



100 Years of Workers' Struggles:

A Conference Commemorating the Centenary of the Founding of IWW
June 25 – 26, 2005 Chicago, Illinois

Delegates from across the United States and Canada gathered in Chicago in June 1905 to launch a new labor movement, the Industrial Workers of the World. In the years that followed, the IWW revolutionized the labor movement, organizing workers who the traditional craft unions had written off and creating a form of direct action, rank-and-file militant unionism that inspired workers around the world even as it led terrified employers to unleash a savage wave of repression.

Today, while the mainstream labor movement seems headed to oblivion, workers are reclaiming and reinventing earlier modes of struggle. Workers centers, solidarity unionism, and the contemporary resurgence of the IWW demonstrate that workers continue to resist exploitation, and to struggle for control over their working lives. We are commemorating the 100th anniversary of the founding of the IWW with a two-day conference at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

The first day of this two-day conference will focus on how the IWW and its ideas have inspired, and continue to inspire, a wide array of social movements. The second day will focus on alternative forms of worker organizing as workers grapple with globalization, contracting-out and other aspects of the new economy in the face of an increasingly hostile labor law regime. There will also be performances and exhibitions in conjunction with the conference.

We welcome proposals for presentations on specific aspects of these themes, for panels, or for related presentations (video showings, workers' art, etc.). Brief descriptions (approximately 150 words) of proposed presentations should be submitted by April 15, 2005. Proposals should be sent to: IWW Centenary, PO Box 13476, Philadelphia PA 19101, or emailed to: centenary@iww.org. Please be sure to include a short description of each presenter with your proposal. Sponsored by the Industrial Workers of the World and the Graduate History Society at the University of Illinois at Chicago