

# What We Hold in Common



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著者:Zandy, Janet 编

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"Let us imagine what it would be like," writes Janet Zandy at the outset of this ground-breaking volume, "if the history and culture of working-class people were at the center of educational practices. What would students learn?" Among other things, she suggests, "they would understand that culture is created by individuals within social contexts and that they themselves could produce it as well as consume it." Working-class history and literature have too often been ignored in traditional curricula, remain invisible in most texts, and are unavailable to students and teachers. Essential reading for all interested in the rapidly growing field of working-class studies, "What We Hold in Common" offers a distinct combination of primary voices, critical essays, and resources for curriculum transformation. It deepens the understanding of working-class literature, history, culture, and artistic production, while attending to the material conditions of working-class peoples' lives. Janet Zandy brings together-in poetry, fiction, memoir, and song-the voices of working-class people throughout history, with a strong emphasis on the often overlooked voices of working-class

women. Critical essays place working-class studies in perspective for teacher and student, as scholars in the field write about recovering autobiographies and oral histories, practicing working-class studies, and current and emerging texts and theories. Course syllabi and curriculum materials offer concrete strategies and resources for the classroom. "What We Hold in Common" draws upon the award-winning 1995 volume of "Women's Studies Quarterly" a text that was pivotal in the development of working-class studies. This revised and expanded volume is even more comprehensive, rendering it a core resource in field which, Zandy insists, should be viewed not "merely as an object of study, but] as a means of struggle." Janet Zandy is associate professor of language and literature at Rochester Institute of Technology. Her books include "Calling Home: Working-Class Women's Writings and Liberating Memory: Our Work and Our Working-Class Consciousness." Zandy and Nicholas Coles are currently editing an a

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