

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
Department of History
Semester I, 1989-90

History 407

Tues. & Thurs. 2:25-3:40 p.m.

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Office Hours: Tues.-10:00 a.m.-12 noon
Thurs. 1:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m.

American Labor History, 1607-1900

This course will explore the history of work, workers, and working class culture in America from the founding of the first colonies to the beginning of the twentieth century. We will focus on how working men and women constantly strived to make sense of the profound socio-economic and technological changes taking place in this period. We will discuss a wide variety of issues including: workers' organizations and unions, radicalism and working class political culture, the effects of immigration and urbanization on American workers, and the significance of race and gender on workers' solidarity.

The following books are required reading for the course; they are available for purchase in the University Bookstore and are on reserve in Room 1191, College Library, Helen C. White Hall.

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| Jeremy Brecher | <u>Strike</u> |
| Thomas Dublin | <u>Farm to Factory: The Mill Experience and Women's Lives</u> |
| Roster Rhea Dulles & Melvyn Dubofsky | <u>Labor in America</u> |
| Jacqueline Jones | <u>Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow: Black Women, Work and the Family, From Slavery to the Present</u> |
| Alice Kessler-Harris | <u>Out to Work: A History of Wage-Earning Women in the United States</u> |

In addition there will be a packet of photocopies for you to purchase at Kinko's (620 University Avenue). Copies will also be on reserve at the College Library. These readings will be marked by the letter "P."

There will be two papers and a final exam in this course. Each paper will be approximately 6-8 pages. The first paper will be due on Thursday October 5th, and the second will be due on Thursday November 9th. Paper topics will be distributed in advance. The final exam format will be discussed in class. Papers are to be turned in the day they are due in class at the beginning of the lecture; there will be no extensions for late papers.

- October 12 **Poor Whites and Black Slaves: Labor in the Antebellum South**
 reading: Jacqueline Jones, Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow, chapter 1
- October 17 **The Union and Unionism: White Workers and the Civil War**
 reading: David Montgomery, Beyond Equality: Labor and the Radical Republicans, 1862-1872, pp. 90-113 (p)
 : Dulles and Dubofsky, pp. 95-107
 : National Labor Union: Address (p)
- October 19 **Emancipation and the Black Worker**
 reading: Jones, chapters 2 and 3
 : Black National Labor Union: Resolutions (p)
- October 24 **The Labor Uprising of 1877**
 reading: Jeremy Brecher, Strike, chapter 1
 : Letter describing the Strike of 1877 (p)
- October 26 **The Knights of Labor**
 reading: Dulles and Dubofsky, chapter 8
 : Knights of Labor: Terrance Powderly (p)
- October 31 **The Growth of an Immigrant Labor Force**
 reading: John Cumbler, "Migration, Class Formation and Class Consciousness: The American Experience (p)
- November 2 **Anarchism and Socialism**
 reading: Hartmut Keil, "German Working-Class Radicalism in the United States from the 1870s to World War I" (p)
 : Richard Schneirov, "Free Thought and Socialism in the Czech Community Chicago, 1875-1887" (p)
 : International Working People'Association, Manifesto, 1883 (p)
- November 7 **The Crusade for the Eight Hour Day**
 reading: Brecher, chapter 2
- November 9 **Trade Unions and the American Federation of Labor**
PAPER DUE
 reading: Dulles and Dubofsky, chapter 9
 : Kessler-Harris, chapter 4
 : A.F. of L.: An Appeal (p)
- November 14 **Clerks and the Changing Nature of Clerical Work**
 reading: Margery Davies, "Women's Place is at the Typewriter: The Feminization of the Clerical Labor Force" (p)
- November 16 **Salesworkers and the Commercial Revolution**
 reading: Susan P. Benson, "'The Customer Ain't God': The Work Culture of Department-Store Saleswomen, 1890-1940" (p)

- November 21 **Race, Regionalism and American Workers in the Late Nineteenth Century**
 reading: Ralph Mann, "Community Change and Caucasian Attitudes Toward the Chinese: The Case of Two California Mining Towns, 1850-1870" (p)
- November 23 **THANKSGIVING**
- November 28 **Machine in the Garden: Farm Labor and the Mechanization of Agriculture**
 reading: Nancy Osterud, "'She Helped Me Hay It as Good as a Man': Relations Among Men and Women in an Agricultural Community" (p)
- November 30 **Urban Workers, Urban Development and Urban Politics**
 reading: Kessler-Harris, chapter 5
 : Jones, chapter 4
- December 5 **Mass Culture and the Struggles Over Working Class Leisure**
 reading: Roy Rosenzweig, "Middle Class Parks and Working Class Play: The Struggle over Recreational Space in Worcester, Massachusetts, 1870-1910" (p)
 : Kathy Peiss, "Gender Relations and Working Class Leisure: New York City, 1880-1920" (p)
- December 7 **Crises of the 1890s**
 reading: Alexander Keyssar, "Unemployment and the Labor Movement in Massachusetts, 1870-1911" (p)
- December 12 **The Great Strikes: Homestead and Pullman**
 reading: Brecher, chapter 3
 : Dulles and Dubofsky, chapter 10
 : Samuel Gompers, "The Strike and Its Lessons" (p)
- December 14 **Labor and the Emergence of American Imperialism**
 reading: William Whittaker, "Samuel Gompers, Anti-Imperialist" (p)