

History 600/CLS519
Fall 2007
Thursday 3:30-5:30
5255 Mosse Humanities Building

Professor Camille Guérin-Gonzales
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Working-Class Cultures: Comparative and Theoretical Perspectives

This is an advanced readings and research seminar on the historical meanings of work and working-class culture. We will look at the ways in which a variety of scholars and “organic intellectuals” have drawn upon the methods and practices of labor history, social history, economic history, and cultural studies (including cultural geography) to study working women and men over time. Throughout the course, we will be examining relations of power by looking closely at ideas about race, class, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality. We will especially be concerned with the ways in which these ideas have shaped working-class lives, informed class relations, and organized communities of solidarity. Some of the questions we will address are: What is unique about U.S. labor history and what is part of a shared international history of workers? How have processes of cultural fusion and cultural fragmentation operated to unite and divide working people? In what ways does an interrogation of the politics of space (place, location, landscape, architecture, environment, home, city, region, territory, and geography) help us to understand working-class cultures? How can students of labor history redefine the study of work and working people to address the revolutionary changes wrought by deindustrialization? Our readings are interdisciplinary and comparative, but we will analyze working-class cultures, as well as the meanings of work, at particular historical moments. Rather than a comprehensive survey of the literature of this vast area of study, we will focus on selected readings that will help us to explore questions of class and social identity, of nationalism and internationalism, and of working-class struggles for control over the work place and strategies of resistance working people have developed in particular times and places.

Course Requirements

Reading and Discussion

The first half of the semester will be devoted to class discussions of assigned readings. Each week, you will submit an informal one-page “position” paper that identifies the main points you would like the class to cover in discussing the week’s assigned reading. You will keep a reading and research journal throughout the course

Historical Research and Writing

The second half of the semester is devoted to research and writing. You will write a project proposal, visit research sites and repositories, devise a research plan, carry out your research, and complete a research project. You will have the option of writing a 25-page research paper or writing a shorter paper (12-15 pages) and producing a 15-30 minute multi-media presentation (film, artwork, music, etc.) that draws on your research and provides a visual and aural elaboration of your study.

Historical Research and Writing (cont.)

Part One: Project Proposal

Write a three-page (approximately 900-word) project proposal that a) identifies a theme in working-class history that will form the basis for your research; b) illustrates how authors of selected assigned readings have addressed this theme; c) discusses sources these authors have drawn upon; d) explains why this theme is important to you; and e) poses the major question you will ask about this theme (one paragraph). *Due October 25 at the beginning of class.**

****No late papers accepted for any reason other than a documented religious or health excuse. No exceptions, including computer & transportation problems. This applies to all written work in the course.***

Part Two: Research Team Explorations.

You and your classmates will form small research teams and will visit research sites and repositories and identify sources that will help you address the major question you posed in your project proposal. *October 25-November 8.*

Part Three: Research Plan.

Submit a 2-page (approximately 600-word) research plan along with a 2-page annotated bibliography in which you identify sources you have found and describe how they will be helpful to you in answering the question you posed in your project proposal. *Due November 8.*

Part Four-A Option: Research Paper.

Conduct research and write a 25-page essay (approximately 7,500 words) expanding on the argument you posed in your two-page proposal. Your essay must a) identify a question important to history about your selected theme; b) suggest an answer to your question (this is your major argument); c) provide evidence and examples that support your answer/argument, including both primary and secondary sources; and d) integrate your answer/argument and evidence into a coherent, persuasive conclusion. At least one of your primary sources must focus on your own community, however you define it. A detailed research and writing guide will be distributed in class. *Due December 13, 3:30 p.m.*

Part Four-B Option: Research Paper and Multi-Media Presentation.

You will have the option writing a shorter paper (12-15 pages, approximately 3,600-4,500 words) and producing a 15-30 minute multi-media presentation (film, artwork, music, etc.) that draws on your research and provides a visual and aural elaboration of your study. You must submit a copy of your multi-media presentation (film, video recording, music recording, art installation, etc.).

Multi-Media Presentations December 6 and December 13. Everyone must attend.

Final Paper and Multi-Media Submission Due December 13 at the beginning of class.

Grade Distribution

40%	Faithful attendance, preparation for and participation in discussions of course readings reading journal
20%	Project proposal Research plan: Visits to research sites and repositories Identification of research question Annotated bibliography
40%	Research project

Readings

The following books are available for purchase at the University Book Store, and are on reserve in Helen C. White College Library:

Required Readings

John Russo and Sherry Lee Linkon, eds. *New Working-Class Studies*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2005.

Nan Enstad. *Ladies of Labor, Girls of Adventure*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1999.

Robin D.G. Kelley. *Race Rebels: Culture, Politics, and the Black Working Class*. New York: The Free Press, 1994.

Matt Garcia. *A World of its Own: Race, Labor, and Citrus in the Making of Greater Los Angeles, 1900-1970*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001.

Colleen O'Neill. *Working the Navajo Way: Labor and Culture in the Twentieth Century*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2005.

Eric Arnesen, Julie Greene, and Bruce Laurie. *Labor Histories: Class, Politics, and the Working-Class Experience*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1998.

Required Style Books

Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 7th ed., Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007.

William Strunk. E.B. White, and Maira Kalman. *The Elements of Style Illustrated*. New York: Penguin, 2007.*

*Note: You may substitute the following title for the Strunk, White, and Kalman style book: William Strunk and E.B. White. *The Elements of Style*. New York: Allyn & Bacon, 1999.

Calendar and Assignments

Week 1
Sept. 6 Introduction

Labor Day, September 3

Week 2
Sept. 13 Historical Meanings of Work and the “New Working Class”

Reading.

John Russo and Sherry Lee Linkon, eds., *New Working-Class Studies*

Discussion Position Paper. Submit an informal one-page “position” paper identifying the main discussion points you want the class to cover. Your discussion points should focus on the four sections of the book listed in the Table of Contents: Part One: New Working-Class Studies at the Intersections; Part Two: Disciplinary Perspectives; Part Three: Representations; and Part Four: Politics and Education. One or two discussion points per section are sufficient (a total of four-eight discussion points).

Reading Journal: Begin your reading journal. You will share your reading journal with me periodically during the semester, so please type, word process, or write legibly and clearly. Your journal will play a central role in your development as a labor historian, a writer, and an intellectual. It will be where you express your informal reflections on readings, research, experiences in and out of class, and your larger research project. Your journal will allow you to involve yourself actively in the work of labor history and to try out ideas and devise your own analogies and metaphors for the academic concepts and theoretical perspectives you will encounter in the course. Your journal will be an invaluable resource when you turn to the formal writing assignments in the course.

*Rosh Hashanah & Ramadan, September 13
Diez y Seis de Septiembre*

Week 3
Sept. 20 The Work of Leisure

Reading.

Nan Enstad. *Ladies of Labor, Girls of Adventure.*

Discussion Position Paper: Submit an informal one-page “position” paper identifying the main discussion points you want the class to cover. Four-eight discussion points are sufficient.

Yom Kippur, September 22

Week 4
Sept. 27 Everyday Strategies of Resistance

Reading.

Robin D.G. Kelley. *Race Rebels: Culture, Politics, and the Black Working Class.*

Discussion Position Paper: Submit an informal one-page “position” paper identifying the main discussion points you want the class to cover. Your discussion points should focus on the three sections of the book listed in the Table of Contents: Part One: “We Wear the Mask”: Hidden Histories of Resistance; Part Two: To Be Red and Black; Part Three: Rebels Without a Cause? One or two discussion points per section are sufficient (a total of three-six discussion points).

Week 5 Diasporic Cultures
Oct. 4

Reading.

Matt Garcia. *A World of Its Own*.

Discussion Position Paper: Submit an informal one-page “position” paper identifying the main discussion points you want the class to cover. Four-eight discussion points are sufficient.

Week 6 Geographies of Difference
Oct. 11

Reading.

Colleen O’Neill. *Working the Navajo Way*.

Discussion Position Paper. Submit an informal one-page “position” paper identifying the main discussion points you want the class to cover. Four-eight discussion points are sufficient.

Eid Al-Fitr, October 13

Week 7 Workers’ Control
Oct. 18

Reading.

Eric Arnesen, Julie Greene, and Bruce Laurie. *Labor Histories: Class, Politics, and the Working-Class Experience*.

Discussion Position Paper. Submit an informal one-page “position” paper identifying the main discussion points you want the class to cover. Your discussion points should focus on the three sections of the book listed in the Table of Contents: Part One: Politics and the State; Part Two: Class and Culture; and Part Three: Labor Activism and Workers’ Organizations. One or two discussion points per section are sufficient (a total of three-six discussion points).

Week 8 The Work of History and Historians
Oct. 25

Reading.

Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers*, 7th edition.

William Strunk and E.B. White, *The Elements of Style*.

Discussion. Research Project Proposals

Form Research Teams

Project Proposal Due. Your 3-page (approximately 900-word) project proposal should a) identify a theme in working-class history that will form the basis for your research; b) illustrate how authors of relevant assigned readings have addressed this theme; c) discuss sources these authors have drawn upon; d) explain why this theme is important to you; and e) pose the major question you will ask about this theme (one paragraph).

Week 9 The Detective Work of Historians
Nov. 1

Discussion.

Research Team Updates

Library Workshop & Multi-Media Workshop

Week 10 The Detective Work of Historians
Nov. 8

Discussion.

Research Plans

Research Plan Due

Week 11 Writing History
Nov. 15

Research and Writing. No Class Meeting

Week 12 Writing History
Nov. 22

Research and Writing.

Thanksgiving Recess, November 22

Week 13 Writing History
Nov. 29

Research and Writing. No Class Meeting

Week 14 Representing Working-Class Cultures
Dec. 6

Multi-Media Presentations

Hanukkah, December 5

Week 15 Representing Working-Class Cultures
Dec. 13

Multi-Media Presentations

Final Paper Due at the beginning of class*

Multi-Media Submissions Due at the beginning of class*

**Late papers and multi-media submissions will receive significantly reduced grade*