LABOR
AND
PROGRESSIVISM
SOUTH OF THE SLOT
THE VOTING BEHAVIOR OF THE SAN FRANCISCO WORKING CLASS 1912–1916

Thomas R. Clark

The years between the defeat of the Union Labor Party in 1911 and the United States’ entry into World War I were a time of relative stability for organized labor in San Francisco. Union membership, which had grown rapidly from 1901, leveled off after 1911 and did not rise again until the wartime industrial boom created an increased demand for labor. However, organized labor was by no means inactive, for the period of stability in industrial relations coincided with an increase in political activity. The election of Hiram Johnson in 1910 was followed by a wave of pro-labor legislative reforms in 1911 and 1913, largely through the support, if not the direct initiative, of the Progressive governor. Labor lobbyists became a permanent Sacramento fixture. San Francisco’s John I. Nolan exemplified the new alliance between labor and politics: a member of the Iron Molder’s Union and the San Francisco Labor Council’s salaried representative in Sacramento, Nolan went on to represent San Francisco’s largely working-class 5th Congressional District.

The relative stability which appeared on the industrial relations front and the increased activity of labor on the legislative front coincided with another important development in California politics: the rise and fall of the Progressive Party as a significant political force. Until fairly recently, historians had so often defined “progressivism” as a middle-class movement that little was said of its relationship to the labor movement. More recently the role of labor has received more attention in histories which treat progressivism not as a unified phenomenon but as a heterogeneous collection of groups often seeking quite different sets of objectives.

However, where labor’s relationship to Progressive Era politics has been considered, the focus has usually been on labor leaders. There have been few attempts to study the voting behavior of working-class constituents. San Francisco’s neighborhoods were relatively homogeneous, with predominantly working-class districts in the Sunset and the Richmond, and the upper-class districts of Pacific Heights and Nob Hill. This provides a valuable opportunity to evaluate voting behavior along class lines. Furthermore, because of California’s appetite for the initiative and referendum, the vote for or against a variety of propositions allows one to examine working-class support for a variety of key Progressive Era issues.

The purpose of this essay is to examine working-class support for progressivism. The term “progressivism” is used with all due caution; but generally, it should be thought of as the political and legislative agenda of the Progressive Party. Where the terms “progressive” and “progressivism” have been used, every attempt has been made to identify the species of progressivism to which they refer. A statistical analysis of working-class voting behavior, as well as a content analysis of the labor press, has been made in the hope of clarifying the relationship between labor and progressivism. It will be argued that, in San Francisco, working-class voters embraced Progressives and progressivism with no more and no less enthusiasm than other voters, and without a great deal of consistency. At least two historians have taken working-class and labor support for progressivism to indicate that workers and labor leaders had adopted a “middle-class psychology” and been incorporated into the mainstream of middle-class politics. This study, however, suggests that what has been interpreted as overwhelming support for progressivism-in-general is, in fact, nothing more than

San Francisco’s drinking places have always been an important arena for political discussion. The proprietors of the Teamsters Inn clearly did not expect their customers to be put off by the political preferences they expressed.

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the selective voting behavior of a working class fully aware of its class interests.

Students of California progressivism have at their disposal two major works on the subject: George Mowry’s *The California Progressives*, which appeared in 1951 and continues to be an influential interpretation; and Spencer Olin’s *California’s Prodigal Sons: Hiram Johnson and the Progressives, 1911–1917*, which appeared in 1968. Both scholars addressed the relationship between labor and the Progressives.7

Mowry saw the Progressive Insurgency in California as a middle-class movement, a concept similar to the “status revolution” thesis later elaborated by Richard Hofstadter. Mowry’s progressives feared the power of both organized capital and organized labor and were especially hostile to the latter. Mowry argued that Progressives were tolerant of trade unions only so long as they were ineffective, and that wherever “closed-shop” forces started to make gains, as they did in San Francisco, the progressives became hostile to trade-unionism. As for the pro-labor legislation which passed in the state legislature in the 1911 and 1913 sessions, Mowry claimed that those bills which became law were watered down versions of labor proposals. More importantly, anti-injunction legislation, which was labor’s single most important demand, never passed.8

Spencer Olin, writing in 1968, proceeded from a different framework.

Heavily influenced by the views of Samuel Hays, Samuel Haber, and Robert Wiebe, Olin stressed the Progressives’ desire for efficiency and social harmony. Contrary to Mowry’s assertion that Progressives were hostile to labor, Olin concluded that organized labor and the Progressives formed a convenient political friendship: labor leaders ensured the electoral support of the working class districts, and progressive politicians provided legislation favorable to labor’s interest. Olin argued that Mowry concentrated too heavily on the rhetoric of a few selected Progressives, and too little on legislative accomplishments. Mowry, Olin contended, fixed his attention so firmly on the failure to secure an anti-injunction law that he neglected the fact that thirty-nine of forty-nine bills proposed by labor became law during the 1911 session.9

If Mowry did in fact ignore a great deal, Olin was guilty of the same fault. Progressive support of organized labor was indeed qualified, and the passage of an anti-injunction law was in fact of primary importance to California labor leaders.10 Moreover, both Mowry and Olin focused on the attitudes and policies of Progressives toward labor and said little or nothing of labor’s stance toward progressivism. Where they considered labor, the focus was on leadership and lobbying activities. Neither attempted a comprehensive analysis of the Progressives’ constituency and the role of working-class voters, union or nonunion.

Following the lead of Alexander Saxton, who showed that San Francisco workers supported Hiram Johnson in 1914, John Shover and Michael Rogin, in separate articles, attempted sophisticated statistical analyses to determine the roots of electoral support for Progressives in California. These essays—later published as chapters in a book which attempted to apply “critical election” theory to California politics—argued that a shift in the Progressive constituency occurred between 1910 and 1914. Although in 1910 Hiram Johnson’s support had come from middle-class, native-born, and rural areas of the state, his re-election in 1914 owed itself to the votes of the state’s urban working class. Both Shover and Rogin pointed to the considerably pro-labor legislative sessions of 1911 and 1913 as an explanation for this shifting base of electoral support. Shover concluded that Mowry’s thesis was therefore in need of revision, for it could not explain how a movement born out of middle-class status anxiety could have been so appealing to working-class voters. Rogin, hoping to expand on Shover’s article, argued that the Progressive Era in California marked the beginning of “the incorporation of workers into liberal, middle-class American politics.”11

Shover’s and Rogin’s conclusions, were based almost entirely on the vote for Johnson yet Hiram Johnson’s ability to secure the votes of working-class voters does not mean that all Progressives, much less “progressivism,” elicited the same response. This essay proposes to test the Shover-Rogin hypothesis against a wider range of variables: a statistical analysis will be made of San Francisco working-class support for all candidates who ran as Progressives between 1912 and 1916, and their success or failure will be compared to that of the other parties’ candidates. In addition, well over 100 propositions came before San Francisco vot-

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*Army Street, south of Market, ca. 1910.*

The texture of life in working-class districts was dramatically different from that in upper-class Pacific Heights and in the middle-class Richmond District.
ers during these years. Not all of
these are useful indicators of sup-
port for progressivism, but there are
several which allow one to measure
working-class support for a variety
of key Progressive Era issues. By
using the same statistical methods
as those employed by professors
Shover and Rogin and applying them
to a greater number of variables, it
is hoped that a more refined state-
ment can be made about the nature
of the relationship between the
working-class constituency and Pro-
gressive Era politics. In order to
supplement statistical data and to
provide probable explanations for
voting patterns, a careful examina-
tion has been made of San Francisco’s
labor press during this period. Not
only does this help explain voting
behavior, but it offers as well an
opportunity to consider the extent
to which the working-class vote fol-
lowed the recommendations of labor
leaders.

In order to gauge workers’ sup-
port for specific can-
didates, parties, and
propositions, I have used two sta-
tistical methods. First, I have borrowed
a technique used by both Shover and
Rogin, by which a district’s vote on
a labor-issue proposition—in this
case the “No” vote on San Fran-
cisco’s 1916 Anti-Picketing Ordi-
nance—is used as an index of pro-
labor sentiment. The resulting senti-
ment index is then compared to the
vote for specific candidates and
propositions. A high positive corre-
lation indicates a candidate or pro-
position was most successful in those
districts where the labor sentiment
index was high and ran poorest in
those districts with low pro-labor
sentiment; a negative correlation
would suggest the opposite. Sec-
ond, I have divided San Francisco
assembly districts into working-
class and non-working-class blocs in
order to test the hypothesis that
there are statistically significant dif-
fences between the mean voting
behavior of the two groups.11 Since
opposition to the anti-picketing or-
dinance ran considerably higher in
working-class districts than it did
citywide, one would expect that a
candidate or proposition which ran
well in the working-class districts
would also show a strong, positive
correlation to the labor sentiment
index. And, in fact, this was the case.

Although both Shover and Rogin
have shown that San Francisco
workers supported Hiram Johnson
in 1914, neither attempted to measure
the support that other Progressive
Party candidates received. Shover’s
and Rogin’s argument implicitly as-
sumes that working-class support
for Johnson also indicates support
for progressivism in general. One
way to test this assumption is to cor-
relate the labor sentiment index with
voting for (1) other candidates run-
ning as Progressives and (2) can-
didates from the major parties who
were considered “progressive.” If
workers were in fact voting for pro-
gressivism and not just for Johnson
as an individual, then one would ex-
pect that other Progressive candi-
dates would also show positive cor-
relations to the labor sentiment
index.

Johnson and Francis Heney, who
ran for the U.S. Senate in 1914, both
did better in working-class districts
than they did citywide, and their
overall performance correlates highly
with the labor sentiment index. Run-
ing for the U.S. Senate in 1916, John-
son again scored a heavy victory in
working-class districts, but the cor-
relation of his support to the labor
sentiment index decreased conside-ably. There are two possible explana-
tions for this decrease: First, Johnson
ran on both the Progressive and Re-
publican tickets in 1916, and it is pos-
sible that the Republican endorse-
ment cost him a few votes among workers while gaining the votes of a few standpat Republicans. Second, Johnson ran so well in both working-class and non-working-class districts—with the exception of Pacific Heights—that the small vote against him is not sufficient to show a significant difference. Nonetheless, working-class voters gave Johnson and Heney greater support than did non-working-class voters.

However, other Progressive Party candidates were not always as successful as Johnson and Heney. Support for Progressive candidates to the House of Representatives and the State Assembly shows no significant correlation with the labor sentiment index. Because San Francisco had two congressional and thirteen assembly districts, it is possible to make general statements about support for Progressives as a group. Progressive Party candidates in the 4th and 5th congressional districts in both 1914 and 1916 were, respectively, Julius Kahn and John I. Nolan. Kahn, a Republican businessman, ran most poorly where pro-labor sentiment was high, whereas Nolan, a former labor leader, received his greatest support among working-class voters. What is significant is that working-class voters voted not for the “progressive” candidate—for both claimed to be that—but for the candidate who was perceived to be a friend of labor. The pattern is the same for Progressive candidates for the Assembly; calling oneself a Progressive was not enough to ensure working-class support. The recommendations of the labor press point to a similar conclusion: candidates were rated according to their past record with no apparent regard for party affiliation.

What was true of Progressive Party candidates was generally true for Republicans and Democrats as well. Neither party could claim consistent support south of Market Street. Although it appears that Democrats were somewhat more successful than Republicans, the appearance is deceiving. Democrats did in fact run better in the working-class districts than they did elsewhere; but they did not always win there. In 1912, the six most heavily working-class districts, 21–25 and 29, elected three Democrats and three Republicans. Granted, the Republicans won by much narrower margins in working-class districts than they did elsewhere, but they did win. Furthermore, when the three South-of-Market Republicans elected in 1912 ran again in 1914 and/or 1916, the labor press rated the legislative voting record of each as “excellent.” In fact, South-of-Market assemblmen who ran for re-election always had favorable voting records, regardless of their party.

The only party which consistently polled highest where pro-labor sentiment was strongest was the Socialist Party. The South of Market districts showed strong support for socialist candidates; Assembly District 22, for example, gave Eugene V. Debs nearly twenty-four percent of its vote in 1912, well above the national average of six percent. Between 1912 and 1916, Socialist candidates for assembly seats averaged more than fifteen percent in the working-class districts while getting only five percent in the non-working-class districts.

While the Socialist vote in San Francisco was never sufficient to elect Socialists to office, it did affect the races between Democrats and Republicans. Take for example the 1912 vote in Assembly District 23, where Republican James Ryan received 2,104 votes to Democrat John...

Selected Progressive Candidates by Class Status of the Electorate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Johnson</th>
<th>Johnson</th>
<th>Heney</th>
<th>Johnson</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Working Class Avg.</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>72.43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Working Class Avg.</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>72.00%</td>
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</table>
Bogues's 1,983—a difference of only 121 votes. The Socialist candidate, Herman Doyle, received 1,629 votes. Although it is difficult to say whether Doyle's votes would have gone to the Democrat or the Republican it is clear that a major party which could tap into the sentiment behind the Socialist vote would certainly win more elections. In a sense, that is exactly what pro-labor Progressives like Johnson and Heney were able to do. When one compares the average Socialist vote in state elections where Johnson and Heney ran with those where they did not run, the results are quite revealing. Against Johnson and Heney, the Socialist vote in the working-class districts ranged from six to ten percent, whereas in races which lacked a notably pro-labor Progressive it ranged from twelve to nearly twenty-four percent.17

Several propositions came before the San Francisco voters which, according to traditional definitions, could be called "progressive." These propositions provide further variables which can be used as evidence to test the Shover-Rogin hypothesis. A total of thirteen propositions covering several progressive themes—direct democracy, civil service reform, regulation of public utilities, "moral" reform, and improvement of labor conditions—can be subjected to the same tests as those applied to the several candidates.18

There were no significant differences between working-class districts and the rest of the city when it came to voting for or against "moral reforms." The vote on two prohibition amendments shows no significant correlation to the index: voters rejected both amendments by approximately four-to-one margins with no more than a 2.26 percent spread between working-class and non-working-class districts. A proposition to abolish prize fights, which lost by a small majority in all districts, shows only a moderately negative correlation to pro-labor sentiment. It seems clear that, regardless of class, San Franciscans wanted to keep their liquor legal and were divided on the issue of abolishing prize fights.19

Of the propositions which do not deal with moral reforms or labor issues, only two show strong divisions along class lines in election results. Of the other two, a proposition extending the nonpartisan direct primary to include additional state offices failed to win a majority on either side of Market Street. Extending the civil service lost in both areas as well, faring only slightly better in the working-class districts. Of the seven non-labor-issue propositions, only two, one allowing the Railroad Commission to fix the value of public utilities—a first step toward municipal ownership—and another abolishing the poll tax, show strong, significant differences along class lines. Not surprisingly, these two propositions deal most directly with economic issues.20

The labor-issue measures, on the other hand, reveal a striking cleavage. Voting patterns on each of the six labor-issue propositions shows a very high correlation to the labor sentiment index and a statistically significant difference between the mean vote according to class. It is to be expected, of course, that votes on labor-issue propositions would show strong correlations to a pro-labor sentiment index; what is interesting, however, is the degree of polarization between working-class and non-working-class districts. Jack London's description of the Market Street cable (the "slot") as a reification of the barriers between rich and poor in San Francisco is on the mark. The aristocracy of Pacific Heights and Nob Hill and the "suburban" middle-class of the Sunset and Rich-

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mond districts perceived labor and economic issues in an entirely different light from workers "south of the slot."21

When a quantitative analysis of working-class voting behavior is carried beyond an examination of electoral support for Hiram Johnson, it reveals that working-class support for "progressivism" was not unconditional. To explain working-class voting behavior during the Progressive Era as evidence of the "incorporation" of workers into middle-class politics ignores the considerable degree of polarization between working-class and non-working-class voters. Jules Tygiel, in a reappraisal of San Francisco's Union Labor Party (ULP), argued convincingly that the ULP was clearly perceived as representing working-class interests and that San Francisco voters—both South of Market and in Pacific Heights—were conscious of this fact and voted accordingly.22 The evidence seems to suggest that the class conflict observed by Tygiel for the 1901-1911 period was still quite evident in the 1912-1916 elections. When workers did support Progressive candidates or "progressive" reforms, it was because they promised to benefit workers, not because workers had been incorporated into the middle-class.

A statistical analysis of San Francisco voting behavior supports Daniel Rodgers's observation that the Progressive Era was highlighted by the substitution of "special interest" politics for the traditional party system.23 An examination of San Francisco's labor press during the 1912-16 period lends additional support to Rodgers's conclusion. Like working-class voters, the three major labor journals in San Francisco—Organized Labor, Labor Clarion, and Coast Seamen's Journal—showed no special inclination toward any political party. Rather, all three papers seemed to follow Samuel Gompers's admonishment to "support our friends, and punish our enemies" regardless of party.

Although the labor press in San Francisco did not officially make political endorsements, it used four important methods to get its message across to the rank-and-file. First, all three papers made direct recommendations on propositions and ordinances; never addressing all measures on the ballot, labor editors included only those which were most crucial to labor's interest. Second, a few weeks before each election, each paper carried a section entitled "Questions for the Candidates" in which questions of interest to labor were posed and the candidate's response reported. Third, the California State Federation of Labor, as well as the local Building Trades Council and the San Francisco Labor Council, published the voting records of Assemblymen, State Senators, and members of Congress. The voting records appeared alongside a candidate's response to the questions.
And fourth, editorials served as a means of indirectly—though at times very conspicuously—supporting a friend or punishing an enemy of labor.  

Any attempt to discuss all of the issues addressed by San Francisco's labor press would exceed the space available here. However, it is instructive to select for examination two major themes: (1) To what extent were the A.F. of L. and its affiliates non-partisan? (2) Was A.F. of L. support for Asiatic exclusion racially or economically motivated? Labor historian Philip Taft has argued that the A.F. of L. under Gompers was consistently non-partisan, but Marc Karson countered that the federation was a strong supporter of the Democratic Party between 1908 and 1916. Taft argues that labor's support of Asiatic exclusion was based on a legitimate economic grievance, and Karson argues that the A.F. of L. policy was fundamentally racist.

The disagreement over non-partisanship can be resolved in part by considering candidates to state and federal offices separately. Party affiliation did not affect the way candidates for state offices in California were the labor press. Consider, for example, the following table, which gives a breakdown of candidate ratings by party and year of election: At the state level, therefore, it does not appear that organized labor in San Francisco showed any favoritism toward Democrats; on the contrary, Republicans, simply because they were able to win narrow victories in the working-class districts and then vote in the interest of their constituents once in Sacramento, were most likely to secure favorable ratings from organized labor.

Karson's contention that organized labor supported Democrats, however, is much more credible in the presidential arena. While none of the three labor journals officially endorsed Democratic candidate Woodrow Wilson in either 1912 or 1916, they ran editorials either in favor of Wilson or against Theodore Roosevelt (1912) and Charles Evans Hughes (1916).

In an article entitled, "Roosevelt and The Japs," the Coast Seamen's Journal reminded its readers that in 1907 Theodore Roosevelt had interfered with San Francisco's effort to segregate white and Japanese children in the city's schools. Furthermore, Roosevelt had recommended that Congress pass legislation that would allow the Japanese to become American citizens. Organized Labor ran a political advertisement which compared the stands of Wilson and Roosevelt on the question of Asian Exclusion and quoted Wilson as saying, "Oriental coolieism will give us another race problem to solve and surely we have had our lesson." Roosevelt ran poorest in working-class districts, showing a negative correlation with the labor sentiment index (−.6887), although the "Bull Moose" platform carried more pro-labor planks than the Democrats' and Roosevelt's running mate was none other than Hiram Johnson.

Considering the intimate relationship between labor and anti-Asian sentiment in San Francisco, which dated at least to the 1870s, it seems reasonable to assume that Roosevelt's policy on Asian Exclusion cost him support among working-class voters. When San Francisco's white working class rejected Roosevelt for his tolerance of Asian immigration, was it acting on the basis of legitimate, class-based economic concerns or...
was it simply taking a racist position? It is difficult to conclude that labor’s policy toward Asian exclusion was not based on racism, but Taft is correct in asserting that there was an economic component. Walter MacArthur, secretary of the San Francisco Labor Council and editor of the Coast Seamen’s Journal, summed up labor’s argument in an address to the Pacific Coast Immigration Conference, April 13–14, 1913:

There is no necessary disagreement between the organized workers and those who take the immigrant by the hand and lead him into higher paths of social and civic life. We are all agreed that the immigration question is a “problem of humanity.” [However] in the more concrete form it is also a problem of economics, a bread and butter problem.”

The quote from MacArthur is interesting for several reasons: first, that immigrants could be taken “by the hand and [led] into higher paths of social and civic life” reveals MacArthur’s paternalism, which, of course, was not unique to labor leaders during the Progressive Era; second, he stresses that labor’s opposition to immigration is based on economics; finally, MacArthur was speaking on the need to restrict both white and Asian immigration. Labor’s efforts to restrict the importation of cheap labor, which it believed would deflate wages and provide business with a source of strikebreakers, extended to European as well as Asian labor. However, labor leaders and working-class voters should not be let off quite so easily. For organized labor sought only to regulate the influx of European laborers, but it wanted the absolute exclusion of Asians and denial to those who were already here of the right to citizenship and the right to own or lease land.” Racism and economic self-interest, it seems, were mutually reinforcing phenomena to a point. Whether Roosevelt’s pro-labor platform or Wilson’s Asian exclusion offered more to San Francisco workers is open to debate.

In 1912 Wilson had received the lukewarm support of the labor press only by default; his support in 1916 owed itself much more to the pro-labor record of his first administration and his promise to keep the United States out of the war in Europe. As in 1912, the labor press did not officially endorse either candidate, but there could be no mistaking the favorite. In the issues immediately preceding the November election, all three labor papers carried an imposing picture of Woodrow Wilson on their front pages. The Coast Seamen’s Journal captioned its photograph of Wilson: “The man who signed the Seaman’s Charter of Freedom and thereby completed the work of Abraham Lincoln, the Great Emancipator.”

Inside, the editors went about in their usual manner, listing the respective accomplishments of both candidates. Wilson’s list went on for nearly two pages, but a brief discussion of Hughes’s career mentioned only his support of the tariff (which labor opposed), his concurrence in the infamous Danbury Hatter’s Case, which upheld the use of the injunction in labor cases, and his opposition to the Adamson Act, which guaranteed the eight-hour day for the nation’s railroad workers. An unsigned editorial referred to Hughes as the “candidate of the plutocracy” and reckoned that Hughes appeared
to "have less sympathy (for) . . . American workers than the Czar of Russian has shown for the Polish Jews." For a non-partisan paper with an official policy of not endorsing candidates, the Coast Seamen's Journal, along with the other labor weeklies, had made its position perfectly clear.33

San Francisco Republicans should not have been surprised by labor's overwhelming, though unofficial, support for Wilson in 1916, for in the issue immediately following Wilson's victory in 1912, Organized Labor had issued a caveat to members of all parties: The Democratic Party not only has a great opportunity (because of its victory), but it has a great responsibility. The next four years will tell whether this party, like the Republican and Progressive parties, will lose the confidence of the common man. Should this come about, it is inevitable that in the Presidential campaign of 1916 we will see the workingmen of this nation solidified as never before and marching under the banner of the party which looks alone to the workers of the world for its perpetuity.34

In 1912 therefore, San Francisco labor was not prepared to pledge its loyalty to the Democratic Party; rather, it issued a stern warning to the Democrats not to go the way of the Republicans and Progressives. And just as labor swore loyalty to no political party, neither did it embrace the more elusive label of "progressivism" without qualifications. Organized Labor editorialized three days before the 1916 election that, "Whether a man is a true progressive or not may be judged largely by his attitude toward labor unions . . . (this is) the test of a candidate's progressivism. . . ."35

The essays by John Shover and Michael Rokin, taken together, offer a single interpretation of working-class voting behavior during the Progressive Era, which can be presented as follows:

(1) The California working class, starting in 1914, proved to be the greatest source of support for Cal-
Working-class and labor support for “progressivism” constitutes the incorporation of the working class into middle-class politics and their adoption of the “classless” rhetoric of middle-class ideology (Rogin).

The first component of the Shover-Rogin hypothesis, that working-class voters supported progressivism, is clearly in need of qualification. Working-class voters supported Hiram Johnson and accounted for the greater part of Johnson’s political success after 1914, support for Johnson cannot be interpreted as support for all Progressives, much less progressivism. As a group, Progressives fared no better among working-class voters than any other party; and to the extent that one can speak of “progressive” propositions, working-class voters—like everyone else—were most likely to vote according to what appeared to be in their best interest. One need not resort to the rubric of Progressivism to explain working-class voting behavior.

By denying the premise that workers supported Progressivism, we necessarily deny the conclusion that such support constituted the incorporation of the working class into middle-class politics and its acceptance of middle-class ideology. More-

![Table 1: Performance of Progressive Party Candidates by Labor Sentiment Index](http://online.ucpress.edu/ch/article-pdf/66/3/196/100463/25158438.pdf)

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Johnson Governor</th>
<th>Heney Senator</th>
<th>Johnson Senator</th>
<th>Representative 1914</th>
<th>Representative 1916</th>
<th>Assembly 1914</th>
<th>Assembly 1916</th>
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<td>.3085</td>
<td>.0494</td>
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<td>.3611</td>
<td>.2197</td>
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<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.100</td>
<td>.436</td>
<td>.415</td>
<td>.109</td>
<td>.250</td>
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![Table 2: Performance of Republican and Democratic Candidates by Labor Sentiment Index](http://online.ucpress.edu/ch/article-pdf/66/3/196/100463/25158438.pdf)

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<th>Republicans</th>
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<td>1914</td>
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<td>r</td>
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![Table 3: Performance of Socialist Party Candidates by Labor Sentiment Index](http://online.ucpress.edu/ch/article-pdf/66/3/196/100463/25158438.pdf)

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<td>.8668</td>
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<td>.9214</td>
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<td>P</td>
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over the assertion that progressivism was an essentially middle-class phenomenon, albeit embraced by working-class voters, ignores the diversity of Progressive Era reforms and he varied interests of progressive reformers.

The progressive legacy for twentieth-century politics is an ambiguous one whose contradictions may not be resolved before the century ends. By attempting to place working-class voters in the context of Progressive Era politics, Shover and Regin opened a new line of inquiry which enables us to move beyond simple categories and look carefully at how different groups of Americans responded to progressivism. Quite possibly a close examination of Los Angeles and San Francisco. That, however, is a different undertaking. What is important is that by starting with the Shover and Regin hypothesis and examining working-class voting behavior in a specific place, we have been able to see more clearly how Americans of the Progressive Era responded to progressivism. In casting their votes, San Francisco working-class voters treated progressivism not as a monolithic entity but as a collection of elements from which they chose those which served their interests.

See notes on page 234.