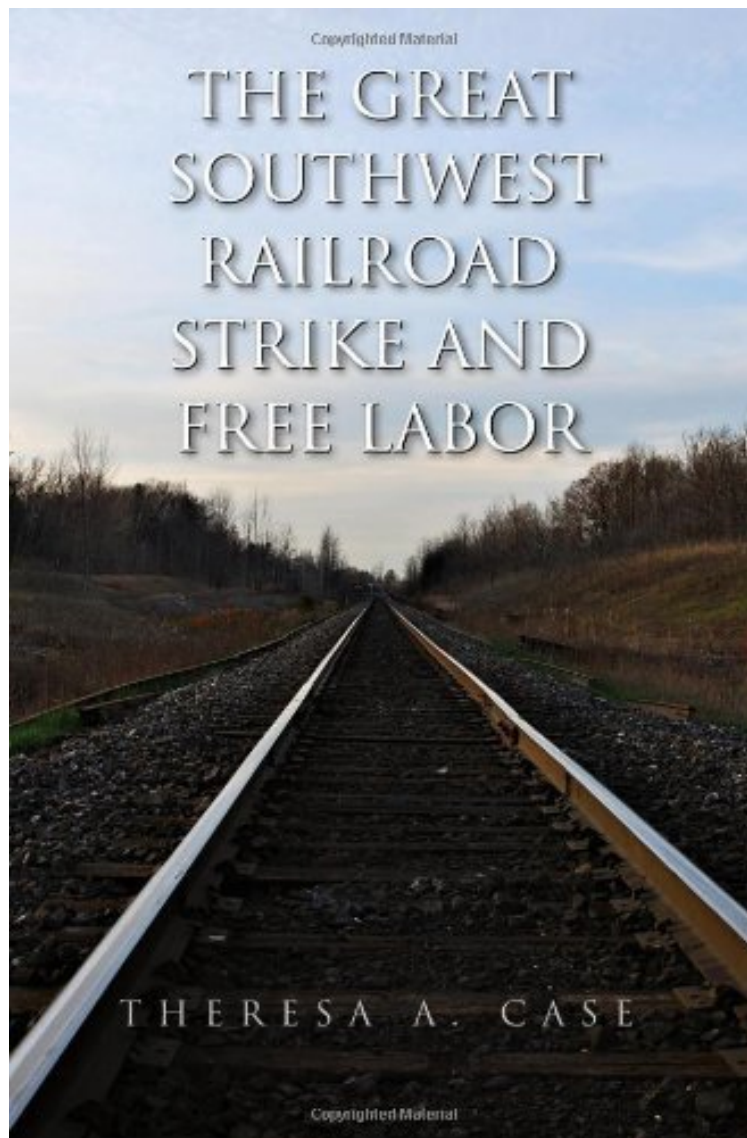


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The Great Southwest Railroad Strike and Free Labor (Red River Valley Books, sponsored by Texas AM University-Texarkana)

Theresa A. Case

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Theresa A. Case : The Great Southwest Railroad Strike and Free Labor (Red River Valley Books, sponsored by Texas AM University-Texarkana) before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Great Southwest Railroad Strike and Free Labor (Red River Valley Books, sponsored by Texas

AM University-Texarkana):

Focusing on a story largely untold until now, Theresa A. Case studies the "Great Southwest Strike of 1886," which pitted entrepreneurial freedom against the freedom of employees to have a collective voice in their workplace. This series of local actions involved a historic labor agreement followed by the most massive sympathy strike the nation had ever seen. It attracted western railroaders across lines of race and skill, contributed to the rise and decline of the first mass industrial union in U.S. history (the Knights of Labor), and brought new levels of federal intervention in railway strikes. Case takes a fresh look at the labor unrest that shook Jay Gould's railroad empire in Texas, Arkansas, Missouri, Kansas, and Illinois. In Texas towns and cities like Marshall, Dallas, Fort Worth, Palestine, Texarkana, Denison, and Sherman, union recognition was the crucial issue of the day. Case also powerfully portrays the human facets of this strike, reconstructing the story of Martin Irons, a Scottish immigrant who came to adopt the union cause as his own. Irons committed himself wholly to the failed strike of 1886, continuing to urge violence even as courts handed down injunctions protecting the railroads, national union leaders publicly chastised him, the press demonized him, and former strikers began returning to work. Irons's individual saga is set against the backdrop of social, political, and economic changes that transformed the region in the post-Civil War era. Students, scholars, and general readers interested in railroad, labor, social, or industrial history will not want to be without *The Great Southwest Railroad Strike and Free Labor*.