



Melding Media & Primary Sources
P.T.C. Strike of 1944 Webquest

- I. Read Stephen Nepa's article about the PTC at the Encyclopedia of Greater Philadelphia website <http://philadelphiaencyclopedia.org/archive/philadelphia-transportation-company-ptc-strike/>
- A. What jobs were open and which were closed to African American employees of the PTC before the strike? **Could not be motormen or conductors; could be porters, messengers, tracklayers**
 - B. Which groups did Carolyn Davenport Moore bring together to fight the discrimination of the PTC? **Black churches, ward leaders, and union representatives**
 - C. Which organization mandated that the PTC hire black drivers? **Fair Employment Practices Commission**
 - D. How did the reaction of the PTC differ from the reaction of the PRTEU when the order to promote black workers was issued? **PTC was willing to go along with it (with permission of the PRTEU); PRTEU did not accept the demand**
 - E. How many troops did President Roosevelt send to Philadelphia and what were they charged with doing while here? **4,000 soldiers; to drive buses and trolleys and to restore order. Rode on the buses for 10 days after the strike ended to maintain order.**
 - F. With what penalties did Major-General Hayes threaten the striking workers if they refused to return to work? **Canceled draft deferments and permanent ineligibility for defense work.**
 - G. What evidence is given in the article that indicates that blacks were accepted into the PTC workforce once the strike had ended? **By October, 16 had been promoted to be drivers and within a year they held positions throughout the company.**
2. Go to the Civil Rights in a Northern City website and look over the Time-line <http://northerncity.library.temple.edu/exhibits/show/civil-rights-in-a-northern-city/collections/philadelphia-transit-strike-of/timeline--philadelphia-transit>
- A. What was the immediate impact on war production once the strike was underway? **Down by 70%**

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- B. What types of establishments were shut down to discourage fighting (you'll need to click on the article listed under 8/2/44) **Billiard halls, pool halls, taprooms (bars)**
 - C. Other than the shooting of a "Negro Boy," what violence was inflicted on the black community on August 3rd, 1944(click on article)? **11 windows broken in black section of North Philadelphia**
 - D. What proportion of PTC workers were participating in the strike by August 4th, 1944? **6/11 (6,000 of 11,000)**
 - E. What two things happened to the leaders of strike on Saturday, August 5th, 1944? **They were fired and arrested.**
 - F. On what day did the strike end? **Monday, August 7, 1944**

3. Go to the photo section of the same website; notice that you can scroll through page by page.

<http://northerncity.library.temple.edu/items/browse?collection=6&tags=photographs>

- A. On page 1, click on the two images of women looking at bus advertising. Why do you think the PTC was eager to hire female drivers for this traditionally male job? **Many drivers were fighting overseas; assumption was that women would leave the workforce once the men returned. Black men would presumably want to keep the jobs.**
- B. On page 2, find three slogans on signs held by protestors that tie directly to the Second World War. Briefly explain the message of each. **Answers will vary**
- C. On page 4, what are the striking PTC drivers donating and why? **Blood; people unable to get to blood centers because of strike. Also probably to show that they cared about the war effort in spite of the strike that hindered people from getting to war-related jobs**
- D. On page 5, find and then list four different ways people found to get to work in the absence of mass transit. **Roller skates, bicycle, army truck transports, transportation provided by places of employment**
- E. On page 6, why might the soldier be confused about how to eat spaghetti? **The United States was less ethnically diverse; perhaps he'd never eaten this traditionally Italian food**

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- F. On page 8, click on the photo of City Hall. What indicates that this photo was taken during the Second World War? **“Have you bought your bond today?” banner**
- G. Look through pages 9 through 14. Imagine you have written a book about the PTC Strike of 1944.
1. Which image would you choose for the cover of your book? Describe the photo and explain why would you select this image? **Answers will vary**
 2. What would be the title of your book? Be creative! **Answers will vary**
 3. In 5-7 sentences, write the blurb for the back of the book. Your blurb must summarize the events of the strike. Include the following terms:
 - a. A. Philip Randolph
 - b. President Roosevelt
 - c. Executive Order 8802
 - d. Fair Employment Practices Committee
 - e. PTC.
 - f. PRTEU
 - g. Carolyn Davenport Moore
 - h. Major-General Hayes

