

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON  
Department of History  
Semester I, 1988-89

History 407

American Labor History, 1607-1900

Professor Zonderman  
5213 Humanities Building  
Office Hours: Tues. - 9:30-10:30 a.m.  
Thurs.- 2:00-4:00 p.m.

Tues. and Thurs.- 11-12:15 p.m.  
(and one hour of mandatory  
discussion sections each  
week)

263-1972  
263-1800

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 have 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.

Jeremy Brecher	<u>Strike</u>
Thomas Dublin	<u>Farm to Factory: The Mill Experience and Women's Lives</u>
Foster Rhea Dulles and 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 Kinkos (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 long. The first paper will be due on Thursday October 6th, and the second will be due on Thursday November 10th. 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.

- September 6 Introduction: Work and Workers in America
- September 8 Early Labor Problems and the "Protestant Work Ethic"  
 reading: Edmund Morgan, "The Labor Problem at Jamestown, 1607-1618" (p)
- September 13 A World of Slaves, Servants, Artisans and Farmers: Labor in Colonial America  
 reading: Foster Rhea Dulles and Melvyn Dubofsky, Labor in America, chapter 1  
 : Alice Kessler-Harris, Out to Work chapter 1
- September 15 American Workers, the Revolution, and the Constitution  
 reading: Alfred E. Young, "George Robert Twelves Hughes (1742-1840): A Boston Shoemaker and the Memory of the Revolution" (p)  
 : "Grand Federal Procession, Philadelphia, July 4, 1788" (p)
- September 20 Masters, Journeymen, and the Transformation of the Urban Working Class  
 reading: Dulles and Dubofsky, chapter 2  
 : "Trial of the Philadelphia Tailors, 1827" (p)  
 : "Trial of the Thompsonville Weavers, 1834" (p)
- September 22 The Development of Labor Politics  
 reading: Dulles and Dubofsky, chapter 3  
 : Locofocos and the New York Flour Riot of 1837 (p)
- September 27 The Beginnings of the Trade Union Movement  
 reading: Dulles and Dubofsky, chapter 4  
 : Trades Union of Philadelphia (2 documents) (p)
- September 29 Industrialization  
 reading: Kessler-Harris, chapter 2  
 : Thomas Dublin, Farm to Factory, pp. 1-36  
 : Essay by T.W. Dyott, Philadelphia, 1833 (p)  
 : poem; "The Factory Bell" (p)
- October 4 Workers and the Mechanized Factory System  
 reading: Dublin, pp. 39-191  
 : Kessler-Harris, pp. 59-68
- October 6 Paper Due The Options for Women Workers  
 reading: Kessler-Harris, pp. 45-58, 68-72  
 : Mary Blewett, "The Sexual Division of Labor and the Artisan Tradition in Early Industrial Capitalism" (p)

- October 11 Working Class Ethics in Antebellum America  
 reading: Eric Foner, Politics and Ideology in the Age of the Civil War, pp. 57-76 (p)
- October 13 Poor Whites and Black Slaves: Labor in the Antebellum South  
 reading: Jacqueline Jones, Labor of Love, Labor of Sorrow, chapter 1
- October 18 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 20 Emancipation and the Black Worker  
 reading: Jones, chapters 2 and 3  
 : Black National Labor Union: Resolutions (p)
- October 25 The Labor Uprising of 1877  
 reading: Jeremy Brecher, Strike, chapter 1  
 : Letter describing the Strike of 1877 (p)
- October 27 The Knights of Labor  
 reading: Dulles and Dubofsky, chapter 8  
 : Knights of Labor: Terrance Powderly (p)
- November 1 The Growth of an Immigrant Labor Force  
 reading: John Cumbler, "Migration, Class Formation, and Class Consciousness: The American Experience" (p)
- November 3 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 in Chicago, 1875-1887" (p)  
 : International Working People's Association, Manifesto, 1883 (p)
- November 8 The Crusade for the Eight Hour Day  
 reading: Brecher, chapter 2
- November 10 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 15 Clerks and the Changing Nature of Clerical Work  
 reading: Margery Davies, "Woman's Place is at the Typewriter: The Feminization of the Clerical Labor Force" (p)
- November 17 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 22           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 24           THANKSGIVING
- November 29           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)
- December 1            Urban Workers, Urban Development and Urban Politics  
    reading:   Kessler-Harris, chapter 5  
              : Jones, chapter 4
- December 6            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 8            Crises of the 1890s  
    reading:   Alexander Keyssar, "Unemployment and the Labor  
                  Movement in Massachusetts, 1870-1911" (p)
- December 13           The Great Strikes: Homestead and Pullman  
    reading:   Brecher, chapter 3  
              : Dulles and Dubofsky, chapter 10  
              : Samuel Gomper, "The Strike and Its Lessons" (p)
- December 15           Labor and the Emergence of American Imperialism  
    reading:   William Whittaker, "Samuel Gompers, Anti-  
                  Imperialist" (p)