial difference, and recent studies of immigrant anarchist periodicals have demonstrated sharp criticisms against the nationalistic racial imagination of the United States. For example, Salvatore Salerno argues that “the activism of Italian immigrant anarchists problematizes our understanding of the racialization process…. The anarchist press in Paterson contains the most sustained and detailed critique of race in the United States.”

Further at odds with American traditions, historian Nunzio Pernicone argues that anarchists were considered dangerous because they “rejected electoral politics and espoused direct revolutionary action, [which] had a natural appeal for immigrants eager to transform the world as soon as possible.”

Many anarchists focused on union organization and workers’ issues, particularly propaganda that advocated a class conflict. This solution was largely incompatible with the “pure and simple unionism” of Samuel Gompers and the American Federation of Labor – a non-political bread-and-butter form of union action predicated on the assumption of compatible goals between skilled workers and managers. Bruce Nelson notes, in his study of working-class movements in Chicago, that anarchists played a key role in attempts toward integration “by trying to unite across the ethnic, skill, sexual, and craft lines that fragmented the city’s working class.”

The symbolism of anarchist violence, correspondingly, was yet another way to engage a multi-ethnic work force in a politics of class. However, even though immigrants may not have started with American conceptions of race, they were immediately compelled to fit themselves into the existing racial hierarchy. Immigrant communities often bore the brunt of reactions to anarchist violence despite, as Chapter Two

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demonstrated, publicly recoiling from these acts and denouncing anarchists as unrepresentative of their ethnic cultures.

One of the reasons that contemporary investigators had such a hard time finding the roots of anarchists’ activities was that unlike a strike or mass protest, the act of assassination or bombing was not a moment of labor solidarity, but rather often caused schisms in the labor movement and amongst anarchists themselves. This dramatically complicated and fragmented interpretations of these acts, for their contemporaries and ours, since even within radical circles dissenting explanations clouded the intended meaning of anarchist outrages. Radical anarchists from a century ago were also working through their own version of a complicated morality over the validity of individual acts of terror. For anarchists, the morality of revolutionary violence was moored to retributive justice. However, consensus on when this violence would be effective was contested. Anarchists in America throughout this period, particularly prominent figures like Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman, found themselves thinking through action and questioning the usefulness of politically motivated violence in the context of what they saw as a flawed democratic government in the United States while also defending and critiquing the violent crimes that were associated with the anarchist movement.

The opening chapter of this dissertation set the stage for anarchist violence in America within the context of a perceived class war; a war that was enacted between increasingly exploitative industrialists and the slippery slope of upward and downward class mobility during the desiccation of labor and corresponding decline in wages and standards of living. Although terrorist violence was a response to the larger structural violence perpetrated by capitalists, the economist H. M. Gitelman notes: “The decision to discipline employees by defeating them in a strike was often premised upon the employer’s view that his workers had no substantial grievances but were being misled by ‘outside agitators’... [which] serves to mask the basic issue of whether those in positions of power are or are not prepared to acknowledge the existence of legitimate grievances.”5 Anarchist violence allowed employers to continue to make these claims, since their terrorism was frequently attributed to foreign radicals who were out of step with

America’s march towards progress. Thus, one of the reverberations of anarchist violence was that it enabled employers to convince themselves and others that workers had no real grievances and, therefore, did not need protection from unions or welfare legislation from the state. Industrialists also used fears of anarchist violence to further their own claims to state resources, to protect their property, and to maintain free access to the labor markets. In anticipation of labor trouble, employers could call on the municipal police forces to maintain order, privately funded guards to supplement local authorities, and, if the conflict escalated, the full power of the State in the form of the National Guard or regular Army troops. Yet, the particular problems of anarchist violence challenged the legitimacy of all of these organizations.

Although anarchism was a transnational movement, and its adherents in the United States were largely immigrants, the evidence clearly shows that, contrary to persistent mythologies about American exceptionalism, many of the participants in this movement embraced anarchist doctrines only after arriving on American shores and experiencing the turbulent industrial relations of this period. This is true of many of the most well-known names in American anarchist history—including six of the seven Haymarket defendants, Emma Goldman, Alexander Berkman, Rose Pesotta, Carlo Tresca, Nicola Sacco, and Bartolomeo Vanzetti—as well as many rank-and-file anarchists. Although several contemporary mainstream commentators attributed the violence to foreigners, it was the precarious transition to industrialization that contributed most to the development of an anarchist ideology and the emergence of anarchist terror in

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the United States. Not random and chaotic acts of destruction, an examination of anarchists’ calculated actions is important to unravelling the logic of their use of violence as propaganda. Thus, this dissertation has traced anarchist violence following labor historian Herbert Gutman’s challenge that “the little-understood violence [of this period] had specific purposes and was the product of long-standing grievances that accompanied the transformation into New America.” Contextualizing anarchist terror within labor unrest in the Gilded Age and Progressive Era demonstrates that the violence had political motivations.

While we have seen the violence in American industrial relations and the retaliatory acts of terrorism throughout this dissertation, Chapter Two offered telling evidence of how the police and other law enforcement agencies turned these anarchist acts that were often perpetrated by lone individuals into a hunt for wider conspiracies. While police investigators were often unable to substantiate claims of large-scale conspiracies after the Haymarket bombing, examples of sympathy for anarchism among military men in 1892 and 1908 struck fear into those who fought to suppress the anarchist peril. After Pennsylvania National Guard private William Iams was strung up by this thumbs and dishonourably discharged in 1892 for his declaration of “Three cheers for the man who shot Frick!” he pressed charges against his commanding officers for aggravated assault and battery and conspiracy to libel and slander. What was at stake in the trial, which began on October 27th, was whether or not the National Guard had the freedom to discipline its members unchecked by outside intervention. Attorneys for the arraigned officers argued that they were not answerable to civil courts and requested trial by military tribunal according to the provisions of the April 1887 National Guard Act. However, Judge Porter ruled in Iams’ favour on the point of jurisdiction, stating:

We are not prepared to say that because a man belongs to the National Guard he is outside of the jurisdiction of this or any other court of the state. If a military

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commander exceeds his duty or goes beyond his authority he is amenable to the civil courts for results of such acts. 10

The National Guard, defending its officers, argued, “when the army is in the face of the enemy the regulations and articles of war are thrown aside.” 11 Defense attorneys argued that the penalty inflicted upon Iams was deemed necessary to preserve military discipline since the town of Homestead was in a state of rebellion when Iams made his cheer for the attack on Frick. His utterances could have created mutiny and officers were bound by military law to promptly punish mutiny. 12 At his trial, Iams ended his testimony with a statement to the jury that acknowledged the class divide of the citizen-soldiers who protected the republic:

A conviction will not prevent men from enlisting as privates; and there will always be found men willing to serve as generals, colonels, captains, lieutenants and corporals at the fat salaries paid. But shall the little rope you saw here yesterday be put in a glass case alongside the thumbscrew and other implements of torture used in the past ages. 13

At the centre of the trial was the difficult questions of how civilized would the citizen-soldiers of the state be, particularly in a historical moment where they were called on to resolve labor unrest that could easily turn to savage violence. After nine days in court, the National Guard officers were acquitted of all charges on Saturday November 5 th , since the judge and jury were satisfied that whether or not the punishment inflicted on Iams fit the crime, military law was permitted to inflict its own punishment on its subjects. 14 What the conclusion of Iams’ story offers to this present analysis of Propaganda by Deed was that both within American society at large and among its military members, anarchist

13 “With the Jury: Verdict in the Famous Iams Case Expected This Morning,” Pittsburgh Commercial Gazette (November 5, 1892): 3.
sympathies would not be tolerated, and the reprimand of these sympathizers had full state support.

Yet, Iams was not the last anarchist sympathizer to turn up in military uniform. Following the media hysteria of the anarchist scare of 1908, William Buwalda, an army private stationed in San Francisco, decided to attend an anarchist meeting to practice his short hand. Although he arrived with the preconception that the speaker, Emma Goldman, was a crank, as he took notes on her speech, Goldman’s words began to make a lot of sense to him. At the end of the meeting, Buwalda, in uniform, made his way to the front of the lecture hall and shook her hand. For this, he was court martialed and sentenced to five years in prison, as his act was immediately considered an “offence against the flag and army.”15 While not as physically brutal or socially ostracising as Iams’ punishment in 1892, it was clear that authorities were deeply concerned about anarchist infiltration of their institutions of law, order, and social control. In the light of Buwalda’s fifteen-year record in the army, he was given a dishonourable discharge and pardoned by President Roosevelt after spending 10 months in jail. However, upon his release Buwalda promptly returned the medal he had received for service in the Philippines because the decoration was a reminder of “war-legalized murder… upon a weak defenceless people.”16 He joined the anarchist movement and was later arrested with Emma Goldman in San Francisco in January 1909.17 Punishing Buwalda for the simple act of shaking hands with an anarchist coupled with his defection to the anarchist movement seemed to substantiate fears that the anarchist peril might infect reputable citizens of American society. By 1908, the problem of internal security against anarchist violence persisted to the point that a regiment of soldiers, which had been scheduled to deploy to the Philippines, was ordered to remain in the U.S. because President Roosevelt and Secretary of War Taft feared serious labor and anarchist rioting might break out. Taft

publicly called for increased military appropriations in case “the forces of anarchy, socialism and revolt against the organized government should manifest themselves.”

But despite the widespread efforts of municipal, state and federal agencies to track and suppress radical groups, terrorist violence in industrial relations continued through the second decade of the twentieth century. On October 1\textsuperscript{st}, 1910, the vehemently anti-labor \textit{Los Angeles Times} Building was bombed, killing 21 people. James and Joseph McNamara were arrested and eventually plead guilty to the bombing.\textsuperscript{19} On May 1\textsuperscript{st}, 1914, Marie Ganz led a crowd to the private residence of John D. Rockefeller in an attempt to assassinate the industrialist in retribution for the Ludlow Massacre inBolder, Colorado and on July 4\textsuperscript{th}, 1914, a bomb under construction for Rockefeller’s private residence exploded prematurely, destroying a tenement building in New York and killing three anarchists: Arthur Caron, Carl Hanson, and Charles Berg.\textsuperscript{20} On July 22\textsuperscript{nd}, 1916, a bomb thrown into the Preparedness Parade in San Francisco killed eight and wounded 40; labor organizers Thomas Mooney and Warren Billings were framed for the resulting deaths.\textsuperscript{21} As violent attacks continued, justification for growing and emerging federal agencies of surveillance also expanded.

As much as the Spanish-American War offered a boon for the Secret Service, it was the United States’ involvement in World War One and attendant concerns about espionage and subversion that spurred the Bureau of Investigation’s expansion, both in size and activity. By 1917, the Bureau was still subcontracting some surveillance work to

\textsuperscript{18} Goldstein, “Anarchist Scare of 1908,” 71.
\textsuperscript{20} Marie Ganz, \textit{Rebels: Into Anarchy and Out Again} (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1919).
private detectives but, far from being dependent on the Secret Service, Bureau operatives had in several respects supplanted the Treasury men as the eyes and ears of Washington. Under Attorney General A. Mitchell Palmer, who took office in March 1919, the expansion of the Bureau of Investigation accelerated, supplementing the work of immigration officials, postal inspectors, and treasury investigators. At war’s end, the number of Bureau agents approached six hundred. Assigned to branches throughout the country, they demonstrated a continued preoccupation with the threat of anarchist violence.22

While a new institution of law, order, and social control developed in part around fears of anarchist violence – as well as of other forms of radicalism, espionage, and wartime subversion – so too did new legislative solutions to these social ills. Chapter Three argued that court cases emphasised the foreignness of defendants while subsequent laws focused on the suppression of speech and assembly, greater control over immigration and naturalization, and the utility of deportation as a more malleable administrative tools than court cases to shape the national character. As the United States entered the First World War, the federal government built on state-level anti-anarchy laws to develop new legislation for stifling dissenting voices, particularly the Espionage Act of 1917 and the Sedition Act of 1918.23


The Espionage Act of 1917 provided penalties of $10,000 fine and twenty years’ imprisonment for any person who conveyed “false reports or false statements” with the intent of interfering with the operation of American Armed Forces or of contributing to the success of America’s enemies. The same penalties applied to anyone who attempted “to cause insubordination, disloyalty, mutiny, or refusal of duty” in the Armed Forces. The Sedition Act of 1918 provided for the similar treatment of persons who uttered, printed, wrote, or published “any disloyal, profane, scurrilous, or abusive language about the form of government of the United States, or the Constitution of the United States, or the uniform of the Army or Navy of the United States, or any language intended to… encourage resistance to the United States, or to promote the cause of its enemies.” Eldridge Foster Dowell, *A History of Criminal Syndicalism* (Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins Press, 1939), 17.
The clearest demonstration of the changing government role in suppressing dissenting voices can be seen in the contrast between the Spanish-American War of 1898 and the entry of the United States into World War One in 1917. During the Spanish-American War and the brutal suppression of the Filipino insurrection, protests against American war policies met virtually no government suppression. Both the anarchist Emma Goldman and socialist leader Eugene Debs delivered speeches in protest of American imperialist foreign policy without reprisal. Twenty years later, for saying virtually the same things in opposition to World War I, Debs was sent to jail and Goldman was deported to revolutionary Russia along with Alexander Berkman and 249 other undesirables.  

Although exclusion of anarchists was ineffective in suppressing recurring terrorist violence between McKinley’s assassination and 1917, the anti-anarchist laws that were established in the first decade of the twentieth century laid the groundwork for the mass deportation of alien radicals during the post-World War I Red Scare.  

By 1920, the Joint Legislative Committee Investigating Seditious Activities for the State of New York concluded, “One of the most effective means of dealing with aliens resident in this country who urge the violent, forcible or unlawful overthrow of the institutions of this government, or of organized government elsewhere, is deportation.”  

Perhaps a more enduring legacy of the legislative approach to anarchist violence is evident in the Immigration Act of 1924.  

The long-term conflation of anarchism with foreignness and the short-term impact of the Red Scare, which reached near panic with

renewed anarchist bombings in 1919-1920, helped to push immigration restriction forward and to shape its racial contours. The 1924 Act echoed the findings of the 1910 Dillingham Commission by establishing a quota system that privileged Orchard’s Western European roots, and placed severe restrictions on Berkman’s, Czolgosz’s, Alia’s, Averbuch’s, and Silverstein’s Eastern and Southern European migration streams, effectively cutting off the possibility of the influx of new recruits from their homelands.

Chapter Four investigated the contrast between public rituals of mourning that were enacted for the victims of anarchist violence and the private deaths of the condemned perpetrators behind prison walls. However, anarchists also mourned their comrades with monuments and gravesites, but, more powerfully, they remembered them in the written word and across their propaganda networks. The cultural legacy of the execution of the Haymarket anarchists permitted those who perpetuated violent acts, like Alexander Berkman, Leon Czolgosz, Giuseppe Alia, and Selig Silverstein to envision themselves as folk heroes, participating in the nobility of sacrifice for the anarchist cause and fully understanding that where their lives ended, propaganda began. Propaganda by Deed was a revolutionary sacrifice that could avenge the working class, frighten the bourgeoisie, result in their own martyrdom, and then serve as further propaganda for the movement. By attacking a representative of the oppressors, anarchists expected to focus the nation’s attention on this subjugation and then trigger a series of other violent acts that would eventually culminate in revolution. An unforeseen by-product of Propaganda by Deed, however, was that it allowed other crimes to be linked to or obscured by anarchism, such as Harry Orchard’s murder of Frank Steunenberg that he attempted to pin on the WFM28 and Police Chief George Shippy’s accidental slaying of Lazarus Averbuch because he “looked like an anarchist.”29 Just as anarchists could inscribe their own meaning on their and their comrades’ actions, so too social elites, who could call on the full power of the state and the mass circulation press, were able to twist and distort fears of anarchist violence for their own ends. Yet, police, court officials, legislators, and journalists soon found themselves caught up in the very culture of fear they helped to create.

When viewed altogether, one can also see how approaches to dealing with the specific threat of the anarchist peril in the United States quickly evolved between 1886 and 1908. Authorities increasingly turned away from a language of class war to interpret these events as nothing but lawless anarchy imported by evil foreigners who wanted to disrupt the natural harmony of class relations in republican America. Through a process of trial and error, police, lawyers, and legislators, with the assistance of journalists, attempted to control reactions to anarchist violence while punishing the alleged perpetrators; but they also discovered that maintaining this control was a highly contested process that needed to be monitored carefully if the “right” message was going to prevail. Thus, middle- and upper-class professionals made strenuous efforts to silence anarchists through the trial process and secluded them in a captivity that was regulated by the police and prisons. With the bodies of anarchists controlled by state officials and executed in private, the public’s fury at their detached and sometimes nonexistent experiences of these events often led to violent enactments of citizenship that indirectly challenged the authority of the state as the arbitrator of justice. For those in positions of influence, fear of anarchist violence was used to establish boundaries against outsiders and to subdue, nationalize, or vanquish internal opponents of the national project. In the end, anarchism provided a useful and predictable rhetorical tool for Progressive policies such as immigration restriction, increased policing powers, suppression of civil liberties, and other measures that historian Gary Gerstle has deemed “the nasty work that building a national community entails.”

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30 Gerstle concludes, “Our history suggests that building a national community depends on repression and exclusion…. Numerous groups, even anarchists, have served as examples of the “other” against whom “we” have defined our Americaness; a qualification for immigrants to embrace whiteness is the rejection of a primordial uncivilized radicalism.” Gary Gerstle, “Liberty, Coercion, and the Making of Americans,” *Journal of American History* 84 (September 1997): 555.
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