

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON
Department of History
Fall Semester, 1986

History 571

Mr. Hollingsworth

American Capitalism Since the Late Nineteenth Century

A major concern of this course is to analyze the changing nature of American capitalism during the twentieth century and to analyze how it is distinctive as well as similar to that in other highly industrialized, capitalistic systems. The course will denote particular attention to class relationships, focusing on the distinctive characteristics between labor and capital in the United States. The course will be especially concerned with why the relations between labor and capital in the United States are different from other highly industrial societies. The course will also attempt to understand why the class relationships have varied from one sector of the economy to another (e.g. steel, automobile, aircraft, computer, telephone industries) and why these relationships have varied over time within the same sector.

Readings:

There are two types of readings. Books which each student should purchase at University Bookstore and a packet of "photocopied" materials which are available at Insty Print, 905 University Avenue (located in the basement).

Each week the required readings will serve as the focus of class discussions. It is each student's responsibility to do the readings carefully and critically and to be prepared to discuss the issues raised by them.

Class Discussions:

Each week at least two students will "volunteer" to lead the class discussions. In preparation for these discussions, the "volunteers" should meet outside of class and plan for some of the key issues which will be discussed. In class, the "volunteers" should be prepared to play an important role in steering the week's discussion in class.

The "volunteers" will also prepare five or six well worded questions or issues that they will have developed as a result of their planning. The questions should be duplicated and made available, ideally by noon of Friday but no later than Monday noon prior to Tuesday's class meeting.

Each student should plan to engage in this "volunteer" type activity twice during the semester.

Written Work:

There will be one examination in this course. It will be on December 2 and will be rather comprehensive in nature. In addition, each student is to write two papers. Each paper will be similar in that they are to be "think pieces" that confront major problems or questions posed by the course (through readings and/or class discussions). The model for these papers will be essays which appear in either The New York Review of Books or Reviews in American History. Each student very early in the semester should become quite familiar with these publications. Each paper should be typed and should be between 8 and 12 double-spaced pages.

All paper topics must be approved in advance by Mr. Hollingsworth. Each student is advised to choose the paper topics well in advance of the date when the papers are due.

Deadlines:

First Paper: October 7, topic and sources for paper submitted in writing to Mr. Hollingsworth for approval. October 28, paper due.

Second Paper: November 11, topic and sources for paper submitted in writing to Mr. Hollingsworth. December 9, paper due.

Policy on Deadlines and Incompletes:

A seminar involves collective effort. It works well only if everyone works together and if all participants collaborate, on time and in tandem. In a lecture course, if you ease up or do not do the work, you injure only yourself. In a seminar, however, if you ease up or do not cooperate with the entire class, you injure the quality of the entire class. Hence, it is necessary that you fulfill all assignments on time.

Attendance at seminar sessions is obligatory, illness or family emergency being the only valid excuse for an absence. In case of illness, please phone the secretary of the History Department to inform us of your absence.

All written assignments must be completed by the dates noted above. Incompletes will not be given except under unusual and verifiable circumstances (serious medical problems or family emergencies).

It is expected that students can and will express their ideas in clear, simple English prose. Students having difficulty in doing that or having uncertain writing skills, should make use of office hours to discuss their difficulties.

Office hours are held for your benefit. Please make use of them, not just in the first and the last weeks of the term.

Students who do not have a good background in American History should buy a used college textbook or borrow one from the library. The chapters relevant to the topic under discussion should be read in preparation for each week's assignment.

Any textbook will do, but I will recommend the following: Norton, Chaudacoff, et. al., A People and A Nation (Houghton, Mifflin Co.), and Blum et. al., The National Experience (Harcourt, Brace).

Grading Policy:

- 15 Percent: General involvement (attendance and class participation in discussions).
- 15 Percent: Based on contribution from leadership from supplementary readings during the two occasions described above.
- 46.3 Percent: 23.3 percent based on each of the two papers.
- 23.3 Percent: Examination.

Discussion Topics and Reading Assignments:

September 2: Introduction: Discussion of course mechanics

1. Rogers Hollingsworth and Robert Hanneman, "Leftist Governments, Working Class Power, and the Political Economy of Advanced Capitalist Societies" (Packet)

September 9: The Problem of Socialism in the U.S.

2. Seymour Lipset, "Why No Socialism in the United States" (Packet)
3. Introductory essay to Werner Sombart's Why Is There No Socialism in the United States? (Packet)
4. Weinstein, "The Problems of the Socialist Party" (Packet)
5. John Laslett, "Reflections on the Failure of Socialism in the American Federation of Labor" (Packet)

September 16: The Transformation of American Business

6. Alfred Chandler, "The Rise of Big Business" (Packet)
7. Alfred Chandler, "The United States: The Seedbed of Managerial Capitalism" (Packet)
8. Alfred Chandler, "Organizational Innovations" (Packet)
9. Alfred Chandler, "Industries Not Accepting New Structure" (Packet)

September 23, 30: Labor and the Transformation of the American Economy

10. Dan Clawson, Bureaucracy and the Labor Process, Chapters 3 and 4 (Packet)

11. John Laslett, "Reflections on the Failure of Socialism in the American Federation of Labor" (Packet). Repeat reading of September 9.
12. Melvin Dubovsky, "Socialism and Syndicalism" (Packet)
13. Katherine Stone, "The Origins of Job Structures in the Steel Industry" (Packet)
14. Harry Braverman, Labor and Monopoly Capitalism, Chapter 4 (Packet)
15. Stuart Brandes, "American Welfare Capitalism" (Packet)

October 7, 14: Mike Davis, Prisoners of the American Dream

October 21: Richard Edwards, et. al., Segmented Work, Divided Workers

October 28: David Noble, America By Design

November 4: Donald Stabile, Prophets of Order

November 11, 18: Alfred Chandler, The Visible Hand

- November 25, December 9:
- (1) Michael Piore and Charles Sabel, The Second Industrial Divide
 - (2) Rogers Hollingsworth and Leon Lindberg, "The Governance of the American Economy" (Packet)
 - (3) James R. Kurth, "The Political Consequences of the Product Cycle" (Packet)