

Rough in the Bunch: Appalachia's Rayon Girls Fight for the Right to Strike

Senior Division

Individual Documentary

I first learned about the rayon girls through a journal article I studied for an Appalachian History class. I chose this topic because it sparked my interest in relaying a narrative that transcends gender barriers and is both empowering and inspiring to anyone who feels like an underdog.

My research included reviewing oral history accounts of the Bemberg and Glanzstoff plant employees at the University of North Carolina's Oral Histories of the South archive. I visited the McClung Collection Archives where I found articles relating to the strike from local and statewide newspapers. At the Archives of Appalachia at East Tennessee State University and the Tennessee State Library and Archives I was able to view photographs and video footage of the strike. Through the Library of Congress Digital Archives I was able to find period correct videos of the rayon-making process along with footage of suffrage rallies and labor meetings. In the library at the East Tennessee Historical Society I found both primary and secondary sources that related to the history of women's rights in Tennessee, social events in the south, and area interests in Tennessee occurring around 1929.

I created my project in Final Cut Pro X. Through a combination of primary source photos and footage, and a soundtrack of relevant music, I was able to create a narrative of modernity that this topic requires.

My project relates to the NHD theme by identifying the right of the Elizabethton female textile workers—rayon girls—to strike. This right is juxtaposed with the responsibility of the textile mill owners to provide a safe work environment and to pay a fair wage. The rayon girls proved their right to strike—to seek fair treatment, to request equal wages. The mill owners were required to accept the responsibility to create a safe work environment and to deliver a fair wage.

Margaret Bowen led the first wave of strikers out of the spinning room on March 12, 1929. These workers were not part of a union, but were merely a group of women that desired better working conditions and higher wages. The women had been forced to produce more rayon through a process known as the "stretch out" without receiving additional compensation. The strikers were met by opposition and denied their right to strike near the plant from the mill owners, politicians, newspaper reports, and the Carter County Court.

My research uncovered that the Elizabethton Textile Mill Strike of 1929 was the catalyst for a host of other female-led textile mill strikes across the southeast. These strikes improved the working conditions in textile mills and culminated in the 1938 Fair Labor Standards Act. This Act became the cornerstone for all employer responsibility legislation in the United States, leading to the formation of a national minimum wage and a standard forty-four-hour workweek. The significant legacy of the rayon girls is they inspired others workers to claim their rights and the outcome of their right to strike is still felt by every American laborer.

Primary Sources

Books

Dunn, Robert Williams, and Jack Hardy. *Labor and Textiles: A Study of Cotton and Wool Manufacturing*. New York: International Publishers, 1931.

This book helped me learn more about the rayon-making process and the way in which textile mills were run around the time period the Elizabethton strikes occurred.

Gompers, Samuel, John McBride, and William Green. *The American Federationist*. American Federation of Labor, 1915.

This book, a compilation of the issues of the magazine The American Federationist published by the American Federation of Labor in 1915, helped me to understand the importance of unions in labor disputes in the early twentieth century, and how unionism directly impacted the fight for workers' rights.

Harvey, Rowland Hill. *Samuel Gompers*. Stanford University Press, 1935.

This book helped me to learn about the importance of unionism and union leaders in the United States around the time of the Piedmont region strikes. Unions during this time period played a crucial role in the struggle for Southern laborers' rights.

Tippett, Thomas. *When Southern Labor Stirs*. New York: J. Cape & H. Smith, 1931.

This book helped me to understand the attitudes during the time of the Piedmont region strikes toward striking workers, both positive and negative. This book is one of the first to designate the region of the Southeast that contained many textile mills, including the ones in Elizabethton, as the "Piedmont" region. It detailed

the consequences of the "stretch-out" and gave credence to the idea that the Elizabethton strike predicated all other strikes in the region.

Government Documents

Anna Weinstock Schnieder Papers 1921-1967. Kheel Center for Labor-Management Documentation and Archives, Cornell University Library and Online Archive.

Viewing these papers from Cornell University's digital archive helped me to gain an understanding of the mediation tactics practiced by Anna Weinstock, who helped to bring an end to the Elizabethton strikes. Seen as a novelty by many because she was a woman, Weinstock was a shrewd negotiator and often understood the plight of the workers for whom she was mediating discussions.

Loewe V. Lawlor, Legal Information Institute (February 3, 1908).

Reading this primary source legal brief helped me to understand the court standing of the day. The Supreme Court ruled in this case concerning the application of antitrust laws to labor unions. The Court's decision outlawed secondary boycotts as violations of the Sherman Antitrust Act. This limited the activities of strikes as related to the transfer of goods manufactured across state lines. This ruling limited the rights of workers to strike. This helped me develop a further understanding of the rights of American workers in the early 1900s.

United States. Department of Commerce. Bureau of the Census. *Official Register of the United States, 1929: Containing a List of Persons Occupying Administrative and Supervisory Positions in Each Executive and Judicial Department of the Government Including the District of Columbia.* United States Government Printing Office, 1929. Accessed February 21, 2014. Library of Congress.

This register showed the mediators appointed by the federal government to discuss an end to the Elizabethton strike, including Anna Weinstock. This was useful in helping me understand the transitions of mediation that occurred along with their timeline of occurrence and how each mediator brought a unique perspective to the rayon girls' struggle.

United States. Department of Labor. Public Law 426-62: An Act to Create a Department of Labor. *US Department of Labor*. March 4, 1913. Accessed February 21, 2014.

Reading this Act helped me to understand the nature of the responsibility plant owners had to their employees, and how these responsibilities were often neglected. The Department of Labor was created to oversee employers and to help them in the facilitation of their responsibilities. Although owners often disregarded their responsibilities in keeping their employees safe and providing them with a fair wage, the creation of a Department of Labor was an important step in the United States government's recognition of workers' rights.

United States. *The Sherman Anti-trust Law: With Amendments and List of Decisions Thereunder or Relating Thereto*. Washington: Govt. Print. Off., 1904.

This primary source document allowed me to understand that the Sherman Antitrust Act of 1890 was the first measure passed by the U.S. Congress to prohibit trusts. Court rulings as related to this act stated that the act forbade any "restraint of commerce" across state lines, and courts ruled that union strikes and boycotts were covered by the law. This helped me understand the limitations of American workers to strike in certain situations.

United States. Women's Bureau. Department of Labor. *Conditions of Work in Spin Rooms*. By Ethel L. Best. Washington: U.S. G.P.O., 1929.

This government document detailed the appalling treatment women in spinning rooms were forced to work under in textile mills. It noted that in southern states under the stretch-out, conditions were especially deplorable. This primary source provided additional reinforcement to oral interviews from mill workers about the dangerous factories they worked in.

Interviews

Burgess, David. "Interview F-0006." Interview by Dallas A. Blanchard. University of North Carolina Oral History of the American South. August 12, 1983. Accessed February 6, 2014.

This interview, from a Southern social justice activist predominantly active in the 20s, 30s, and 40s, helped me to understand the nature of Southern industrialization, and why factories moved to the less-unionized South. This interview was interesting, as it noted that many Southern towns offered tax breaks and other incentives to corporations who moved factories into their town. This, combined with the ability to pay non-union Southern laborers less money, led to the migration of factories to the South.

Camp, Miriam Bonner. "Interview G-0013." Interview by Mary Frederickson. University of North Carolina Oral History of the American South. April 15, 1976. Accessed March 8, 2014.

This interview helped me to learn more about how the stretch-out affected workers in the mills.

Cole, Robert. "Interview H-0311." Interview by Jacquelyn Dowd Hall. University of North Carolina Oral Histories of the American South. May 10, 1981. Accessed January 29, 2014.

This interview with the local bodyguard of one of the kidnapped union leaders was significant in providing a local perspective on the strikes. Although Cole did not work in the plant, his sister did and he was involved in almost every element of the strike, and viewed firsthand almost all of the clashes between strikers and corporation workers.

Dugger, Sr., George F. "H-0312." Interview by Jacquelyn Dowd Hall. University of North Carolina Oral Histories of the American South. August 9, 1979. Accessed January 29, 2014.

This interview with a lawyer who was present at the Elizabethton strikes provided context as to how the citizens of Elizabethton felt about the strike. I noted that many of the wealthier citizens were divided about the nature of the rayon girls, but most people in the community appreciated the work that they were doing.

Galliher, Christine, and Dave Galliher. "Interview H-0314." Interview by Jacquelyn Dowd Hall. University of North Carolina Oral Histories of the American South. August 8, 1979. Accessed January 29, 2014.

This interview helped me to understand the role of one of the first walk-outs, Christine Galliher, and the role she played in the Elizabethton strikes. Her insight and experience proved very useful as a device to further convey the narrative of the rayon girls in my documentary.

Hopkins, Eva, and Kenneth Hopkins. "Interview H-0167." Interview by Lu Ann Jones. March 5, 19080. Accessed February 23, 2014. University of North Carolina Oral History of the American South.

This interview helped me to learn how the stretch-out process affected everyday workers. It was also useful in explaining the difficulties blacklisted workers faced after the strike.

Archival Collections

American Bemberg Research Department Report, "The Story of American Bemberg Staple Fiber," Johnson City, TN: Archives of Appalachia.

This file helped me to understand how the Bemberg factory (renamed American Bemberg during World War II) came to be. Germans were some of the first to manufacture rayon, but the climate and lack of abundant fresh water in Germany led German factory owners to move to the American South.

Journal Articles

Hackett, Frank Warren. "The Federal Employers' Liability Act of 1908: Is It Constitutional?" *Harvard Law Review* 22, no. 1 (November 1908): 38-47.

This journal article helped me to learn more about the Federal Employers' Liability Act and the opinions about it at the time. This Act was one of the first to establish owner responsibility for workers' rights.

Newspaper and Magazine Articles

"250 Strikers Under Arrest." *The North Adams Transcript* (Adams, MA), May 14, 1929, Afternoon ed., sec. 1.

This newspaper article spoke of the arrest of striking workers. The adjoining photograph was of the remains of a union member's home that had been shattered in an explosion as he attended a union meeting. This article taught me the extreme

lengths that both "sides" of the strike were taking as the strike lengthened.

American Bemberg Corporation, and American Glanzstoff Corporation. "To Our Employees:." *The Elizabethton Star*, May 31, 1929.

This ad placed in a newspaper by the Bemberg and Glanzstoff corporation related the stipulations Anna Weinstock facilitated as a mediator between the strikers and the corporation. It noted that the workers' grievances would be recognized.

"Arrest 5 for Kidnaping Unionists." *The Scranton Republican*, April 5, 1929, sec. A.

This article documented the arrests of five Elizabethton, Tennessee business owners for the kidnaping of Alfred Hoffman of the United Textile Workers of America and Edward McGrady, Vice-President of the American Federation of Labor. This further validated the violent tendencies that the strike initiated in the region.

"Deadlock Grips Textile Strike: 500 Johnson City Workers Stage Strike." *The Elizabethton Star*, April 22, 1929.

This newspaper article helped me to understand how the rayon girls inspired strikes across the southeast, including this strike in the nearby town of Johnson City.

"Green Assails Mill Owners in Textile Strike." *The Scranton Republican*, May 9, 1929, sec. 1.

William Green, President of the American Federation of Labor, is quoted as urging the Senate Manufactures Committee to approve the resolution authorizing a Senate investigation into the Elizabethton Textile Strike. Green contended the mill owners were "sowing seeds of Communism" and described their actions as one of national concern. Green also harshly criticized the governor of Tennessee for sending troops to Elizabethton.

"Green Blames Work Conditions, Wages for Textile Strike." *Jacksonville Daily Journal* (Jacksonville, IL), May 9, 1929, Morning ed., sec. 1.

This article quotes William Green, President of the American Federation of Labor, as stating low wages and "onerous" working conditions as the cause for the Elizabethton strike. The article explains that Green was testifying before a Senate committee and was quoted as saying the mill owners were "sowing the seeds of communism."

"Havoc Sweeps Over Wide." *The Elizabethton Star*, March 14, 1929.

This article told of the calling in of the Tennessee National Guardsmen at plant owner Dr. Arthur Mothwurf's request. The ensuing panic and violence from this act by Governor Henry Hollis Horton swelled the strikers' numbers.

"Kidnapers Seize Two Labor Leaders." *The Reading Times* (Reading, PA), April 5, 1929, sec. A.

This article authored by an Associated Press writer, spoke to the urgency expressed by the United States Department of Labor in preventing the spread of textile strikes across the south. Department of Labor Conciliator, Charles Wood, was sent to the region to see what could be done to end the strike.

Lewis, Nell Battle. "North Carolina at the Cross-Roads." *The Virginia Quarterly Review*, Winter 1930.

This article dealt with the strikes that were springing up since the Elizabethton, Tennessee, strike of 1929 led to the Gastonia, North Carolina, strike of early 1930, and how these strikes led to chaos in the textile towns of the Piedmont region.

"National Affairs: Southern Stirrings." *Time Magazine*, April 15, 1929.

This magazine article talked about the strike in Elizabethton and how it was already beginning to affect workers in surrounding states. Although local newspapers did not report the violence and chaos that occurred during the Elizabethton strike, it is interesting to note that national newspapers and magazines took up the cause of the rayon girls fighting for their rights.

"News of the World Through the Eyes of The Camera." *Alton Evening Telegraph* (Alton, IL), April 27, 1929, Evening ed., sec. A.

This summary of the year to date in headline photographs included images of the three labor leaders that were working with strikers in Elizabethton, Tennessee. This gives credence that this strike had national implications and was being followed in newspapers across the United States.

"No Agreement Yet to Settle Rayon Strike." *The Bee-Danville* (Danville, VA), March 15, 1929, Evening ed.

This article documents the addition of the Tennessee Federation of Workers to support striking Elizabethton textile workers. The support came after Dr. Arthur Mothwurf, President of Bemberg Corporation, declared the plant "would not reopen on a union basis." This information helps me understand that national union leaders saw the strike as a stand ground strike.

"Opponents Ready for Tennessee Textile Strike." *Santa Cruz News*, April 17, 1929, sec. A.

The article cites comments made by Dr. Arthur Mothwurf, Bemberg Plant President, that the plant had been turned over to the Tennessee National Guard.

This move would later prove to launch the strike into violence.

"Plant Claims Workers Back." *Elizabethton Star*, March 15, 1929.

This article corroborates evidence of the Bemberg and Glanzstoff plant owners initially claiming that the strikers were simply a few unhappy workers and that they were back. The growth of the strike and the escalation of violence between the strikers and the plants would eventually prove this information false.

Reinthal, Techn. Franz. "The Rayon and Other Silky Fibers." *Economic*, 1926, 144-48.
Accessed February 22, 2014.

This article, published slightly before the rayon girls' strike in 1929, explained the still-new process of rayon making and how these textile fibers could revolutionize the world.

"STRIKE ENDS: PLANTS OPEN." *The Elizabethton Star*, March 22, 1929.

This headline alerted local newspaper readers that the strike had ended. Unfortunately, other primary source material corroborates that the strike had not ended at this point in time. The Elizabethton Star was pressured by the American Bemberg and Glanzstoff corporation to keep quiet about the strikes. Additionally, this source provided a useful visual representation of the local news media's reaction to the strikes.

"Strike Is Settled: Plants Open at Once." *The Elizabethton Star*, March 23, 1929.

This article, from the perspective of the local news media, reported that the strike had ended. However, oral accounts and other primary source newspapers from

across the country assert that it didn't end until May. However, this newspaper was funded partly by the corporation and so was advised to keep quiet about the escalating violence between the strikers and the National Guardsmen called in by the corporation.

"Strike Quiet: Workers Plan Meeting Tonight." *The Elizabethton Star*, March 15, 1929.

This article detailed the potential meeting of the strikers on the night it was written. Through oral accounts, I was able to discover that night that the meeting was to inform and warn workers about the Tennessee National Guardsmen that were arriving in the town to quiet the strike.

"Strikers and Plants Still at Variance." *The Elizabethton Star*, March 19, 1929.

This article provided evidence as to the escalating violence between the strikers and the corporation. In this article, the calling out of the Tennessee National Guard is detailed more fully.

Talley, Robert. "Industry Moves into Dixie." *Freeport Journal* (Freeport, IL), May 2, 1929, sec. 2.

The author of this article visited the Elizabethton area to investigate the factors behind the southern textile mill strike and how new labor was being recruited into the plant. This helped me understand that the eyes of the nation were truly on this small town and that the events of the strike had national implications.

"Textile Strikers Taken in Charge in Large Number Tennessee Town Tuesday." *The Corsicana Daily Sun* (Corsicana, TX), May 14, 1929, sec. 1.

This article gives details of the arrest of more than two hundred-fifty striking

workers. Each person was charged with intimidation and were escorted to the Carter County Courthouse by the Tennessee National Guardsmen. The article states that the guns of the guardsmen were leveled at a number of strikers and bayonets were drawn. This article expounds on the potential for violence in the strike. It also documents the national attention the strike drew to the region.

"The Garment Worker's Strike." *International Socialist Review*, November 1, 1915, 260-65.

This article helped me to understand the textile strikes that occurred in the North that led many factory owners to move to the American South. This image also served as a useful visual aid in my documentary.

Photographs, Video, and Audio

Bemberg: The 1929 Strike Epilogue. Performed by WSJK-TV. American Bemberg Corporation Film and Video Collection: Tennessee State Library and Archives, 1974. DVD.

This video contained original footage from the strike and interviews with three of the bosses who ran the plants during the strike in 1929. It was interesting to see a perspective that differed from that of the rayon girls, and provided insight into what these bosses thought of the strikes at the time.

Brothers, Roe, writer. *Bristol Tennessee Blues.* Hill Billies. Recorded 1925. Vocalion, MP3.

This song helped me to provide a uniquely East Tennessee viewpoint within my documentary.

Carter, A. P., Sara Carter, and Maybelle Carter, writers. *Can the Circle Be Unbroken.* The Carter Family. JSP Records, 1928, MP3.

This classic song served as a recognizable reminder to my audience of the location and context of the 1920s South within my documentary.

Glanzstoff Plant Construction 3/1/1928-4/15-1929/ Equipment Demonstration and Training Films. American Bemberg Corporation Film and Video Collection: Tennessee State Library and Archives. DVD.

This actual video footage of the Bemberg and Glanzstoff plants from the Tennessee State Library and Archives helped me to provide context for my audience as to the construction of the plants and added a useful visual component to my documentary.

Historic Views of Elizabethton, TN: 1928-1930/North American Rayon Strike, 1929/Herbert Hoover's Visit to Carter County, TN. American Bemberg Corporation Film and Video Collection: Tennessee State Library and Archives. DVD.

These videos provided a valuable resource and insight into the activities of Elizabethton residents. It also helped me to see visually the magnitude of the strikes, the amount of Tennessee National Guardsmen, the aftermath of much of the violence in the town during the strike, and the negotiations between various labor leaders, mediators, and plant bosses. It also proved to be a useful visual device in displaying to my audience the lives of the rayon girls during the strike.

Hq. Co. 2nd Battalion, Co. G of the 177th Infantry of the Tennessee National Guard,. 1929. 1929 Strike at the Bemberg and American Glanzstoff Plants, Elizabethton Star Newspaper, Elizabethton, TN. Compiled by Iris Ellis.

This image helped me to understand the sheer number of National Guardsmen deployed to Elizabethton to quash the rayon workers' strike. Due to their arrival, violence erupted in Elizabethton, Tennessee, as workers became agitated at their government's refusal to hear their rights.

Misc. Footage From the Library of Congress. 1925-1930. DVD.

This footage, including period-correct video of the rayon-making process, helped me to provide a visual component for my audience so as to help them understand how rayon factories were operated.

Morse, Lee. *Mississippi Mud Fox Trot = Barro De Mississippi*. Lee Morse and Her Bluegrass Boys. Victor, 1928, MP3.

This song helped me to convey the period of Progressivism discussed within my documentary.

Senate Manufacturing Committee. 1929. The History of the Finance Committee, The United States Senate Committee on Finance, Washington, D.C. Accessed March 22, 2014.

This image helped me to show my audience what the United States Senate Committee investigation meetings that were called in the wake of the violence surrounding Elizabethton, Tennessee, may have looked like.

Suffrage Footage From Encyclopedia Britannica Digital Archive. 1919. DVD.

This video footage from various suffragette rallies helped me to visually demonstrate to my audience how suffrage rallies were carried out. These rallies often inspired women like the rayon girls to fight for their rights.

Secondary Sources

Books

Applebome, Peter. *Dixie Rising: How the South Is Shaping American Values, Politics and Culture*. New York: Times Books, 1996.

This book helped me to understand the importance of the labor movement in the American South and how these values became incorporated into the national consciousness. An important facet of this book was its description of the South as the "bad job capital of America," and this quote helped me to understand why so many industrial organizations migrated to the south, due to the combination of easy availability of natural resources and cheap and abundant labor, and the rarely unionized aspect of the south. This book asserts that many southerners viewed unions as a "bugaboo of yankeeism" due to propaganda from mill owners.

Atkins, Joseph B. *Covering for the Bosses: Labor and the Southern Press*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2008.

This book helped me to understand how local newspapers during labor disputes often did not cover the story, or looked for ways to tell it in the bosses' favor. The reasons for this are several; first, many factory owners sponsored the local newspapers almost entirely; and second, many of the reporters had family members involved at the factory and didn't want them to lose their jobs; third.

Bergeron, Paul H., Stephen V. Ash, and Jeanette Keith. *Tennesseans and Their History*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1999.

This book contained a brief footnote about the Elizabethton strike, and provided additional historical context about Tennessee during the time period of the strike.

Bernstein, Irving. *The Lean Years: A History of the American Worker, 1920-1933*.

Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1960.

After reading this book, I gained a greater understanding of the impact of the Elizabethton strikes of 1929 on the surrounding area, often called the Piedmont region. I also learned how the region's available natural resources, particularly the wealth of nearby fresh water, affected the growth of factories in the region.

Brenner, Aaron, Benjamin Day, and Immanuel Ness. *The Encyclopedia of Strikes in American History*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2009.

This encyclopedia helped me to understand the historical context behind labor struggles in the United States, and how earlier strikes in the North influenced the Elizabethton strikers and set the precedent for the responsibility of employers to protect their workers.

Bucy, Carole Stanford. *Tennessee through Time: The Later Years*. Layton, UT: Gibbs Smith, 2008.

This book provided me with background information on the history of the state of Tennessee during the Elizabethton strikes.

Carson, Clarence Buford. *A Basic History of the United States: The Growth of America 1878-1928*. 13th ed. Vol. IV. Wadley, Ala.: American Textbook Committee, 1997.

This book gave credence to the notion that the Elizabethton strikes sparked a wave of strikes across the southeast. In it is detailed a host of other strikes in states like North Carolina and Georgia whose strikers were inspired by the rayon girls.

Clayton, Bruce, and John Salmond. *Debating Southern History: Ideas and Action in the Twentieth Century*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 1999.

This book helped me to understand more about working class culture in the south during the time period of the Elizabethton strike, and how this may have influenced the rayon girls.

Clinton, Catherine. *Half Sisters of History: Southern Women and the American past*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1994.

This book addresses how the histories of Southern women are often pushed to the side of America's mainstream historical narrative. It also addresses the reasons why the rayon girls' story is not known; within labor history, the histories of women are silenced, within American history, the histories of Southern women are silenced, and within Southern history, the histories of industrial laborers and labor revolutionaries are silenced.

Cobb, James C. *The Selling of the South: The Southern Crusade for Industrial Development 1936-1990*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1993.

This book helped me to learn more about the expansion of industrialism in the South. The author highlighted the advantages for plants to relocate from the Northern United States to the southern region.

Cott, Nancy F. *No Small Courage: A History of Women in the United States*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

This book helped me to understand the often little-known stories of women who changed the face of the United States. It directly references how women were involved in the labor movement, and how they influenced this cause.

Dash, Joan. *We Shall Not Be Moved: The Women's Factory Strike of 1909*. New York: Scholastic, 1996.

This book helped me to understand how strikes were carried out in northern states, and the differences and similarities between this earlier strike in the north and the Elizabethton strike in the south.

Degler, Carl N. *At Odds: Women and the Family in American from the Revolution to the Present*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1980.

This book helped me to understand the role of women as documented in key elements in American History. This historical perspective gave me insight into how these roles affected female laborers.

English, Beth Anne. *A Common Thread: Labor, Politics, and Capital Mobility in the Textile Industry*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2006.

This book dealt with the intertwining of politics and labor in the textile mill towns of the Piedmont where so many of these textile strikes, like the Elizabethton strike, occurred. The fabric of smaller towns like Elizabethton would be directly altered through the extension of industrial labor capitalism with the introduction of these mills.

Escott, Paul D., and David R. Goldfield. *Major Problems in the History of the American South. Vol. II: The New South: Documents and Essays*. Lexington: D.C. Heath and Company, 1990.

This book provided more context as to the history of the New South Movement and how it affected Appalachian communities like Elizabethton, Tennessee.

Galenson, Alice. *The Migration of the Cotton Textile Industry from New England to the South, 1880-1930*. New York: Garland Pub., 1985.

This book helped me to understand how and why the textile industry in the United States migrated South. The reasons included: an abundance of natural resources, cheap and available labor, cheap land, and low property taxes imposed upon the factories.

Gompers, Samuel, John McBride, and William Green. *The American Federationist*. American Federation of Labor, 1915.

This book, a compilation of the issues of the magazine The American Federationist published by the American Federation of Labor in 1915, helped me to understand the importance of unions in labor disputes in the early twentieth century, and how unionism directly impacted the fight for workers' rights.

Grantham, Dewey W. *Southern Progressivism: The Reconciliation of Progress and Tradition*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1983.

This book helped me to understand the nature of Progressivism in the South, and how this directly influenced Southern people like the rayon girls.

Hall, Jacquelyn Dowd, James LeLoudis, Robert Korstad, Mary Murphy, Lu Ann Jones, and Christopher B. Daly. *Like a Family: The Making of a Southern Cotton Mill World*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1987.

This book helped me to understand the interpersonal relationships between textile mill workers, especially the close friendships women in these mills developed and how these friendships influenced textile mill strikes in the south.

Lee, Tom. *The Tennessee-Virginia Tri-cities: Urbanization in Appalachia, 1900-1950*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 2005.

This book spoke to the industrialization of Elizabethton as a direct result of the textile mills' growth in that region, and how this affected residents and the community as a whole, both now and then.

Link, William A. *The Paradox of Southern Progressivism: 1880-1930*. University of North Carolina Press, 1992.

This book helped me to understand how Progressivism in the South, while not quite as liberal as Northern progressives, helped to liberate in some way the laborers of the South.

Lynch, Timothy P. *Strike Songs of the Depression*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2001.

This book taught me more about strike songs that were popular for protesters during the Piedmont strikes of 1929-1934, and how the rayon girls may have used these songs. This gave me a greater understanding of what a typical day for a striking rayon girl may have sounded.

Marrin, Albert. *Flesh and Blood so Cheap: The Triangle Fire and its Legacy*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2011.

This book gave me historical context on one of the most well-known labor history events in the United States. It helped me to understand how labor disputes were often carried out in the north, and the cultural differences between workers in northern and southern plants.

Peters, Jackie, and Dawn Trivette. Peters. *Carter County*. Charleston, SC: Arcadia Pub., 2012.

This book helped me to learn more about the history of Carter County, Tennessee, where Elizabethton is located. Elizabethton is the county seat.

Pope, Liston. *Millhands & Preachers: A Study of Gastonia*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1965.

This book gives credence to the idea that the strike in Elizabethton was the catalyst to a host of other strikes across the Piedmont region. One of the most significant and most violence were the strikes that occurred in Gastonia, North Carolina. The study of these Gastonia strikes helped me to understand how other workers were inspired by the rayon girls' fight for their rights.

Salmond, John A. *The General Textile Strike of 1934: From Maine to Alabama*. Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2002.

This book helped me to learn how the Elizabethton strike of 1929 directly influenced a wave of strikes across the Southeast in what as known as the General Textile Strike of 1934. This strike had been building since the rayon girls' first strike at Elizabethton, as evidenced in the strikes that occurred soon after across the Piedmont region. Reading this helped me to understand what an impact the rayon girls had on the layout of the textile industry in the United States for years to come.

Sherr, Lynn, and Jurate Kazickas. *The American Woman's Gazetteer*. New York: Bantam Books, 1976.

This book provided examples of inspiring American women in history, state by state. It was specifically helpful in educating me about the role of Tennessee's suffragettes and how they may have inspired the women of Elizabethton.

Tindall, George B. *The Emergence of the New South, 1913-1945*. Vol. 10. A History of the South. Louisiana State University Press, 1967.

This book helped me to understand more about the New South Movement and how it affected Appalachian communities like Elizabethton, Tennessee.

Whalen, Robert Weldon. *"Like Fire in Broom Straw": Southern Journalism and the Textile Strikes of 1929-1931*. Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 2001.

This book helped me to understand the bias through which southern journalism hid the actions of mill owners during the textile strikes. This is particularly obvious during the Elizabethton strike. The Elizabethton Star, a local newspaper heavily funded by ad revenue from the Bemberg and Glanzstoff plants, refused to print negative editorials regarding the mill owners during the strike. The paper did, however, print various ads from the plants to the workers encouraging them to cease striking, and explaining the futility of the strike.

Wheeler, Marjorie Spruill. *New Women of the New South: The Leaders of the Woman Suffrage Movement in the Southern States*. Oxford University Press, 1993.

This book helped me to understand how the suffrage movement was carried out in the American south, and how the tactics of these southern suffragettes inspired working-class women to fight for their rights.

Wood, Phillip J. *Southern Capitalism: The Political Economy of North Carolina, 1880-1980*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1986.

This book helped me to understand the political economy of the "stretch-out." The stretch-out became the catalyst for the Elizabethton strike and eventually the wave of strikes immediately following. The stretch-out was a wave of high production, lower wages, and fewer laborers forced upon southern textile mill workers due to the rapid technological increase of machinery ability. The mill owners forced workers to produce so much that they were "stretched" both

physically and mentally. This business practice led to an increase in workplace accidents and health issues among the workforce.

Zieger, Robert H. *Organized Labor in the Twentieth-century South*. Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1991.

This book helped me to understand the importance of unions in southern labor, both historically and present-day. This author addresses the past history of the less-unionized south and how this lack of unionization has become the norm across the United States. This book also asserts the necessity of unions in the south, and that the fight for labor rights will be won and lost in the south, and acknowledges the importance historically of the rayon girls in this struggle.

Government Documents

"Map of the Appalachian Region." Map. Accessed March 23, 2014. ARC.

This map helped me to understand where the Appalachian Mountains lie on a map of the United States, in order to properly visualize this unique region.

United States. United States Tariff Commission. *RAYON STAPLE FIBER (Certain Cellulose Filaments)*. Compiled by Joseph E. Talbott. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1961.

This government document helped me to understand the ways in which the rayon-making process was altered in order to be safer for workers.

United States. Wage and Hour and Public Contracts Divisions. United States Department of Labor. *General Statement as to the Effect of the Portal-to-portal Act of 1938. Title 29, Chapter V, Code of Federal Regulations Part 790 on the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1908. November 1947*. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1947.

This government document taught me how the Fair Labor Standards Act positively impacted the rights of workers for years to come. This shows that the rayon girls right to strike changed the landscape of workers' rights.

United States. White House Rural Council. *Made in Rural America: Helping Appalachian Business Sell to the World*. By Earl F. Gohl. Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2014.

This article informed me about the current state of Appalachian industrialization and unionization. It helped me to learn how labor struggles of the past can influence future endeavors.

Interviews

Dr. Alice Kessler Speaks About Women's Roles in Labor History. Performed by Dr. Alice Kessler. Strength in Union, 2013. DVD.

This interview with a professor from Columbia University helped me to understand the militancy of female strikers in the United States.

Brooks, Dr. Jennifer. "More About the Rayon Girls." E-mail interview by author. February 28, 2014.

This interview with Dr. Brooks, who has worked exclusively with women's labor history and has helped to create exhibits related to the rayon girls, greatly helped me to place the importance of the Elizabethton strike in the context of greater women's, labor, and Southern history. A professor at Auburn University, Dr. Brooks was able to give credence as an expert in the field to the notion that the rayon girls started the labor revolution in the South.

Moore, Gary W. "Interview with the President of the Tennessee Branch of the AFL-

CIO." Telephone interview by author. March 20, 2014.

This interview with the President of the Tennessee branch of the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations helped me to understand the impact of the textile strikes in Tennessee, begun by the rayon girls, had on union activity and government legislation even today. President Moore helped me to understand the importance of labor unions in the South today, and how the female strikers in Elizabethton set a precedent for female involvement in the work of unions, especially in the South.

Journal Articles

Arnow, Pat, ed. "Working in Appalachia." *Now and Then* 5, no. 1 (Spring 1988): 2-9.

This journal article, published through East Tennessee State University's Center for Appalachian Studies, helped me how the industrialization of the south more fully. This article details the labor struggles of coal miners, as well as factory workers, and includes interviews and oral histories that lend credence to the ways in which industrialization drastically changed the subsistence farming agrarian culture of Appalachia forever.

Clark, J. Michael. "The Agrarian Male: Economic and Ecological Challenges in the New Century." Lecture, American Men's Study Association Annual Meeting, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN, 2005.

This journal article addresses the current struggles farmers in Appalachia and across the American South face and the ongoing nature of these struggles since the fall of the Old South's plantation economy.

Clemente, Deirdre. "Striking Ensembles: The Importance of Clothing on the Picket Line." *Labor Studies Journal* 30, no. 4 (January 2006): 1-15.

This journal article helped me to understand the importance of the ways in which female protesters dressed throughout the 20th century. This was of particular importance to the story of the rayon girls; the Elizabethton protesters often wore outfits decorated with American flags. The reasons for this are: first, a display of patriotism often won them support in the community, as America was fraught with nationalism after World War One; secondly, the National Guardsmen patrolling Elizabethton during this turbulent period were required to stop and salute any American flag they saw; and thirdly, they were protesting the German owners and operators of the plant. By stopping the National Guardsmen, who often harmed protesters by attacking them with rocks, the butts of their guns, or even tear gas. By engaging in protest fashion, the rayon girls were able to protect themselves in a nonviolent way.

DeNatale, Doug, and Glenn Hinson. "The Southern Textile Song Tradition Reconsidered." *Journal of Folklore Research* 28, no. 2/3 (May 1991): 103-33. Accessed March 20, 2014. JSTOR.

This journal article showed me the importance of protest songs during the Piedmont strikes. These songs aired the grievances of workers and promoted solidarity within striking groups, especially between female strikers, who often wrote and performed the songs.

Hall, Jacquelyn Dowd. "Disorderly Women: Gender and Labor Militancy in the Appalachian South." *The Journal of American History* 73, no. 2 (September 1986). Accessed February 21, 2014.

This journal article first exposed me to the story of the rayon girls. I was inspired by the nature of these women to break traditional gender stereotypes by fighting for their rights.

Hall, Jacquelyn Dowd, and James LeLoudis. "Cotton Mill People: Work, Community, and Protest in the Textile South, 1880-1940." *The American Historical Review* 91, no. 2 (April 1986): 245-86. Accessed March 17, 2014. JSTOR.

This journal article dealt with the ideals of small Southern communities largely influenced by textile mills like Elizabethton and how these ideals came to fruition in their strikes. Through this, I learned how the independence of Southerners, especially those in the Appalachian South, would lead to more strikes.

Harrop, J. "The Growth Of The Rayon Industry In The Inter War Years." *Bulletin of Economic Research* 20, no. 2 (November 1968): 71-84. doi:10.1111/j.1467-8586.1968.tb00040.x.

This article informed me as to how the rayon industry grew and why it settled in predominantly the Piedmont region. Rayon was invented in Germany, but Europe did not have the fresh water supply nor the cheap and abundant labor source that the American South had.

Lane, Yvette Florio. "'No Fertile Soil for Pathogens': Rayon, Advertising, and Biopolitics in Late Weimar Germany." *Journal of Social History* 44, no. 2 (Winter 2010): 545-62.

This article was interesting, as it was a discussion of how class warfare and racism played into the placement of German rayon plants in Elizabethton. This article asserts that the early stages of Nazism and nationalism in Germany gave Aryan Germans a sense of superiority over Americans, who they considered "unhygienic" due to the mixing of races and cultures in America. This is why many German plant owners believed it not immoral to pay workers less for more work and to place them in dangerous working conditions.

Rodgers, Daniel T. "In Search of Progressivism." *Reviews in American History* 10, no. 4 (December 1982): 113-32. doi:10.2307/2701822.

This journal article helped me to learn more about the Progressive movement in the United States, and how it influenced laborers' rights, with the goal to create safer working conditions, and women's rights, with the goal to improve women's standing in society through voting rights and better employment.

Samuel, Howard D. "Troubled Passage: The Labor Movement and the Fair Labor Standards Act." *Monthly Labor Review*, December 2000, 32-37.

This journal article taught me about the rough passage of the Fair Labor Standards Act, and how it has impacted workers since its inception in 1908.

Selby, John G. "'Better to Starve in the Shade than in the Factory': Labor Protest in High Point, North Carolina, in the Early 1930s." *The North Carolina Historical Review* 64, no. 1 (January 1987): 43-64. Accessed March 17, 2014. JSTOR.

This journal article gave credence to the idea that the Elizabethton strikes preceded all other strikes in the Piedmont region and directly inspired workers across the region to strike for their rights.

Tedesco, Marie. "Claiming Public Space, Asserting Class Identity, and Displaying Patriotism: The 1929 Rayon Workers' Strike Parades in Elizabethton, Tennessee." *Journal of Appalachian Studies* 12, no. 2 (2006): 55-87. Accessed March 17, 2014. JSTOR.

This journal article examined the primary source footage of the strikers held at East Tennessee State University and the Tennessee State Library and Archives. It helped me gain a clearer perspective as to what the rayon girls wanted to achieve through public marches.

Newspaper and Magazine Articles

East Tennessee Historical Society. *Elizabethton Rayon Plants Strike, 1929*. Teaching American History (Library of Congress), 2008.

This small pamphlet helped me to learn basic information about the history of the Elizabethton strike and how it affected the greater region of East Tennessee with regard to both women's and labor history.

Hodges, Ann C. "Strike and You're Out: The Supreme Court's Destruction of the Right to Strike." *Truthout*, April 25, 2013. Accessed 21 February 2014

This article, written by a law professor, outlines the importances of the right of the American worker to strike. This right was first protected by the National Labor Relations Act in 1938. This secondary source helped me understand how the rights of the American worker have evolved over time, but is ultimately rooted in the effects of the strikes of the twentieth century.

Goldstein, Buford J., and John Crockett. "The American Bemberg Research Department Report, "The Story of American Bemberg Staple Fiber,"" In *Archives of Appalachia*. Johnson City, TN, 1952.

This report, published several years after the strike in Elizabethton, dealt directly with the improvement of working conditions due to the rayon girls' strike. This article also examines how the rayon-making process was altered in order to be safer for workers since the building of the plants.

Pope, James Gray. "How American Workers Lost the Right to Strike, and Other Tales." *Rutgers Law School (Newark) Faculty Papers*, 2004. Accessed January 13, 2014.

This secondary source, published in the Rutgers law school dispatch, outlines the origins of five statements of labor law made by the Supreme Court, each of which has had a devastating impact on the American labor movement. This helped me understand the impact each ruling has had on the rights of the American worker. This aided my project in developing a statement of rights that are afforded to the worker under the United States Constitution, legislation, and rulings.

Photographs and Video

Photo of Gary Moore, President. Tennessee AFL-CIO Staff, Tennessee American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations, Nashville, TN.

This photo served as a useful visual representation of Gary Moore, President of the Tennessee AFL-CIO, within my documentary.

Major Episodes in American Labor History. Performed by Thomas E. Woods, Jr. Suffolk Community College: Ludwig Von Mises Institute, 2010. DVD. Accessed February 21, 2014.

This video helped me to understand the role of an injunction in labor disputes.

Sound Recordings

Auerbach, Dan. *Tighten Up*. Performed by Patrick Carney. The Black Keys Cover. Danger Mouse, 2010, MP3.

This song provided a bluegrass twist on a modern classic, and served as a useful transformative transition in my documentary.

Jury, Lukas, performer. *Royals (Lorde Cover)*. Recorded August 18, 2013. MP3.

This acoustic version of a popular modern song helped me to retain modernity within my documentary while still retaining a rustic context.

"MIA Bad Girls - Piano Cover." YouTube. July 08, 2012. Accessed December 3, 2013.

This song served as a sort of Easter egg to myself within my documentary. A dramatic take on one of my favorite songs, this fit perfectly within the nail-biting sequence of my documentary.

Monroe, Ashley, Angaleena Presley, and Miranda Lambert. *Hell on Heels*. Pistol Annies. RCA, 2011, MP3.

I used this song as a quirky reminder of the often weaponized womanhood—characterized as “disorderly” or “tough”—that many rayon girls had to undertake in order to be taken seriously during the Elizabethton strike.

Spektor, Regina. *Après Moi Instrumenta*. Sire/Warner Brother Records, 2012, MP3.

This song brought the aura of intensity—of the drama that occurred during the Elizabethton strikes within my documentary.

Spektor, Regina. *US*. Sire/Warner Brother Records, 2006, MP3.

This song is a bubbly package, wrapping up the difficulties of labor strikes for the rayon girls and playing while their impact is demonstrated.

Williams, Joy, John Paul White, and J. T. Corenlous, writers. *Barton Hollow*. Performed by Joy Williams and John Paul White. The Civil Wars. Prod. by Charlie Peacock, 2011, MP3.

This song, while modern, brought a rustic, Appalachian, and rebellious feel to my

documentary.

Websites

"1929 American Glanzstoff Corporation Worker Strike." Carter County History Online. 2011. Accessed February 21, 2014.

This website helped me to discover some basic information about the strike and how it affected the larger community of Carter County, in which Elizabethton is located. It provides a unique local perspective on the strike.

Princeton Online Encyclopedia. 2007. Accessed January 10, 2014.

This website helped me to learn some basic information about Elizabethton, Tennessee. It includes historic information and current statistics on population growth and industry.

Atkins, Joe. "Martyred Labor Minstrel Ella May Wiggins Celebrated in North Carolina." *The Institute for Southern Studies*, February 3, 2012. Accessed March 19, 2014. Website.

This article helped me to learn more about Ella May Wiggins, a balladeer who was shot and killed during a textile mill strike in Gastonia, North Carolina. This article gives credence to the idea that the Elizabethton strikes were the catalyst for other violent textile mill strikes across what is known as the Piedmont region. This story is jarring, as it speaks to the level of southern women's involvement in these strikes. Her last words are particularly indicative of the southern tradition and serve as incontrovertible evidence of the resilience of these women and the violence of these strikes: "Lord 'a mercy, they done and shot me!"

"Progressive Era Investigations." US Department of Labor. 2010. Accessed March 20, 2014.

This website article from the United States Department of Labor helped me to understand the ways in which Progressivism sought to improve working conditions for laborers across the United States.

Tedesco, Marie. *The Tennessee Encyclopedia of History and Culture*. 2.0nd ed.

This article helped me to understand the grand scheme of the events that occurred during the Elizabethton strike.

"Women in the Progressive Era." *Women in the Progressive Era*. 2007. Accessed March 13, 2014.

This article helped me to learn more about the role of women in the Progressive Movement.