

**FROM DANGER TO SAFETY:  
HOW THE TRIANGLE SHIRTWAIST FACTORY FIRE SAVED AMERICA  
ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY**

## Primary Sources

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Brothers, Brown. "5780pb39f20aa." Photograph. trianglefire.ilr.cornell.edu. Cornell, unknown. Web. Feb 17, 2020. <<https://trianglefire.ilr.cornell.edu/slides/145.html>>

By examining this photograph, we learned that the fire hoses didn't have enough pressure to reach the eighth floor of the Asch Building to help put out the fire.

Brothers, Brown. "5780-087pb1f5ap." Photograph. trianglefire.ilr.cornell.edu. Cornell, unknown. Web. Feb 17, 2020. <<https://trianglefire.ilr.cornell.edu/slides/151.html#screen>>

This photograph gave us a visual on what it really looked like for everyone witnessing the fire. The people looked up at the workers who were trapped but unable to help them, watched people fall from the building only to be crushed by the impact. It helped us understand this scene a little better.

Brothers, Brown. "5780-087pb1f5k." Photograph. trianglefire.ilr.cornell.edu. Cornell, unknown. Web. Feb 17, 2020. <<https://trianglefire.ilr.cornell.edu/slides/153.html#screen>>

We used this photograph to see how bad it must have been for those who had to watch the tragedy, and how devastating it was for those who had a family member die in the fire. Most had a hard time identifying those who perished because they were in pieces.

Brothers, Brown. "5780pb39f20ae." Photograph. trianglefire.ilr.cornell.edu. Cornell, unknown. Web. Feb 17, 2020. <<https://trianglefire.ilr.cornell.edu/slides/155.html#screen>>

This photograph shows a huge hole in the cement that was created by some workers who decided to jump out of the windows instead of being burned. It gave us a visual on how serious the fire really was for all of those people who died.

Brothers, Brown. "5780-087pb1f5ap." Photograph. trianglefire.ilr.cornell.edu. Cornell, unknown. Web. Feb 17, 2020. <<https://trianglefire.ilr.cornell.edu/slides/151.html#screen>>

By using this visual, we understood the devastation of those who had to watch the young girls and men die in the fire, helpless to do anything about it.

Brothers, Brown. "5780Pb39f15g." Photograph. trianglefire.ilr.cornell.edu. Cornell, unknown. Web. Feb 17, 2020. <<https://trianglefire.ilr.cornell.edu/slides/159.html>>

This photo shows the building after it was burnt. In it, you can see the long tables and crowded work areas.

Brothers, Brown. "5780pb39f20d." Photograph. [trianglefire.ilr.cornell.edu](https://trianglefire.ilr.cornell.edu/slides/176.html#screen). Cornell, unknown. Web. Feb 17, 2020. <<https://trianglefire.ilr.cornell.edu/slides/176.html#screen>>

This photograph helped us better understand how difficult it was for family members to recognize their loved ones because they were so burned. Most had to rely on the possessions their family members wore to identify them.

Byron. "5780pb30f24b." Photograph. [trianglefire.ilr.cornell.edu](https://trianglefire.ilr.cornell.edu/slides/273.html#screen). Cornell, unknown. Web. Feb 17, 2020. <<https://trianglefire.ilr.cornell.edu/slides/273.html#screen>>

This picture helped us visualize the labor unions and what the people did to change working conditions for those working in factories, children who were forced to work, and workers who had to endure unfair pay.

Hine, Lewis. "5780pb13f7j." Photograph. [trianglefire.ilr.cornell.edu](https://trianglefire.ilr.cornell.edu/slides/217.html). Cornell, unknown. Web. Feb 17, 2020. <<https://trianglefire.ilr.cornell.edu/slides/217.html>>

We used this source to show that little children worked in factories at this time. We learned that kids as young as 5 worked in the factories. In the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory there were many young immigrant girls working at the time of the fire.

Hochfield, Max. Interview by Sigmund Arywitz. The 1911 Triangle Factory Fire, January 20, 1957, <https://trianglefire.ilr.cornell.edu/primary/survivorInterviews/MaxHochfieldAudio.html>. Accessed Feb 7, 2020.

We used this source to gain further knowledge on what it was like to be in the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory at the time of the fire. We learned that the elevators at the factory were often crowded, and most of the time people got stuck in them. We also learned that only one out of the four elevators were operating during the time of the fire.

Lemlich, Clara. "Life in the Shop." The Cooper Union. Cooper Union's Great Hall, Nov 22, 1909. Testimonial.

We learned about working conditions in factories and mines, and how important the development of Labor Unions was during the Industrial Revolution.

Maisler, Dora. Interview by Sigmund Arywitz. The 1911 Triangle Factory Fire, 12 April, 1957, <https://trianglefire.ilr.cornell.edu/primary/survivorInterviews/DoraMaisler.html>. Accessed Feb 7, 2020.

By reading this interview, we learned more about what the factory was like for the workers and how terrifying it was to be in the middle of the fire. We learned more about the workers' perspectives of the building and how their working conditions prevented a lot of them from escaping.

Newman, Pauline M. International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union Archives, <http://trianglefire.ilr.cornell.edu/primary/letters/PaulineNewman.html>.

This letter helped us understand some of the working conditions at the factory and why the

workers endured these conditions instead of finding another job. Many worked overtime without being paid for the extra time. They were paid \$6.00 a week regardless of how many hours they worked.

New-York Tribune. [volume] (New York [N.Y.]), 26 March 1911. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.  
<<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83030214/1911-03-26/ed-1/seq-5/>>

This article taught us more about what the official firemen thought about the fire and what conditions caused more deaths.

New-York Tribune. [volume] (New York [N.Y.]), 27 March 1911. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.  
<<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83030214/1911-03-27/ed-1/seq-4/>>

We used this source to gain further knowledge on the work of labor unions. We learned that many people reached out to Blanck and Harris about their unsafe working conditions, but they didn't listen. We also learned that after the fire, every factory or work place had to have automatic fire sprinklers that worked.

New-York Tribune. [volume] (New York [N.Y.]), 25 March 1912. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.  
<<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83030214/1912-03-25/ed-1/seq-5/>>

This article helped us understand more about what had happened to change the unsafe conditions in factories a year after the fire, and what still needed to be done to ensure the workers safety.

Pauline, Pepe. The 1911 Triangle Factory Fire, 19 March, 1986,  
<https://trianglefire.ilr.cornell.edu/primary/survivorInterviews/PaulinePepe.html>. Accessed Feb 14, 2020.

We used this source to have a further understanding of the locked door on the ninth floor of the building. We learned that the door was locked to prevent girls from stealing blouses, extra material, and from taking extra breaks. Another thing we learned is that the machines and tables were almost touching, so there was little room to move around.

Schneiderman, Rose. "We Have Found You Wanting." Address Industrial Safety. The Metropolitan Opera House, Apr 2, 1911. Testimonial.

We used this source to understand the workplace disasters that happened during that time period. We learned that many workplaces had similar conditions to the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory. We also learned that most factories were packed full of children; this is because many families were poor immigrants.

Stein, Leon. *Out of the Sweatshop: The Struggle for Industrial Democracy*. New York: Quadrangle/New Times Book Company, 1977. pp. 194-195.

We used this source to understand how horrible conditions in factories were during the Industrial Revolution in the United States. We learned that people worked 6 days a week for 14 -16 hours a

day. This included children. We also learned that workers had very little rights and had to deal with multiple safety hazards.

The Tacoma Times. [volume] (Tacoma, Wash.), 27 March 1911. Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers. Lib. of Congress.  
<<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn88085187/1911-03-27/ed-1/seq-8/>>

We used this source to further our understanding of the working conditions in the factory. One thing we learned is that many of the workers were allowed to smoke--they usually threw their cigarette butts into scrap bins or onto the floor.

The Washington Herald. [volume] (Washington, D.C.), 26 March 1911. Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers. Lib. of Congress.  
<<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn83045433/1911-03-26/ed-1/seq-1/>>

This newspaper article showed us more about how some of the shirtwaist workers died. Some were burnt to mere skeletons, others were killed by jumping from the windows, and some even died by jumping down elevator shafts and were crushed.

Thompson, Charles Willis. Rare and Manuscript Collections,  
<http://trianglefire.ilr.cornell.edu/primary/letters/CharlesWillisThompson.html>.

We used this source to learn what the fire was like from a bystander's perspective. We learned that the horror of watching the fire was just as bad as being in the fire. One of the worst things to watch was the girls jumping from the windows. It was very hard to identify the dead because they were mostly ashes with no particular form or shape.

Unknown. "Lived Amid Flames, But Nearly Drowns". New York Times, Mar 26, 1911, p. 4. Newspaper.

When reading this newspaper article, we learned that one of the first living people to be found in the building after the fire was Hyman Meshel. He was found in a corner of the basement, covered in soot and water up to his neck. Hyman slid down one of the ropes of the elevator shaft to escape the flames.

Unknown. "141 Men and Girls Die in Waist Factory Fire; Trapped High Up in Washington Place Building; Street Strewn with Bodies; Piles of Dead Inside". New York Times, Mar 26, 1911, p.1. Newspaper.

This article helped us better understand the fear and the terror of the fire. We were able to understand the people's perspective of this horrific event.

Unknown. "02-20-13-TriangleShirtWaistFactory-1-1024x678." Photograph.  
<https://fashionschooldaily.com/>. Academy of Art University, unknown. Web. March 21, 2020.  
<<https://fashionschooldaily.com/>>

We used this picture to show the crowded conditions in the factory.

Unknown. "5780-087pb1f5c." Photograph. trianglefire.ilr.cornell.edu. Cornell, unknown. Web. Feb 17, 2020. <<https://trianglefire.ilr.cornell.edu/slides/146.html#screen>>

We used this photograph to show the tragedy of the fire from an outsider's perspective. In this photo we can see that the fire hoses didn't even reach the floor of the fire. The people who had to watch the fire were helpless bystanders to the victims of the tragedy.

Unknown. "5780pb33f3jp." Photograph. trianglefire.ilr.cornell.edu. Cornell, unknown. Web. Feb 17, 2020. <<https://trianglefire.ilr.cornell.edu/slides/241.html#screen>>

This picture is of the Women's Trade Union League who fought for safe working conditions, an eight hour work day, and respect for women at work.

Unknown. "5780pb32f28c." Photograph. trianglefire.ilr.cornell.edu. Cornell, unknown. Web. Feb 17, 2020. <<https://trianglefire.ilr.cornell.edu/slides/282.html#screen>>

By using this source we were able to show labor unions working to get better working conditions, wages, and working hours.

Unknown. "5780pb39f15a." Photograph. trianglefire.ilr.cornell.edu. Cornell, unknown. Web. Feb 17, 2020. <<https://trianglefire.ilr.cornell.edu/slides/149.html#screen>>

This picture gave us a visual of the poor condition of the fire escape ladder. Many people tried to escape using this fire escape ladder, but it collapsed causing many to die.

Unknown. "5780pb39f20af." Photograph. trianglefire.ilr.cornell.edu. Cornell, unknown. Web. Feb 17, 2020. <<https://trianglefire.ilr.cornell.edu/slides/166.html>>

By using this photograph we were able to see the flimsy fire escape that collapsed during the fire. We were also able to see some of the damage that the fire left on the outside of the building.

## SECONDARY SOURCES

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Boehm, Angie. "1909: Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Strike". Libcom.org. Reddebrek, Jan 18, 2017. Web. Dec 2, 2019. <<https://libcom.org/history/1909-triangle-shirtwaist-factory-strike>>

This article taught us that there was a strike in 1909 requesting increased wages, reduced working hours, better working conditions, and the ability to have union representation. We also learned more about Max Blanck and Isaac Harris, owners of Triangle Shirtwaist Factory. They paid judges to find workers guilty and hired ex-prize fighters to fight with the people on strike.

eNotes Editorial. "What law or laws came out of the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire and the Great Chicago Fire?". Enotes.com. eNotes Editorial, Apr. 8, 2016. Web. Dec 11, 2019. <<https://www.enotes.com/homework-help/what-law-or-laws-came-out-of-the-triangle-675233>>

By reading this article, we were able to learn about the Sullivan-Hoey Act. This law established

mandatory inspections aimed at establishing fire safety in factories.

History.com Editors. "Child Labor". HISTORY. A&E Television Networks, Oct 27, 2009. Web. Feb 14, 2020. <<https://www.history.com/topics/industrial-revolution/child-labor>>

This article taught us more about child labor and how terrible children were treated. Children were hired because they could be paid less, work more hours without striking, and handle smaller tools that was often more difficult for adults to use.

History.com Editors. "Labor Movement". HISTORY. A&E Television Networks, Oct 29, 2009. Web. Dec 11, 2019. <<https://www.history.com/topics/19th-century/labor>>

We used this source to learn that the Labor Movement was directed towards putting a price on work and to shorten work hours for all people.

History.com Editors. "Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire". HISTORY. A&E Television Networks, Dec 2, 2009. Web. Dec 5, 2019. <<https://www.history.com/topics/early-20th-century-us/triangle-shirtwaist-fire>>

This article was more specific on what working conditions were like for workers and how the fire could have been prevented. Workers worked 12 hours every day, there was only one elevator that operated, and the fire escape was too small and flimsy for all of the workers to escape on.

History.com Editors. "Triangle Shirtwaist Fire Kills 146 in New York City". HISTORY. A&E Television Networks, Nov 24, 2009. Web. 17 Dec 2019. <<https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/triangle-shirtwaist-fire-in-new-york-city>>

By reading this article, we were able to gain knowledge about the horrible conditions in the factory. We learned that the two stairways in the building were blocked during the fire. The first was locked, and the second only opened inwards. This was a problem because too many people pushed against the door trying to get out, but nobody could open the door.

Mason, Lynn. "History of Child Labor Laws". The History of Child Labor Laws in the United States. Unknown, Unknown. Web. Feb 7, 2020. <<https://www.brighthubeducation.com/history-homework-help/109994-child-labor-laws-in-america/>>

This source taught us more about what child labor was like before the industrial revolution and how it changed afterward. After the industrial revolution 1600 laws were passed by legislation to save children from child labor, although these laws didn't apply to everyone. We also learned more about the Fair Labor Standards Act.

Mestrich, Keith. "Why the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire Is Important Today". HUFFPOST. HuffPost, May 25, 2014. Web. Dec 2, 2019. <[https://www.huffpost.com/entry/why-the-triangle-shirtwai\\_b\\_5029158](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/why-the-triangle-shirtwai_b_5029158)>

By reading this article, we learned about the major points that led up to the fire. We learned that the fire only lasted about 20 minutes, killing 146. Another thing that we learned was the International Ladies Garment Workers Union fought for better working conditions, less working

hours, and better wages.

Parkinson, Hilary. "A Factory Fire and Frances Perkins". National Archives Pieces of History. National Archives, Mar 25, 2011. Web. Feb 7, 2020.  
<<https://prologue.blogs.archives.gov/2011/03/25/a-factory-fire-and-francis-perkins/>>

By using this source, we learned more about Frances Perkins and how she changed workplace conditions, child labor, minimum wage, and maximum working hours for workers by fighting for new laws.

We used a quote Frances Perkins said as a result of what happened at the fire.

Seminario, Peg. "Even after tragedy, it takes organized action to bring change". Don't Mourn-organize Lessons from the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire. The New York Committee for Occupational Safety and Health, unknown. Web. Feb 17, 2020.  
<[https://www.osha.gov/oas/NYCOSH\\_Triangle\\_Journal.pdf](https://www.osha.gov/oas/NYCOSH_Triangle_Journal.pdf)>

We used this source to gain further knowledge about Francis Perkins. We learned Perkins fought for workplace safety and the abolishment of child labor. Perkins later became Secretary of Labor to President Franklin Roosevelt.

Smith, Patricia. "The best way to remember Triangle victims is to improve the health and safety of today's workers". Don't Mourn-organize Lessons from the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire. The New York Committee for Occupational Safety and Health, unknown. Web. Feb 17, 2020.  
<[https://www.osha.gov/oas/NYCOSH\\_Triangle\\_Journal.pdf](https://www.osha.gov/oas/NYCOSH_Triangle_Journal.pdf)>

This source taught us more about some of the diseases we still need to fight against today. One of them is silicosis. There are also other workplace conditions we need to fight against.

The Editors of Encyclopedia Britannica. "Wagner Act". Encyclopedia Britannica. Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., Dec 9, 2019. Web. Feb 14, 2020. <<https://www.britannica.com/topic/Wagner-Act>>

By reading this source, we learned about the Wagner Act. This law enabled labor unions the ability to bargain with their employers.

"The Triangle Shirtwaist Fire-Horror in Manhattan." The Triangle Shirtwaist Fire-Horror in Manhattan, Extra Credits, Apr 7, 2018. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8-fwdc30SaU>.

By watching this video, we learned that after the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire Francis Perkins set up an organization to inspect all factories. The organization was to prevent child labor and horrible working conditions. We learned that many of the factories would hide kids in big waste baskets, and in-between floors in the elevator during inspections.

"The Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire." The Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire, History Channel, Aug 14, 2017. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?reload=9&v=FguWSsW21CQ>.

This video described what was happening in industry at the turn of the century, the working

conditions common to factories, and the safety hazards that many buildings concealed. We felt it would go well with our thesis.

Unknown. "What is the purpose and function of a union?" eNotes.com. Web. Feb 7, 2020. <<https://www.enotes.com/homework-help/what-purpose-function-union-321175>>

We used this source to help us understand more about the purpose and function of a union.

Unknown. "Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)". Office of Financial Management. Unknown. Web. <<https://ofm.wa.gov/state-human-resources/compensation-job-classes/compensation-administration/fair-labor-standards-act-flsa>>

We used this source to further understand the Fair Labor Standards Act. This act established a minimum wage, maximum work hours during a week, and stood against child labor.

Unknown. "History in the Headlines: 100 Years Ago: The Triangle Shirtwaist Fire". History News Network. Unknown, unknown. Feb 7, 2020. <<https://historynewsnetwork.org/article/137979>>

This source taught us that the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory was one of 7,000 buildings that were told they needed to add fire safety escapes. We also found that on the eight floor, the cutting room, they could not find any survivors after the fire.

Unknown. "Our Labor History Timeline". AFL-CIO America's Unions. AFL-CIO, Unknown. Feb 7, 2020. <<https://aflcio.org/about-us/history>>

When reading this article, we learned about the working hours and the wages that the workers at the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory had to deal with. We learned that the workers had to work overtime and not get paid overtime wages. The workers also had to work for long hours every day, six days a week.

Unknown. "Teaching with Documents: Photographs of Lewis Hine: Documentation of Child Labor". National Archives. National Archives and Records Administration, unknown. Web. Feb 7, 2020. <<https://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/hine-photos>>

We used this source to learn about Lewis Hine. He was a child labor activist. He snuck into factories and took pictures of children working to help provide for their families.

Unknown. "The Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire of 1911". U.S. Department of Labor. United States Department of Labor, unknown. Web. Dec 2, 2019. <<https://www.dol.gov/shirtwaist/introduction.htm>>

By using this source, we learned more about Max Blanck and Isaac Harris and their motivations and actions that caused 146 deaths. Some of these actions were refusing to update their safety measures, firing union sympathizers, and ignoring the need for new safer and cleaner working conditions.

Unknown. "TIMELINE OF EVENTS". Remembering The 1911 Triangle Factory Fire. Unknown, unknown. Web. Dec 3, 2019. <<http://trianglefire.ilr.cornell.edu/supplemental/timeline/pages/fire.html>>



By using this source, we learned that the fire departments were notified about the fire at 4:45 p.m., the firemen were almost helpless during the fire because the fire hoses only reached the 7th floor of the building, one floor short of the fire.

Unknown. "Wagner Act". Roosevelt Institute.org. Roosevelt Institute. Jun. 20, 2012. Web. Feb 7, 2020. <<https://rooseveltinstitute.org/wagner-act/>>

This source taught us more about the Wagner Act which protected workers' rights to organize in unions, to bargain collectively, and to strike. It also denied unfair practices from employers.

Unknown. "1910 to 1919 Important News, Significant Events, Key Technology". Thepeoplehistory.com. Unknown, unknown. Web. Dec 17, 2019. <<http://www.thepeoplehistory.com/1910to1919.html>>

By reading this article, we learned about the most important events of 1911. One of those events was the first International Women's Day. This was celebrated so women could work in good conditions, vote, and have rights.

Unknown. "7. The New York Factory Investigating Commission". U.S. Department of Labor. U.S. Department of Labor, unknown. Web. Jan 6, 2020. <<https://www.dol.gov/general/aboutdol/history/mono-regsafepart07>>

This source taught us more about what it was like to watch the girls jump to their deaths, and how it awakened everyone to the terrible conditions these workers were forced to endure.