Women, whereas others created black-owned businesses. They “created new opportunities” while making themselves “less dependent on whites or the Tuskegee machine.” By the time Washington died in 1915, she concludes, such efforts “had already made parts of the debate obsolete.”

While Moore tries to be evenhanded, stressing important areas of agreement between Washington and Du Bois rather than their sharp differences of opinion over education and the advisability of demanding equal political rights, the preponderance of her evidence tells a different story. Describing Washington’s reaction to Du Bois’s 1903 essay “Of Booker T. Washington and Others” and to the “so-called Boston riot” that July engineered by William Monroe Trotter, Moore characterizes the Wizard of Tuskegee as vengeful and primarily concerned with preserving his personal power. Although she does not make Washington’s obsession with silencing his critics an explicit theme, almost every major incident she describes between 1903 and 1912 tells that same story. Given the pivotal role played by Du Bois’s 1903 essay in galvanizing opposition to Washington’s policies, Moore owes her reader an explanation for not including at least extended excerpts from it in the “Documents in the Case” section of her book. This reviewer would also be inclined to fault her for omitting any mention in this connection of Du Bois’s poignant accusation that “Mr. Washington’s program practically accepts the alleged inferiority of the Negro races.”

In this reviewer’s estimation, Professor Moore’s study of efforts at racial uplift would be most useful as required reading in an advanced high school or college-level survey of African American history. Its clear prose and richly textured portraits of Washington, Du Bois, and other important figures of the day make it a pleasure to read and easy to understand. On the other hand, its length and the cost of the cloth edition limit the possibilities for assigning it as a supplement to the textbook in a survey of United States history.

Pembroke Hill School

Carl Schulkin


The goal of The Voice of the People is to present primary sources and critical thinking questions on workers, industrial relations, and working class life in British North America and the United States from 1620 to the present. Covering this large span and employing a thematic approach, labor historians Jonathan Rees and Jonathan Pollack have selected a number of interesting and useful sources. However, these
choices also leave serious gaps, at times create a lack of focus, and weaken its potential appeal for U.S. history instructors.

Rees and Pollack divide the book into four parts: to 1877, 1877–1914, 1914–1945, and 1945–present. Within each part, the authors organize the documents into three themes: “Work and Labor/Management Relations,” “The Union Movement,” and “Working Class Culture.” Each part begins with a short essay to establish context and a header accompanies each document. Three questions come at the end of each document, which could be used as a basis for discussion and for writing assignments.

There are some useful and interesting documents in this reader. For example, in the pre-1877 section, students would be able to find documents discussing indentured servitude, slavery, textile work at Lowell, and union organizing among cordwainers. Other examples in the post–1877 period include documents on child labor, prostitution, steelworkers, female factory work during WW II, migrant labor, and wage work in the fast food industry. Rees and Pollack also cover McCarthyism and note how the civil rights and women’s movements intersected with labor relations.

But unfortunately the weaknesses outweigh the strengths. Brevity allows for only a few examples. The pre–1877 section includes nothing on, about, or from Native Americans; nor do the authors include documents on the Spanish or French experience. There is one document addressing Western labor, an essay by Mark Twain on Chinese workers. In the 1877 to 1914 period, a major weakness is that women show up more as subjects, not as active agents of union leadership or working class culture. The authors do provide one document on prostitution. Beyond women, the section ignores Populism and African American organizers or workers. In the 1914–1945 section, “Working Class Culture” contains only documents from the Great Depression. There is only one document addressing women working during WW II and nothing in the book examining the 1946 strike wave, the largest in U.S. history. In the post–1945 part, the focus becomes lost in “Work and Labor/Management Relations,” which moves from migrant farmers, to a selection from William Whyte’s The Organization Man, to documents on wage work at McDonald’s and technological unemployment. Similarly, the “Working Class Culture” section includes sources on secretaries in the early 1960s, the “hard hat” march in 1970, Ben Hamper’s life in the automobile plant, and temporary workers in the 1990s.

The format and weaknesses make course adoption problematic. The book might work for a course on labor history. However, those teaching the U.S. history survey course (especially the pre–1877 version) may not want to use a book for which students will get limited use.

University of Akron

Gregory Wilson