

History 135
Marjorie Murphy
X8091
Monday 4:15-5.

Spring 2013
211 Trotter Hall
Office Hours:
Friday, 2:30-4

HISTORY DEPARTMENT
SWARTHMORE COLLEGE

LABOR AND URBAN HISTORY

We begin our seminar with a reading from the American Revolution and monograph on the Atlantic World, that in the first century of European occupation of the continent. Here we begin a quest for understanding the formation of the working class and the cities where they labored. Our focus is the history of the lives and activities of working people in the United States as they sought social justice in the fastest growing capitalist economy in the world. I include all workers: women, children, all races, all ethnicities. This is a history also of the ruling classes and middle classes, the relations they built as they controlled the destinies of so many. We will look at the cities of New York, Chicago, Detroit, Los Angeles, Memphis and at company towns, coal mining towns and rural villages. We will examine the issues of social control, deskilling, deindustrialization and racism. We will explore popular culture---music, drinking habits, movies and television; also, anarchism, socialism, communism and consumerism. We will discuss the social movements they built, socialism, communism, trade unionism.

Originally this course was designed to consider the cutting edge of the “new” social history from the Colonial Era to the present. The course considered issues of power through the lens of class, race and gender. More focused on cities, most of our workers came from the hinterlands of Ireland, England, Europe and Africa. We begin with a nod to the early modern and then move quickly through the nineteenth century and cover many topics in the 20th, but don’t look for strict chronology in anyone week.

Background Reading:

For some of you it’s been a long time since any US history course and while the course is somewhat chronological, it is a long way from a survey in any sense. For this reason it may be helpful to look over one of the following, or to keep it by you, when you are looking for coherence.

Howard Zinn, *A People's History of the United States*. A determinedly anti-whig history of the United States written from the bottom up to illustrate an America of struggle and resistance. Unfortunately, Zinn's heroes win more battles against fixed odds than in a Tom Mix western but it's a good read.

Also, if you care to have an overview of American Labor History please read:

ASHP, *Who Built America: Working People*; Priscilla Murolo and A. B. Chitty, *From the Folks Who Brought You the Weekend*.

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

Required Readings:

THE SUCCESS OF THE SEMINAR DEPENDS UPON THE QUALITY OF THE DISCUSSIONS. ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE COMPLETED IN ADVANCE OF EACH SESSION. REGULAR, INFORMED PARTICIPATION IS AN ABSOLUTE MUST AND WILL INFLUENCE YOUR FINAL GRADE. I EXPECT YOU TO READ ALL OF THE LISTED READINGS EVEN WHILE YOU ARE WRITING A PAPER. THE HISTORY DEPARTMENT HAS A NO TOLERANCE RULE ON ATTENDANCE, MISSING A CLASS WILL LOWER YOUR GRADE. IF you are having a medical emergency contact the Dean's Office.

Disability Accommodations: Please contact Leslie Hempling in the Office of Student Disability Services (Parrish 113) or email lhempli1@swarthmore.edu, to arrange an appointment to discuss your needs as early in the semester as possible.

Reading List:

1. Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, *The Many Headed Hydra Slaves, Commoners and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic*
2. David Roediger, *Wages of Whiteness*
2. Sean Wilentz, *Chants Democratic*
4. William Cronin, *Nature's Metropolis*
5. Erik Larson, *The Devil in the White City: Murder, Magic and Madness*
6. Bruce Watson, *Mills, Migrants, and the Struggle for the American Dream.*
7. David Montgomery, *The Fall of the House of Labor*
8. Nan Enstad, *Ladies of Labor, Girls of Adventure*
9. Sue Benson, *Counter Cultures*
10. Liz Cohen, *The Making of the New Deal*
11. Joshua Freeman, *Working Class New York*
12. Thomas Segrue, *The Origins of the Urban Class*
13. Becky M. Nicolaides, *My Blue Heaven: Life and Politics in Los Angeles,*
14. Michael K. Honey, *Going Down Jericho Road.*

Recommended

American Social History Project, *Who Built America: Vol. 1-2*

Bruce Laurie, *Artisans into Workers*

Seminar Papers: (3) Seven-10 pages to discuss the literature summarized below (50%) These are non-graded assignment: you either pass or fail. You are expected to improve as you get the hang of it, one or two will be better than others. The grade is an overall grade depending on how well you do with the literature and how well you participate during our discussions. This semester we will have a rubric to help define improvements in discussions.

Final Examination: Both honors and course students have to take the honors examination. For the purposes of the two credits in this class it will count toward the grade for the second credit. Use of computers in seminar is a privilege forfeited if misused for the purposes of email and social media.

Discussion: (50%) of the grade. EVERY PAPER HAS A DISCUSSANT, SOMEONE WHO READS THE PAPER AND INTRODUCES IT TO THE SEMINAR ON THE DAY WE DISCUSS THE PAPER, IF YOU GIVE THE PAPER ONE WEEK, THE NEXT WEEK YOU ARE A DISCUSSANT. THE WRITER GETS TIME TO MAKE AN INTRODUCTION BUT THE REST OF THE CLASS IS DISCUSSION OF THE PAPER.

Seminar Papers: Seminar papers are 7-10 pages; you should plan your three seminar papers well in advance. You are expected to cover between three and five monographs in one paper, unless you are adding several articles in lieu of one the published books. Seminar papers should have a title, a bibliography and end notes. (Author, Title of Book, pages) There is a specific order you should consider as you prepare for your paper. First you need to find the right readings for your topic. All topics are listed under the weeks you are writing in the bibliographic section of this syllabus. Once you have your topic you must choose your readings carefully. For each monograph find an appropriate book review (see titles of Journals below) and *attach your copy of the book review (use JSTOR) to the seminar paper when you hand in your hard copy.*

A seminar paper should state the major thesis of each book, give a general idea of the content of the book and offer a critical analysis of the book. The paper should have an overall theme and relate to the general readings in the seminar. You should begin by gathering the major reviews of the book. The Journals most appropriate in this class are: Journal of American History, American Historical Review, Review of Reviews in American History, Social History, Urban History, International Working Class History, Labor History, Feminist Studies, Signs, Journal of Interdisciplinary History, Journal of Negro History, Radical History Review. (There are others but this is a main list) Reviews ought to be included in your Annotated Bibliography. Once you have read the reviews, you should have a better idea of a theme to develop for class. Write down these ideas before you begin reading. Skim read each book first, you should be able to pull the thesis of the book from the introduction and or first chapter and the final chapter, you should have an overview of the content from the Table of Contents, and you may have more ideas about the themes from this initial reading: write all of this down and begin to organize an outline of the paper.

With the thesis in mind, the theme you want to follow in front of you and the general class reading in mind, select several chapters you wish to read for the focus of your paper. Take notes on these chapters, read as much as you need to answer these questions: did the author prove his/her point? Does the author offer enough explanations of his/her ideas? Is the book well organized? Is the introduction written in such a way as to offer the thesis of the book, or were you searching for it? What about the evidence? What kind of evidence did the author choose? Where were the sources? Was s/he able to get all the information s/he needed? How much did s/he rely on oral history, Statistics, diaries, letters, official papers, court records, day books, logs, journals, church records, newspapers, insurance records, tax records, maps, census materials, special archives and manuscript collections? What secondary sources were most influential to this writer? Was the evidence sufficient, extensive or meager? Most importantly, was the evidence convincing, why or why not? What were the strongest pieces of evidence for this writer, the weakest? Was there sufficient evidence for the conclusions? What about the conclusion, did the author summarize his/her conclusions? Did s/he prove the points s/he hoped to in the introduction? Were the reviewers correct in their analysis of the book or did they miss or misrepresent things? How would you characterize the book you have read? To help you with this analysis of the book, reread the book by examining the introduction, conclusion and then skim read (first or so paragraph and last or so paragraph of every chapter) Did you pick the best chapters and best examples from those chapters? Were there illustrations, graphs charts? Were they helpful? Once these questions are answered you need to understand where your readings fit with the overall literature, what important themes and directions characterize the literature?

Write

Once you have gathered your notes, reexamine your theme and begin writing, leave yourself plenty of time for revision. Make sure your introduction is strong and contains the major issues you intend to discuss in the order you intend to discuss them and why it is relevant to the topic. Make the conclusion broader than the introduction, make it suggestive, connect it to the larger themes in social history. Come up with a clever title that at a glance gives the reader a very good idea of what is coming. If you need help with your writing I highly recommend **Stephen King's *On Writing***. Papers are due on Blackboard six hours before the seminar, a hard copy of the paper with the book reviews is due in my office at 9 am Tuesday or Thursday Morning. Late or incomplete papers are not considered honors work in this class. Often it means that the seminar will take much longer to complete and you will not be contributing to the seminar. This lack of regard will be incorporated in your grade. If you are asked to rewrite a paper you should do so immediately and plan to have it done within two weeks. An entire grade will be subtracted for late, incomplete work.

Distribute

I require one hard copy of your paper **in my mailbox at 5 pm on Tuesdays**; you may email your paper to the rest of the seminar. If you start your paper well in advance you should not have a problem with the deadline; a good seminar depends upon responsible participants. Absences and late papers are not tolerable. Many

students seem to read the seminar papers casually and carelessly. Class participation is not mere attendance. The quality of your comments in class will determine the outcome of your grade for the course.

Schedule of Classes

JANUARY 21

Week 1 **Radicalism, Revolution and Class Analysis**

Read: Gordon Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution*, pg. iv-77.
Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, *The Many Headed Hydra*, p. i-70
Gary Nash, "The Hidden History of Metizo America," *The Journal of American History*, Vol. 82, No. 3 (Dec., 1995), pp. 941-964

JANUARY 28

Week 2 **CITIES IN REVOLUTION**

Read:
Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, *The Many Headed Hydra* (finish)
Gary Nash, "Also There at the Creation," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, Vol. 44, No. 3, *The Constitution of the United States* (Jul., 1987), pp. 602-611
David Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class* Introduction, Ch. 1-3; Edwin G. Burrows and Mike Wallace, *Gotham*, Ch. 10-21; Gordon Wood, *The Radicalism of the American Revolution*, Ch. 13-19; Sean Wilentz, *Chants Democratic*, Introduction, Part 1&2:

February 4

Week 3 **EARLY INDUSTRIALISM**

Read: Discussion of Wilentz, Gotham, Kevin Kenny, Laurie and White.
Burrows and Wallace *Gotham*, Ch.22 Laurie, *Artisans*: Introduction, ch.1-3; Kevin Kelly, *The Molly Maguires*, Sean Wilentz, *Chants Democratic* (finish); Gary J. Kornblith, "The Artisanal Response to Capitalist Transformation," *Journal of the Early Republic* Vol. 10, No. 3 (Autumn, 1990), pp. 315-321; Gary Nash, "African Americans in the Early Republic," *OAH Magazine of History*, Vol. 14, No. 2, *The Early Republic* (Winter, 2000), pp. 12-16; **optional** Shane White, "A Question of Style Blacks in and around New York City in the Late 18th Century" *The Journal of American Folklore*, Vol. 102, No. 403 (Jan. - Mar., 1989), pp. 23-44 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/540079>; Joe Trotter, *African American Cities*, Ronald Lewis, "Industrial Slavery: Linking the Core to the Periphery."

Paper Topics

Early Industrialism
Republicanism
Mobs, Race and Violence

Urbanization
Early Industrialism

Week 4
FEBRUARY 11

RACE, GENDER AND CLASS FORMATION

Read: David Roediger, *The Wages of Whiteness: Race and the Making of the American Working Class* Introduction, Ch. 4-7

Burrows and Wallace *Gotham*, Ch. 33,37,42,43,48,49; Joe Trotter, *African American Cities*: James Oliver Horton, “Urban Alliances” pp 23-24; Tera Hunter, “The Brotherly Love for which this city is Proverbial” David Montgomery, “The Shuttle and the Cross: The Kensington Riots of 1844,” in the *Journal of Social History*. Kevin Kenny, Molly Maguires, ch 4-5; Margaret Mulrooney, *Black Powder; White Lace; Intro*, ch 1-2; Anthony Wallace, *Rockdale*, ch 1,2&4.

Paper Topics

Working Class Formation
Women’s Work: Industrial, Domestic
Work and Community
Company Towns
Coal Miners
Hardrock Miners
Ideology of Working Class Movements

FEBRUARY 18 **THE MOVE OFF THE LAND**
Week 5

Read:
William Cronin, *Nature’s Metropolis*; Burrows Wallace *Gotham*, 53,56-58;
Paul Avrich, *The Haymarket Tragedy*. Ch. 1-4, 24-28; James Green, *Death in the Haymarket*, Ch. 2,5,9-12,16 Epilogue; Laurie, *Artisans*, Ch. 5.

Paper Topics:

Early Working Class Movements: The Knights of Labor
The Haymarket Tragedy
Agrarian Revolt: The Economics of Farm Life
The Crisis of the 1890’s
Frontier and Borders
Agrarian Labor and the Industrialization of the Land
Urban Mobility and Ethnics
Social Mobility and Migration

FEBRUARY 25 **POPULAR CULTURE**
Week 6

Read:

Edward G. Burrows and Mike Wallace *Gotham*, 60,62,64,67; Laurie, *Artisans*, Ch. 6 and Epilogue; Erick Larson, *The Devil in the White City*.

Paper Topics

Buffalo Bill and the Indians
Jazz
Ethnicity and Acculturation
Black Migration
Crime
Baseball
Amusements and Movies

MARCH 4

CONSUMER CULTURE

Week 7

Sue Benson, *Counter Cultures*; Braverman, *Labor and Monopoly Capital*, Ch. 4-5; David Montgomery, *The Fall of the House of Labor*, Introduction, Ch. 1,4-5.

Paper Topics

Monopoly Capital, Trusts, Big Business
Nativist Movements
Consumer Culture: Department Stores
The Business of Consumption, Advertising
Steel and Industrialism
Women and Labor
Schooling and Politics

WEEK 8

SPRING BREAK

MARCH 6-16

MARCH 18

IMMIGRANTS IN THE MILLS

Week 9

Bruce Watson, *Mills, Migrants, and the Struggle for the American Dream*
James R. Barrett, *Work and Community in the Jungle*, ch 2-5
Liz Cohen, *The Making of the New Deal*, 1-3.

Paper Topics

Immigrants and Ethnicity
Fragmentation and Immigration
Organizing, DeSkilling and Industrialism
Working Class Leisure
Neighborhoods
Urban and Ethnic Families
Steel and Early Industrial Unions
Socialism, Anarchism and Syndicalism
Poverty and Unemployment

MARCH 25

DAMES AND FLICKS

Week 10

Nan Enstad, *Ladies of Labor, Girls of Adventure: Working Women, Popular Culture, and Labor Politics at the Turn of the Century*.

William Tuttle, *Race Riot*, Ch. 1-2.4.

Paper Topics

Socialism, Anarchism

Telephone Workers, Typewriters and New Labor

Working Class Leisure

Working in the War

Women and Labor

Cities/Race Riots

Commercialism and Leisure

April 1

ORGANIZED!

Week 11

Read:

Robin Kelley, *Hammer and Hoe (Prologue and Part 2)*

Liz Cohen, *The Making of the New Deal (finish)*

Rod Zeigler, *The CIO 1935-55 (Chapters on the CIO)*

Paper Topics

The Rise of the CIO

The Communist Party

Cities in the Great Depression

Workers on the Waterfront

Labor and the New Deal

Hollywood in the 30's

Unemployment

Cities in the Great Depression

APRIL 8

CITY LIFE IN THE 20TH CENTURY

Week 12

Read:

Josh Freeman, *Working Class New York*

Ruth Milkman, *Gender at Work (ch.1-6)*

Paper Topics

African Americans in War Work

Labor During War

Gender and the Family

Movies

Baseball

Beats and Red Terrors

Corporate Culture and the Class Divide

APRIL 15

SUBURBS

Week 13

Read:

Thomas Segrue, *The Origins of the Urban Crisis*
Stephen Grant Meyer, *As Long as they Don't Move Next Door: Segregation and Racial Conflict in American Neighborhoods*. (Ch 5-8)

Paper Topics

Suburbanization
Culture in the Cold War
Blue Collar Communities
Automobiles, Tourism
Television
Blue Collar Workers and the Cold War
Elvis and Rock and Roll

APRIL 22

FEAR AND FANTASY IN LA

Week 14

Read:

Becky M. Nicolaides, *My Blue Heaven: Life and Politics in Los Angeles*; Mike Wallace, *Mickey Mouse History*

Paper Topics

Hollywood
New Immigrants
Labor and Globalism
Workers in the Sunbelt
LA and Urbanism
Youth Culture

APRIL 29

URBAN UNREST

Week 15

Michael K. Honey, *Going Down Jericho Road*

Paper Topic

White Collar Workers
Race and Racial Conflict
Riots or Rebellions
Civil Rights in the South
Old Left, New Left
Music

Friday, May 1: REVIEW SESSION AND SEMINAR DINNER. MARK THIS IN YOU CALENDAR. ALL SEMINAR PAPERS FOR HONORS SUBMISSION ARE DUE BEFORE THIS SESSION; THIS IS FOR REVIEW ONLY. A SEPARATE AND LONG BIBLIOGRAPHY IS AVAILABLE FOR WEEKLY READINGS; YOU ARE NOT LIMITED TO THIS SUGGESTED BIBLIOGRAPHY.