Theodore Dreiser and Labor of the Age

Akiyoshi, Reiko
Graduate School of Letters, Kyushu University : Doctoral Program

https://doi.org/10.15017/6788696

出版情報：九大英文学. 41, pp.173-192, 1998-12-15. 九州大学大学院英語学・英文学研究会
バージョン：
権利関係：

Theodore Dreiser and Labor of the Age

Reiko Akiyoshi

Introduction

> Work. Ah the meaning of that word. To rise with the sun. To keep going back and forth in a routine path all the day long. To lift and to bend. To move and to stop. To wind and unwind. Always and always to do. And for what.
> ——Theodore Dreiser, *An Amateur Laborer*[1]

The structural changes that transformed United States society in the half century from 1865 to 1920 continuously reshaped the composition of the working class. From a nation that was still agrarian at the close of the Civil War and in which half or more of all adults were self-employed, the United States had become in 1920 an urban nation in which the vast majority of individuals worked from employes. Both in its growth and its distribution, the American labor forces from 1850 to 1920 became concentrated in the extractive and manufacturing sectors of the economy. Putting priority on the rapid progress of the industrial development of the nation, labor conditions were ignored, making class conflict more and more heated. At the turn of the century, in fact, a remarkable number of labor strikes broke out.

In this social environment, Theodore Dreiser's *Sister Carrie* was published in 1900, and as the chronological fact implies, it built a bridge

between nineteenth-century American literature and that of twentieth-century, effectively reflecting the rapid transfomation of American society. The power of *Sister Carrie* depends on the vivid description of society and the common men and women living in it. The purpose of this paper is to explore how the reality of the age and the author's own experience are reflected in Dreiser's work, putting a focus on labor and class conflict, and to consider Dreiser's ambiguous attitude toward them.

Working People

When Dreiser was young, the United States was in the process of industrialization and urbanization. The progress was remarkable although it contains concomitant conflicts and tensions. Being born a decade after the Civil War, Dreiser witnesses a drastic period of American history. Discussing the change of American society of this period, Arhur M. Schlesinger and Dixon Fox point out as the followings:

> Profound social changes resulting from the growth of giant industry, the dislocation wrought by rapid urbanization, the decline of rural opportunity as the free lands were exhausted, the increasing rapacity of "malefactors of great wealth" and their subservient allies, the political bosses of city, state and nation, the menacing growth of class feeling—all these helped to create a condition of affairs in which the vaunted "unalienable rights" of "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" had become the despair of an ever larger proportion of average humanity.[2]

The period between 1890 and the end of World War I caused a dramatic conflict between traditional dogmas and the forces of a new scientific and industrial world, having a great effect on the thinking of the American

people.

The limited number of upper-class people enjoyed vast fortunes, controlling giant industries of steel, coal, and the railroad. While many people were enchanted by the American dream of success, poverty and misery prevailed over it. The gulf between employers and employees was becoming deeper and deeper, which often caused violent clash. The purpose of this chapter is to consider Dreiser's attitude toward the people of the working class, examning his description of them in *Sister Carrie*.

Carrie appears as a type of the middle class. Her father is working at a flour mil "by the day" (1).[3] She herself is called "a fair example of the middle American class—two generations removed from the emigrant" (2). In those days, a great number of immigrants came to America seeking for a success, and Carrie is connected to those ambitious people. Dreiser further introduces the social reality of the age in the process of describing Carrie. Carrie comes to Chicago with the ambitious aim to "gain in material things" (2). The narrator devotes a large portion of the narrative to description of the Chicago of 1889:

> In 1889 Chicago and the peculiar qualification of growth which made such adventuresome pilgrimages even on the part of young girls plausible. Its many and growing commercial opportunities gave it widespread fame, which made of it a giant magnet, drawing to itself, from all quarters, the hopeful and the hopeless—those who had their fortune yet to make and those whose fortunes and affairs had reached a disastrous climax elsewhere. It was a city of a metropolis 500,000, with the ambition, the daring, the activity of a metropolis of a million. (12)

Chicago is shown as a symbol of the rapid progress of the nation. On the other hand, we witness the reality which is behind such a gorgeous image

of the city. As Carrie comes to realize, the reader soon notices the tough life of lower-class people in the city.

Real life in Chicago gives the ambitious and dreamy girl Carrie severe education. She is educated in two ways. First, her temporary life in the Hansons makes her turn to hard reality. Mr. Hanson, the husband of Carrie's older sister, is "a silent man, American born, of a Swede father, and now employed as a cleaner of refrigerator cars at the stockyards" (9). He is a boring man even though he has an ambition to "build a house" on "two lots far out on the West Side" for which he "had already paid a number of monthly installments" (9). In his house Carrie learns the way of life of the lower-class: She feels "the drag of lean and narrow life" there (10) rather than the happiness of the humble but peaceful life; she reads "from the manner of Hanson, in the subdued air of Minnie, and indeed, the whole atmosphere of the flat, a settled opposition to anything save a conservative round of toil" (11); she notices that her sister is changed from what she used to be and that she now has "a mind which invariably adjusted itself, without much complaining, to such surroundings as its industory could make for it" (26). Everything is different from what Carrie expected. The bitterness of the life of the lower class is disgusting to her. Because of that, however, her ambtion grows greater, and she tries to separate herself from the life she encounters.

Second, Carrie is also educated outside of the home of the Hansons. Unskilled, she can find a job only in a shoe factory, a "clacking, rattling" place. As soon as entering the factory, we notice its unplesant state as Carrie does. The aisles are "dark" and have "the smell of new shoes." The door which opens into the factory is made of cold, hard iron. Beyond the door, there is "a large, low ceiled room, with clacking rattling machines at which men in white shirt sleeves and blue gingham aprons were working." Carrie goes through "the clattering automatons" (28). Further, Dreiser gives the detail explanation of the condition of the

working place:

> The place smelled of the oil of the machines and the new leather—a combination which, added the stale odors of the building, was not pleasant even in cold weather. The floor, though regularly swept every evening, presented a littered surface. Not the slightest provision had been made for the comfort of the employees, the idea being that something was gained by giving them as little and making the work as hard and unremunerative as possible. What we know of foot-rests, swivel-back chairs, dining-rooms for the girls, clean aprons and curling irons supplied free, and a decent cloak room, were unthought of. The washrooms were disagreeable crude, if not foul places, and the whole atmoshere was sordid. (31-32)

The shoe factory where Carrie works is not an exception. The bad conditions of the workplace can be seen in many other factories of that age. In fact, Dreiser expands this real state to the whole workplace, saying "the new socialism which involves pleasant working conditions for employees had not then taken hold upon manufacturing companies" (31) and writes the similar condition in his article, "The Factory":

> It is a long, darksome chamber, set with high, small-paned, prison-like windows, whose mass of light falls like a radiance of evening over the interior. The floors are set with long, shuttles and whirling bobbins make up a roar that is deafening to the ear. Solemn, impressive shadows of men and women go about among them—principally women and some children, whose appearance stamps them as a lesser order of being, the kind, shall we say, who are made to work.[4]

This is the reality of the factory. Dreiser's detailed rendering of the

shoe-factory settings in *Sister Carrie* such as the nervous pace, the spatial segregation by gender, the alienating sights, sounds, odors, and intermittent sexual harassment also represent the reality of the working place.

Encountering the reality of the working place, Carrie does not hide her rebellious dissatisfaction. At work she becomes "more and more distasteful" and "absolutely nauseating" (31). The "chatter and comment" of her coworkers are "silly and graced by the current slang." Carrie never joins the group: "She instinctively withdrew into herself. She was not used to this type, and felt that there was something hard and low about it all" (32). The severe reality of society is educating her to realize how hard it is to survive in this world and to notice that she has already stepped into it. Nevertheless, she still tries to separate herself from reality. Her thought is expressed in Dreiser's narrative as her revulsion to her coworkers.

> The machine girls impressed her even less favorably. They seemed satisfied with their lot, and were in a sense "common." Carrie had more imagination than they. She was not used to slang. Her instinct in the matter of dress was naturally better. She disliked to listen to the girl next to her, who was rather hardened by experience. (43)

Carrie's hatred might echo the author's. The adolescent Dreiser's resentment of manual labor caused him to be dismissed from five successive Chicago jobs and no doubt shaped his approval of Carrie's rebellious dissatisfaction with shoe work and her coworkers.[5]

Even in these unpleasant descriptions, however, it is not so difficult to perceive the author's humanistic attitude toward the working-class people. First, he does not criticize Hanson and his wife's way of life, even though it disillusions Carrie. When Minnie denies Carrie's demand to take her to the theater, the author does not forget to excuse her, saying, "These thoughts were not those of a cold, hard nature at all" (26). While

Hanson seems to be merciless and boring, the description of his attitude toward his baby is very generous and heart-warming. He just wants to protect his present humble but peaceful life.

Second, Dreiser's sympathy can be seen in the description of the female workers. They are rude and seem to lack grace. However, the words spoken by some of them and their attitude toward Carrie reflect their warm heart. A girl of the factory kindly teaches Carrie who has no experience how to work; another one advises her not to care about the rudeness of the male workers. When Carrie becomes perplexed, "the girls at her left and right realized her predicament and feelings, and, in a way, tried to aid her, as much as they dared, by working slower" (29). Their language seems to be very lousy, and their obbstinate desire for things might be disgusting. Nevertheless, as Laura Hapke says, Dreiser does not moralize about them or about their real-life counterparts.[6]

Third, the narrative itself shows sympathy toward workers:

> Ah, the promise of the night. What does it not hold for the weary! What old illusion of hope is not here forever repeated! Says the soul of the toiler to itself, "I shall soon be free. I shall be in the ways and the hosts of the merry. The streets, the lamps, the lighted chamber set for dining, are for me. The theater, the halls, the parties, the ways of rest and the paths of song—these are mine in the night." Though all humanity is still enclosed in the shops, the thril runs abroad. It is in the air. The dullest feel something which they may not always express or describe. It is the lifting of the burden of toil. (7)

Nobody but those who sympathize with the worker can speak these words. This sympathy might come from Dreiser's own life and background. His family was extremely poor, close to starvation at several points, and driven into desperate living circumstances. Because his

parents could not afford to support him, Dreiser's former high school teacher sent him to Indiana University at her expense. After one year, however, he rejected the offer, because he was lonely and felt out of place. David E. E. Sloane says, "Even in those days, the gulf between rich and poor and the improbabilities of chance and opportunity seem written larger in Dreiser's life than in the common run of experience."[7] His life was conflicted with humility and shame. This background makes Dreiser's description of the lower-class people sympathetic, and because of this we can feel the reality of the people vividly.

Dreiser's description of the workplace and the lower-class people thus reflect the conditions of the age. On one hand, exposing the disgusting condition of the factory and the "commonness" of the workers, Dreiser shows his rebellious dissatisfaction with the situation. On the other hand, he validates the longing of the people and their inner reality, showing his sympathy for them.

Labor Strike

Dreiser's ambiguous attitude toward the working people can also be seen in chapters 40-41 of *Sister Carrie*, where Dreiser vividly portraits an industrial strike. It occupies an important place in the novel not only because it shows Hurstwood's spectacular fall from a fortunate life but also because it represents the human power to survive in this world, reflecting the labor problem of the age. Before considering Dreiser's thoughts about the labor problems and working people, it is significant to examine the influence on his description of the strike. His powerful description of the strike in chapter 41 would not have given the reader such a great impression if it had not been grounded in reality.

According to Michael John McDonough, Dreiser depends on three distinct sources: First, his own poverty life in Indina; second, the many

labor strikes he witnesses as a journalist in Chicago, Pittsburgh, Toledo, and New York; third, the specific incidents of the 1895 Brooklyn trolley car strike reported in the *New York Times*.[8] As mentioned in the former chapter, Dreiser had encountered many hard experiences with poverty, and the experiences are reflected on his fiction. His experience as a newspaperman also contributed to the powerful description of the strike in *Sister Carrie*. While working for the *Toledo Blade*, he reported on a trolley car strike, which strongly impressed him. To report the Tredo Strike, Dreiser rode on one of the cars and witnessed many events that he would use in *Sister Carrie*.

His personal experience must have influenced his fiction greatly, but the Brooklyn trolley car strike of 1895 must also have a great influence on his novel. *Sister Carrie* was published in 1990, and the strike broke out in 1895, that is later than Dreiser's experience in Toledo. The impact must have still remained in the author's mind. Actualy, in *Sister Carrie*, we witness the "strike on the trolley lines *in Brooklyn*" (320, emphasis mine). The model of the strike in this fiction is apparently the Brooklyn trolley car strike of 1895 even though it contains various effects from other sources. According to the *New York Times*, the strike was "the first general electric strike in the United States, and in magnitude has never been surpassed by any street-car strike in any of the great cities East or West."[9] It is reported that more than 5,000 men were on the strike and that 200 miles of railroad had been idle. The city was completely paralyzed. As the conflict between strikers and companies became furious, the daily events became top news. The reports provided Dreiser not noly the information of the events but also narrative devices which would shape the realities.

Dreiser adapted specific narrative incidents of the strike which was seen in the newspaper. For example, on January 16 in 1895, the *New York Times* reported the strike as the following:

> The motorman, meanwhile, had taken off the motor brake, and with it in his hand, stood trembling in the car. The instructor went to see what the size of the trouble was. Burly strikers seized him and dragged him from the car. He was flung about and blows were rained upon him as he was hustled down the avenue. He received a parting kick and disappeared in his best speed, stopping only to shout to the motorman of an approaching car that his life would be in danger if he went in.[10]

This description echoes Dreiser's description of Hurstwood. Encountering the furious strikers, Hurstwood is described like the motorman in the newspaper: "Hurstwood recovered himself, pale and trembling" (337). And, the conductor who should have been with Hurstwood left him as the instructor does in the newspaper.

We will find further similarities between the report of the newspaper and Dreiser's narrative description. One of the first riots on January 15 was reported as the following:

> A mob of 500 strikers, among whom were a number of frenzied women, charged on two cars. . . . The mob bombered the car and the police, and the women threw sticks and stones. . . . A stone thrown by one of the mob struck Starter Jackson, who was acting as motorman, on the head, and knocked him from the car.[11]

This description of the strike in the *New York Times* is more dramatic than strict reporting, putting its focus on a specific person. This highly style was apparently reflected in Dreiser's narrative description of his character Hurstwood's experience as a motorman:

> A boy threw a clod of mud while [Hurstwood] was thus reflecting

and hit him upon the arm. It hurt sharply and angered him more than he had been any time since morning. (336)

A woman—a mere girl in appearance—was among these, bearing a rough stick. She was exceedingly wrathful and struck at Hurstwood, who dodged. Thereupon, her companions, duly encouraged, jumped on the car and pulled Hurstwood over. (337-338)

Here, the similarities between the report of the *New York Times* and Dreiser's description of the strike are clear. This assures our assumption that the source of the strike described in *Sister Carrie* is the Brooklyn Strike in 1895.

Then, let us turn to the next question: How is the strike described in Dreiser's *Sister Carrie*? Dreiser adapted and reworked the structure of the newspaper in his fiction. McDonough says, "Selecting only the most dramatic episodes of the sixteen-day strike, [Dreiser's] compressed narrative punctuates, more effectively than the newspapers, the confrontation between the strikers and the scabs. . . . By reducing these events into a twelve-hour period, Dreiser skillfully orchestrates the mounting tension."[12] As seen above, the news reports are highly dramatic. They provided Dreiser with not only narrative incidents but also a range of characters and emotions. The reporter in the daily reports vividly captured the emotions of the actors in the violent and chaotic drama; the police, who lacked "the sense and courage to deal effectively with the situation"; the "trembling" motorman; and the swarming mobs of strikers intent on stopping the cars that challenged their blockade. These characters reported in the newspaper can be seen in *Sister Carrie*. The emotions and confusions of the characters are similar. Both of them represent the reality. However, they do not hide each writer's attitude, which cautiously takes into account the reader's response.

In both the newspaper and *Sister Carrie*, the characters are described vividly. Uncovered human emotions and power to survive are swirling in both of them. Above all, what should be noted is the description of the police. Their brutality is astonishing. In *Sister Carrie*, " [the policeman] plunged left and right, laying about madly with his club. He was ably assisted by his brother of the blue, who poured ponderous oaths upon the troubled waters" (334). Furthermore, one example of this kind of official violence, surpassed in the Doubleday, Signet, and Norton editions, has been restored by the Pennsylvania edition. The policeman traveling with Hurstwood orders "Run over 'em'." Mcdonough points out that this scene has been taken from a report on January 16: "'Here!' [the policeman] shouted, 'run the car right through [the strikers] ! Put on full speed!'"[13] The brutality of the policeman is also suggested in *Sister Carrie* by his words to the old woman, "Go to the devil, you old hag" (335) and other cruel acts. These descriptions of the policeman in both Dreiser's fiction and the newspaper expose the cruel human nature. Even the policeman, who is supposed to be neutral and to suppress his own personal feeling, is exposed to be a common man who has to find a surviving way in this world. And, in these descriptions of both newspaper and *Sister Carrie*, the writer's attitude is reflected. Both of them have some sympathy with the strikers, or at least do not stand on the side of the employers as we see in their description of cruel and unjust policeman.

In chapter 41, every human being is described to be brutal and wild. Not only the side of the employers, including the police, but also the side of the strikers are represented as cruel beings. Their abusing words are rude and disgusting. Dreiser uses a lot of slang such as "scab,""blackguards," and "suckers" and revilement such as "May God starve ye" and "You bloody, murtherin' thafe!" (334). It is needless to say that the description of their acts are violent, filled with blood, and that the vulgarity is inexcusable. These words and acts make Hurstwood " [hold]

to his brake and lever, pale and very uncertain what to do" (333). He "suffered a qualm of body" and became "suffocating" (337, 338). As Carrie definitely tries to differentiate herself from her coworkers, Hurstwood never identifies or sympathizes with them. Dreiser persistently isolates himself.

However, compared to the description of the policeman and the side of the company, Dreiser seems to show some consideration toward the working-class people, letting the reader catch a glimpse of another facet of their character. For example, in the Brooklyn City Railroad, Hurstwood, satirically called "the ex-manager" (327), is talked to by a man whose manner is very friendly and far from brutal; a young man says Hurstwood's response makes him disappointed (329); a striker's quiet words repeatedly impress Hurstwood (333, 337); a girl in the mob of the strikers say to Hurstwood, who is called "Scab" (332), "you'd better sneak" (338). In these humanistic descriptions, Dreiser makes clear his feeling toward the working people. Even in the turmoil of class conflicts and the struggle in their lives that is like a survival game, the people do not lose their humanity. Dreiser shows his sympathy toward them by implying that point.

Experience as a Laborer and Transformation

Having observed that Dreiser introduces the reality of the age in *Sister Carrie* and noticing that he shows both hatred and sympathy toward it, let us now expand the observation to other texts, which were written after *Sister Carrie*. The consideration will lead us to understand how Dreiser changed his attitude toward the labor problems.

After publishing *Sister Carrie* in early 1904, Dreiser began *An Amateur Laborer*.[14] Suffering from tension-related illness and the commercial failure of *Sister Carrie*, he worked in a carpentry shop at Spuyten Duyvil

in New York in 1903, and *An Amateur Laborer* is based on the experience. His pay was fifteen cents an hour. The shop made depot and office furniture and employed abou 100 men, including carpenters, millwrights, tinsmiths, blacksmiths, painters, and unskilled laborers. There, ten-hour routine work made Dreiser suffer. As we witness in *Sister Carrie*, he hated the working conditions and the employers:

> The situation did not appeal to me. It was merciless and cruel. I thought there must be some way out of it and I used to say to myself that if I were a foreman, that I would not be so insistent. I would not be so sharp. There was no need of driving men. Still I did not see how it was to be avoided unless the company would hire more men, and I did not see how a foreman could compel them to do that. He might do it, if he were a strong man, but it would require some man in whom the officials had confidence and for whose judgment they had respect.[15]

On the other hand, he again shows some sympathy toward his co-workers. Dreiser observes their work and explores their personality in it. As a result, their industriousness and earnestness gave some "relief" and "delight" to him. Furthermore, he confesses, "I was really charmed by this life" (144-145). Written soon after publishing *Sister Carrie*, *An Amateur Laborer* does not seem to show the author's negative attitude toward the working people. The author identifies himself to be manual laborer in the work and actually did.

Nevertheless, the reader would be perplexed when he comes to the last page. While Dreiser sympathizes with the lower people, he also shows disgust:

> The workday world. Do you comprehend it, oh my brother. Do you

> know what it means to rise with the sun and earlier, to hasten away with your little basket or bucket and to enter a dull shop, whether nothing is in evidence save the implements of labor—machines, tools and darksome oil stained walls and floors, and work, work, work, the live-long day, week after week, month after month, year after year. Do you know what it means to witness the best of your strength, the keenness of your intelligence going into the manufacture of something, the use of which you never have; the display of which you never see; the comfort of which you never feel. Sometimes as I look back on it now, those commonplace walls seem to contain nothing but that which is obnoxious and disagreeable to me. . . (176-177)

Here, in spite of calling his audience, who is supposed to be a working man, "brother," Dreiser criticizes not only the terrible working conditions but also the ignorance or indifference of the working people by irritably asking some questions to them. Besides, he apparently tries to differentiate himself from them, using the word "disagreeable" emphatically. There is no more humanistic sympathy in his comment. What we see is rather bitter hate toward the people. Before his eyes, they are no more people who can share his feeling or thought:

> I know that men labor there with contentment, or if I cannot say that at least with indifference. Horses they seemed to me, or machines, in the main, blind, unseeing animals, given to understand a little of the meaning of life and harnessed in their youth by circumstances, before they could choose, before nature had provided them with intelligence and made to work. (177)

In spite of his own experience as a laborer, Dreiser never identified himself with his coworkers, but, far from doing so, he tried to isolate

himself from them. These points will lead us further into a consideration of "The Toil of the Laborer" written after Dreiser's laboring experience. In the history of this text, we will witness that more and more Dreiser became to be attracted to determinism in which the laborer's plight is a demonstration of Nature's law.

According to Richard W. Dowell, before Dreiser became tormented by his incurable illness, he had admired variety and accepted inequalities as part of Nature's law: To Dreiser, "strength and weakness, wealth and poverty were contracts which gave life its charm and drama."[16] However, having experienced weakness and poverty, having yielded to strength and been far from luxury, Dreiser now found himself outraged by the indifference and brutality of his immediate superiors and recognized keenly the unfair economic gap between capital and labor. Soon after his laboring experience, he wrote "The Toil of the Laborer," although it was not published until 1913 and the revised edition was published in 1920. In the article, he laments the inequality: "That none should suffer, that none should want! This after all seemed the worthiest thought that sprang at the sight of a toil-weary man."[17] These words seem to show Dreiser's sympathy with his coworkers, but in fact he could not totally identify himself with them as already seen in *An Amateur Laborer*. The dullness and lack of imagination and intelligence which kept them in their present position seems appalling, even disgusting to Dreiser. A tone of ambivalence pervaded both *An Amateur Laborer* and "The Toil of the Laborer."

However, in 1920, a revised edition of "The Toil of the Laborer" was published with great change of its contents. Dreiser removed the most passionate pleas for equity and replaced them with a passage that asks whether it was possible or even desirable. The revision turns to what is called a "survival-of-the-fittest" philosophy. Though he expresses sympathy for the lower class in his earlier writings, Dreiser, by 1920, had come to see more bitterly their condition as an inevitable fate.

> Nature had established these inequalities, the smallness of mind in some, the strength and vision in others. Who was I to set about establishing exact justice or equation, Where I had not created? . . . Nature apparently went on the theory of great reward for those who could or would originate and conduct in a large way, little for those who could not: and these at the bottom did not and apparently could not originate. Their reasoning power were not as yet sufficiently developed for that. They were by reason of their mental equipment, hewers of wood and drawers of water.[18]

Compared to the first draft, this revised edition is far from humanistic. In the former, the laborer's situation echoes the failure of the economic system, but, in the latter, it is controlled by Nature which is beyond the human power. After experiencing the bitterness and humiliation by himself in 1903, he must have understood the feeling of a laborer. But the vivid and energetic impression and repulsion against social and economic system had faded significantly as the time goes on.

Conclusion

Sister Carrie reflects a variety of the reality of the age. The sources for the novel suggest that the author was personally involved in the larger social and philosophical influences of the novel's place and time. As discussed above, his own experience, social and class conflicts, and the common people's psychology blend together into the story. It is for these reasons that the novel becomes a radical moral and stylistic departure from anything seen before this novel in the self-consciously higher order of American fiction.

The tactic of American realism is often said to make literature secon-

dary to the social and historical reality. It might be true in a sense, but, as being seen above, at least in Dreiser's *Sister Carrie*, the author does not depict the social reality as a report which excludes the writer's personal thought or perspective. The author seems to willingly involve himself in the story and the characters, although it exposes his ambiguous attitude toward what he describes.

However, in his later writings, Dreiser, in spite of using his own experience, separates himself from the people and becomes more philosophical rather than humanistic. The experience of labor undoubtedly impressed and influenced him and his creativity, but ironically it led him in the opposite direction. It did not make him close to the reality but to the metaphysic dogma, which needs further investigation.

Notes

1. Theodore Dreiser, *An Amateur Laborer*, ed. Richard W. Dowell (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1983) 177.

2. Arthur M. Schlesinger and Dixon Ryan Fox, "Forward," *The Quest for Social Justice*, ed. Harold Underwood Faulkner (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1931), xv.

3. Theodore Dreiser *Sister Carrie* (New York: Bantam, 1982). Subsequent references are to this edition and page numbers are included parenthetically in the text.

4. Theodore Dreiser, "The Factory," *Theodore Dreiser: A Selection of Uncollected Prose*, ed. Donald Pizer (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1977).

5. W. A. Swanberg, *Dreiser* (New York: Bantham, 1967), 30.

6. Laura Hapke, *Tales of the Working Girl: Wage-earning Women in American Literature, 1890-1925* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1992) 68-69.

7. David E. E. Sloane, *Sister Carrie: Theodore Dreiser's Sociological Tragedy* (New York: Twayne Puiblishers, 1992), 23.

8. Michael John McDonough, "A Note on Dreiser's Use of the 1895 Brooklyn Trolley Car Strike," *Dreiser Studies*, vol. 18, no. 1, Spring 1987, 31-34.

9. "Trolley Strike is On," *New York Times*, January 15, 1895, 1.

10. "Violence by Strikers," *New York Times*, January 16, 1895, 1.

11. "Trolley Strike is On," *New York Times*, January 15, 1895, 1.

12. McDonough 33.

13. I owes this information to McDonough 33.

14. "Intrtoduction" in *An Amateur Laborer*. I owe "Intooduction" of this text for Dreiser's biographical facts.

15. *An Amateur Laborer* 152. Subsequent references are to this edition, and page numbers are included parenthetically in the text.

16. Dowell xxx.

17. Theodore Dreiser, "The Toil of the Laborer." This citation is derived from Dowell's "Introduction" of *An Amateur Laborer*.

18. "The Toil of the Laborer," *Hey Rub-a-Dub-Dub* (New York: Boni and Liveright, 1920), 98.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Dreiser, Theodore. *Sister Carrie*. New York: Bantham, 1982.

---*An Amateur Labor*. Ed. Richard W. Dowell. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1983.

---"The Factory." Ed. Donald Pizer. *Theodore Dreiser: A Selection of Uncollected Prose*. Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1977. 175-177.

---*Journalism: Newspaper Writings,* 1892-1895. Ed. T. D. Nostwich. Vol. 1. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988.

---"The Toil of the Laborer." *Hey Rub-a-Dub-Dub*. New York: Moni and Liveright, 1920.

Secondary Sources

Bell, Michael Davitt. *The Problem of American Realism: Studies in the Cultural History of a Literary Idea*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1993.

Gorgol, Miriam. *Theodore Dreiser: Beyond Naturalism.* New York: New York University Press, 1995.

Hapke, Laura, *Tales of the Working Girl: Wage-earning Women in American Literature, 1890-1925.* New York: Twayne Publishers, 1992.

McDonough, Michael John. "A Note on Dreiser's Use of the 1895 Brooklyn Trolley Car Strike." *Dreiser Studies.* Vol.18. No.1 Spring 1987. 31-34.

Mookerjee, R. N. *Theodore Dreiser: His Thought and Social Criticism.* Delhi: Daryaganj, 1974.

New York Times. "Trolley Strike Is On." 15 January 1895. 1.

---"Violence by Strikers." 16 January 1895. 1.

Schlesinger, Arthur M. and Dixon Ryan Fox. "Forward." *The Quest for Social Justice.* Ed. Harold Underwood Faulkner. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1931.

Swanberg, W. A. *Dreiser*. New York: Bantham, 1967.