

History 600-Seminar 7  
Fall 2008  
Thursday 3:30-5:30  
5257 Mosse Humanities Building

Professor Camille Guérin-Gonzales  
Office Hours: Tuesday, 3:30-5:30  
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### **U.S. Working-Class History**

This is an advanced readings and research seminar on histories of working people in the United States. 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 examine the everyday lives of working women and men. Throughout the course, we will be examining relations of power by looking closely at ideas about race, class, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality. We will be especially concerned with how 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 US 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 workers? In what ways does an interrogation of the politics of space (place, location, landscape, architecture, environment, home, neighborhood, city, region, and territory) help us to understand working-class cultures?

#### **Course Requirements**

##### ***Reading, Discussion, & the Practice of History***

The first half of the semester will be devoted to class discussions of assigned readings and to developing expertise in the practice of historical research and writing. Each week, you will submit an informal one-page discussion 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***

Early in the semester, you will write a short paper exploring the practice of history. 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 15-20 page research paper.

#### **Grade Distribution**

40%	Faithful attendance Preparation for & participation in discussions of course readings Discussion papers Reading & Research Journal
15%	Practice of History paper
15%	Project proposal Topic Statement Research Plan Bibliography
30%	Research paper Polished Draft Revised & Polished Research Paper

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

### ***Required Readings***

Dana Frank, Robin D.G. Kelley, and Howard Zinn. *Three Strikes: Miners, Musicians, Salesgirls, and the Fighting Spirit of Labor's Last Century*. New York: Beacon Press, 2002.

Bruce Laurie. *Artisans into Workers: Labor in Nineteenth-Century America*. Urbana & Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1997.

Tera Hunter. *To 'Joy My Freedom: Southern Black Women's Lives and Labors after the Civil War*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1998.

Camille Guérin-Gonzales. *Mexican Workers and American Dreams: Immigration, Repatriation, and California Farm Workers, 1900-1939*. New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1994.

Annelise Orleck. *Common Sense and a Little Fire: Women and Working-Class Politics in the United States, 1900-1965*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1995.

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

George Lipsitz. *Rainbow at Midnight: Labor and Culture in the 1940's*. Urbana & Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1994.

Michael Honey. *Going Down Jericho Road: The Memphis Strike, Martin Luther King's Last Campaign*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2007.

### ***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.\*

\*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. This version is not illustrated.

## Calendar and Assignments

**Week 1**  
Sept. 4

### **Introduction**

*Labor Day, September 1*

**Week 2**  
Sept. 11

### **Historical Meanings of Work and the “New Working Class”**

**Reading:** Dana Frank, Robin D.G. Kelley, and Howard Zinn, *Three Strikes: Miners, Musicians, Salesgirls, and the Fighting Spirit of Labor's Last Century*

**Due:** Discussion Position Paper:

Submit a one-page discussion position paper that identifies the main points you would like the class to address. You should identify three to six discussion points and write a paragraph for each in which you: a) state the discussion point; b) explain why you selected this point for discussion; c) why the point is important

**Reading Journal:** Begin your reading journal.

Your journal is 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. If you write in your journal regularly, it will be an invaluable resource when you turn to the formal writing assignments in the course.

**Week 3**  
Sept. 18

### **The Making of the U.S. Working Classes**

**Reading:** Bruce Laurie, *Artisans into Workers*

**Due:** Discussion Position Paper

**Week 4**  
Sept. 25

### **Everyday Strategies of Resistance**

**Reading:** Tera Hunter, *To 'Joy My Freedom*

**Due:** Discussion Position Paper

**Library Workshop.**

*Rosh Hashana, September 30-Oct. 1*



**Week 9**  
Oct. 30

**Audacity of Hope II**

*Reading:* Michael Honey, *Going Down Jericho Road*

*Due:* Discussion Position Paper.

**Week 10**  
Nov. 4

**Researching Working-Class History**

*Due, Humanities 4119, by 5:00 p.m. (\*no late papers accepted):*

Paper Topic Statement.  
Research Plan  
Bibliography

*Be sure to vote!*

Nov. 6

*Writing period, no class meeting*  
*Eid al Adha, November 8-9*

**Week 11**  
Nov. 11

**Writing Working-Class History**

*Comments distributed, 4119 Humanities, between 3:30-5:30*

Nov. 13

*Writing period, no class meeting*

**Week 12**  
Nov. 20

**Writing Working-Class History**

*Writing period, no class meeting*

**Week 13**  
Nov. 25

**Writing Working-Class History**

*Due Tuesday, November 25, Humanities 4119, by 5:00 p.m. (\*no late papers accepted):*

Polished, complete draft of final paper

Nov. 27

*Thanksgiving recess, no class meeting*

**Week 15**  
Dec. 4

**Writing Working-Class History**

*Drafts returned with comments*  
*Writing Period*

**Week 16**  
Dec. 11

**Advancing Working-Class History**

*Due:*

Revised & polished research paper\*  
Draft copy with my comments\*

*Presentations of Research Projects*

*\*Late papers will receive significantly reduced grades*