



## 1926

### The 40-Hour Workweek

Ford believed that a worker should be allowed leisure time just like the salaried employee above him. He argued time off was not time wasted because it encouraged the workers to do a better job when on the clock. It also helped stimulate the economy by allowing workers, with Saturdays off, to use their free time spending money.

A worker could spend their paycheck on clothes, leisure activities, and restaurants. The promise for these hours encouraged more workers to seek employment at Henry Ford.

<sup>1</sup> African American Foundry Workers

Courtesy of the National Automotive History Collection, Detroit Public Library

<sup>2</sup> Movie Theater

Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI Collection, [LC-USF34-038814-D]

<sup>3</sup> Fine Dining

From the Collections of the Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History, Sam Vinegar Collection

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) restricts photocopying or reproduction of copyrighted material for anything other than "fair use." "Fair use" includes private study, scholarship, research and non-profit educational purposes. If you wish to use an image from this website for a purpose other than "fair use" it is your responsibility to obtain permission from the copyright holder. While many images on this website are in the public domain, some are not. Please consult the credit lines provided for each image.

## 1926 The 40-Hour Workweek

### Credits:

Lacey, Robert. *Ford: The Men and the Machine*. Boston: Little Brown & Co, 1986. Print.

### Keywords/Topics:

Work/Jobs

Entertainment and Recreation

### Questions:

1. Why did Henry Ford create the 40-hour workweek?
2. How did other business owners feel about Ford's decision?
3. Why would an autoworker like the new workweek?

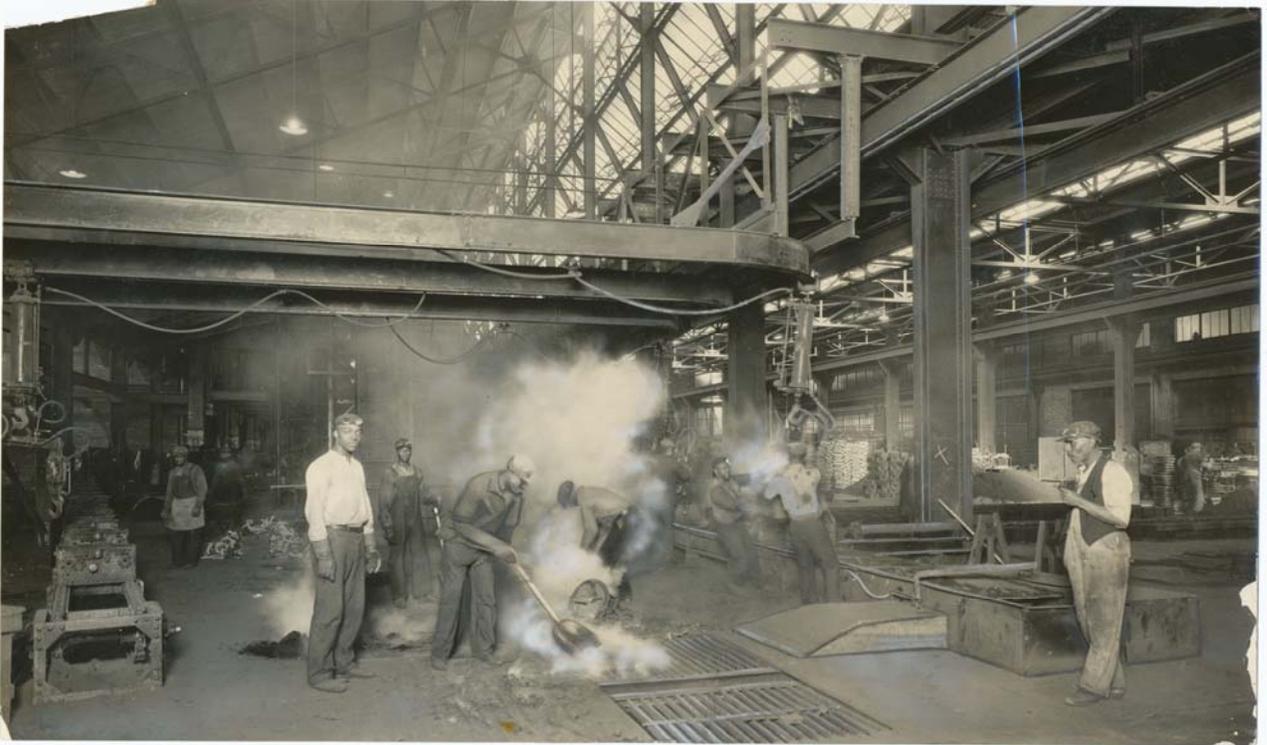
### Links to Internet Websites:

<http://www.worklessparty.org/timework/ford.htm>

[http://www.americanheritage.com/blog/20069\\_25\\_469.shtml](http://www.americanheritage.com/blog/20069_25_469.shtml)

<http://www.thehenryford.org/exhibits/fmc/chrono.asp>

## 1926 The 40-Hour Workweek



*Courtesy of the National Automotive History Collection, Detroit Public Library*

Working six days a week in the auto plants was very strenuous. The environment was dirty and dangerous. Many workers used their days off to rest and recuperate from a long workweek.

## 1926 The 40-Hour Workweek



*Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, FSA/OWI Collection, [LC-USF34-038814-D]*

Henry Ford was correct in his assumption that workers would use their days off to spend money. A popular activity at that time was the theater. Pictured above are black and white children lined up outside a movie theater in Chicago, Illinois.

## 1926 The 40-Hour Workweek



*From the Collections of the Charles H. Wright Museum of African American History, Sam Vinegar Collection*

In the years before the Great Depression, restaurant dining was a popular form of recreation. Couples got dressed in their best attire to go out to dinner. People would also eat dinner at a restaurant before going to a play or picture show.