This seminar will examine major historical and historiographical issues in the American labor history from the formation of the first "modern" American labor unions to the onset of the Great Depression. Among the topics to be explored are: the influence of race, gender, ethnicity, religion, region, and occupation on the formation of class consciousness and working-class organizations; the cultural and ideological dimensions of the working class experience; and the relationships between technological change, socio-economic change, and workers' skill and status.

This course is not intended to be a mere introduction to the labor history of the period, but neither does it assume a strong background in the field on the part of the students. It is designed to acquaint students with major scholarly works and significant historical problems in American labor history from 1830 to 1930.

Course Requirements: In addition to regular attendance and participation in the weekly seminar meetings, each student will lead class discussion for one week and write a 7-10 page paper on that week's reading. Also, each student will write a 15-20 page critical review essay on supplementary literature relating to one of the course's major themes.

All required readings for the seminar are available for purchase at the University Bookstore. They are also on reserve in the College Library, Helen C. White Hall.

(Note: The "Suggested Readings" for each week are a selection of books and articles for students interested in pursuing the week's major themes through the scholarly literature. These lists may also be useful in preparing the critical review essay at the conclusion of the course. Students should feel free to consult with the instructor on further additions to these "Suggested Readings.")
September 3 Introduction to the Course

September 10 Historical Overview I

Required Reading:
Bruce Laurie, Artisans Into Workers: Labor in Nineteenth-Century America.

Suggested Readings:

J. Carroll Moody and Alice Kessler-Harris, Perspectives on American Labor History, The Problem of Synthesis.


Irwin Yellowitz, Industrialization and the American Labor Movement, 1850-1900.


September 17  Historical Overview II

Required Reading:
David Montgomery, The Fall of the House of Labor: The Workplace, the State and American Labor Activism, 1865-1925.

Suggested Readings:

Leon Fink, Workingmen's Democracy, The Knights of Labor and American Politics.


Samuel Gompers, Labor and the Common Welfare.

Samuel Gompers, Labor and the Employer.

Harold Livesay, Samuel Gompers and Organized Labor in America

Bernard Mandel, Samuel Gompers: A Biography.


Milton Meltzer, Bread and Roses: The Struggle of American Labor, 1865-1914.

Norman Ware, The Labor Movement in the U.S., 1860-1895.


David Montgomery, Workers' Control in America.


Melvyn Dubofsky, Industrialism and the American Worker, 1865-1920.


David Brody, *Labor in Crisis: The Steel Strike of 1919*.

Marc Karson, *American Labor Unions and Politics, 1900-1918*.


Lloyd Ulman, *The Rise of the National Trade Union*.


James O. Morris, *Conflict Within the AFL: A Study of Craft versus Industrial Unionism, 1901-1938*.


Herbert Gutman, *Work, Culture and Society in Industrializing America*.


Nancy Schron Dye, *As Equals & As Sisters: Feminism, Unionism and the Women's Trade Union League of New York*.

Elizabeth Payne, *Reform, Labor, and Feminism: Margaret Dreier Robins and the Women's Trade Union League*.

Jacquelyn Dowd Hall et. al., *Like A Family: The Making of a Southern Cotton Mill World*.

Patricia Cooper, *Once A Cigar Maker: Men, Women, and Work Culture in American Cigar Factories, 1900-1919*.


September 24  The Emergence of the Antebellum Working Class

Required Reading:

Suggested Readings:


Howard Rock, Artisans of the New Republic: The Tradesmen of New York City in the Age of Jefferson.

Christine Stansell, City of Women: Sex and Class in New York, 1789-1860.


Mark Lause, Some Degree of Power: From Hired Hand to Union Craftsman in the Preindustrial American Printing Trade, 1778-1815.


October 1    Early Industrialization

Required Reading:


Suggested Readings:

Norman Ware, *The Industrial Worker, 1840-1860.*


Alan Dawley, *Class and Community: The Industrial Revolution in Lynn.*


Christopher Clark, *The Roots of Rural Capitalism: Western Massachusetts, 1780-1860.*


October 8  Labor and the Civil War

Required Reading:
Iver Bernstein, The New York City Draft Riots: Their Significance for American Society and Politics in the Age of the Civil War.

Suggested Readings:
David Montgomery, Beyond Equality: Labor and the Radical Republicans. 1862-1872.
October 15  Race, Labor, and Reconstruction

Required Reading:
Peter Rachleff, Black Labor in the South: Richmond, Virginia, 1865-1890.

Suggested Readings:
William H. Harris, The Harder We Run: Black Workers Since the Civil War.
Charles Flynn, White Land, Black Labor: Caste and Class in Late Nineteenth-Century Georgia.
Melton McLaurin, Paternalism and Protest: Southern Cotton Mill Workers and Organized Labor, 1875-1905.
James Irwin, "Farmers and Labors: A Note on Black Occupations in the Post-Bellum South," Agricultural History, 64 (1990), 53-60.
William Cohen, At Freedom's Edge: Black Mobility and the Southern White Quest for Radical Control.


Jonathan McLeod, Workers and Workplace Dynamics in Reconstruction-Era Atlanta: A Case Study.

October 22  Immigration and Radicalism

Required Readings:
Bruce C. Nelson, Beyond the Martyrs: A Social History of Chicago's Anarchists, 1870-1900.

Suggested Readings:
A. T. Lane, Solidarity or Survival: American Labor and European Immigrants, 1830-1924.
Gerald Rosenblum, Immigrant Workers: The Impact on American Labor Radicalism.
William Dick, Labor and Socialism in America.
Staughton Lynd, American Labor Radicalism.
Nick Salvatore, Eugene V. Debs: Citizen and Socialist.
John Laslett, Labor and the Left.
Melvyn Dubofsky, We Shall Be All: A History of the IWW.
Joseph Conlin, ed., At the Point of Production: The Local History of the IWW.
Joseph Conlin, Bread and Roses Too: Studies of the Wobblies.
Paul Avrich, The Haymarket Tragedy.
Robert Parmet, Labor and Immigration.


October 29  Law and the Labor Movement

Required Reading:
William Forbath, Law and the Shaping of the American Labor Movement.

Suggested Readings:


J. Atleson, Values and Assumptions in American Labor Law.

Edward Berman, Labor and the Sherman Act.

Felix Frankfurter and Nathan Greene, The Labor Injunction.

Alvin Goldman, The Supreme Court and Labor Management Relations Law.


John Orth, Combination and Conspiracy: A Legal History of Trade Unionism.


Marjorie Turner, *Early American Labor Conspiracy Cases: Their Place in Labor Law.*

November 5  Working Men's Culture

Required Reading:
Roy Rosenzweig, *Eight Hours for What We Will: Workers and Leisure in an Industrial City, 1870-1920*.

Suggested Readings:

Clark Halker, *For Democracy, Workers, and God: Labor Song-Poems and Labor Protest, 1865-95*.

Francis Couvares, *The Remaking of Pittsburgh: Class and Culture in an Industrializing City, 1877-1919*.

Elliott Gorn, *The Manly Art: Bare-Knuckle Prize Fighting in America*.


Michael Isenberg, *John L. Sullivan and His America*.

Hartmut Keil, *German Workers' Culture in the United States, 1850 to 1920.*
November 12 Working Women's Culture

Required Reading:

Suggested Readings:


Andrew Heinze, *Adapting to Abundance: Jewish Immigrants, Mass Consumption, and the Search for American Identity.*


November 19

The Development of Clerical Work and "White-Collar" Labor

Required Reading:

Suggested Readings:
Margery Davies, Woman's Place Is At The Typewriter: Office Work and Office Workers, 1870-1930.
Cindy Aron, Ladies and Gentlemen of the Civil Service: Middle-Class Workers in Victorian America.
Jurgen Kocka, White Collar Workers in America, 1890-1940.
Sharon Strom, Beyond the Typewriter: Gender, Class and the Origins of Modern American Office Work, 1900-1930.
Olivier Zunz, Making Corporate America, 1870-1920.
December 3  Salesworkers and the Commercial "Revolution"

Required Reading:
Susan Porter Benson, Counter Cultures: Saleswomen, Managers, and Customers in American Department Stores, 1890-1940.

Suggested Readings:

Sarah Malino, "Faces Across the Counter: A Social History of Female Department Store Employees, 1870-1920" (Ph.D., Columbia, 1982).

George Kirstein, Stores and Unions: A Study of the Growth of Unionism in Dry Goods and Department Stores.

Dorothy Cobble, Dishing It Out: Waitresses and Their Unions in the Twentieth Century.
December 10 Scientific Management and Labor

Required Reading:
Hugh Aitken, Scientific Management in Action: Taylorism at Watertown Arsenal, 1908-1915.

Suggested Readings:
Milton Nadworny, Scientific Management and the Unions.
Stuart Brandes, American Welfare Capitalism, 1880-1940.
Jean McKelvey, AFL Attitudes Toward Production, 1900-1932.
December 17

"Fordism" and Labor

Required Reading:

Suggested Readings:
Joyce Peterson, American Automobile Workers, 1900-1933.


