RUTGERS UNIVERSITY LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT HISTORY FALL 2011 (38:578:612)

Professor Dorothy Sue Cobble <u>cobble@rutgers.edu</u>; 732-932-1742 (phone) Office hours: Tuesdays 7:15-8:15 or by appointment.

Tuesdays, 4:30-7:10 pm Labor Education Center Room 130/131

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course offers an historical perspective on labor and employment relations in developed capitalist economies, especially the United States. It is centrally concerned with the question of how to treat, value, and reward workers. We will start with the work of the home and its relation to the market-based economy. Next, we consider the slave economy and the legacy of slavery. In the remainder of the course we explore the work and labor relations of market economies. Themes include transnational labor migration and the rise of corporate capitalism; the ideas, movements, and institutions of working people; the role of the state in labor relations and the economy; the rise, fall, and future of social democracy, collective bargaining, and welfare capitalism; economic inequality and democratic governance; the effects of globalization on workers, employers, and communities.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The course aims to give students an:

- *understanding of the broad outlines of the historical evolution of work, labor movements, and social policy in the United States;
- *understanding of how the U.S. story compares with and is shaped by other regions;
- *ability to analyze the strengths and weakness of the various labor relations systems that have existed in the U.S. and in other nations;
- *understanding of the market and labor relations as social constructs;
- *ability to identify and evaluate the main arguments presented in a historical text;
- *ability to make an argument (written and oral) using historical evidence/examples.
- *appreciation of the power of the past to shape the present;
- *appreciation of the historical imagination and the "lessons" of history:
- *enlarged sense of personal and political possibility.

COURSE TEXTS

1. *Required Articles. All the required articles are indicated by * below and are available on the web through SAKAI at https://sakai.rutgers.edu/portal. PRINT OUT ALL OF THE REQUIRED ARTICLES AND BRING THEM WITH YOU TO CLASS. For problems or questions with Sakai, call or email Laura Walkoviak at 732-932-9503 or lawalkoviak@work.rutgers.edu. If you have a problem with your own computer, computers are available at the Carey Library in the Labor Education

Center. For library hours call 732-932-9513 or e-mail the associate librarian Eugene McElroy at Mcelroy@work.rutgers.edu.

2. **Required Books**. The following required books are available for purchase at the Rutgers University Bookstore, 1 Penn Plaza - Ferren Mall, Albany St & Easton Ave., New Brunswick, NJ (http://rutgers.bncollege.com). Call 732-246-8448 for hours. All are in paperback. The current RU bookstore prices for new and used copies are listed below. The books are also available for purchase on the internet from a variety of sources.

Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, An American Slave, Written By Himself* (Boston, 1845). [Dover Thrift edition]. \$1.50/1.15.

William Forbath, *Law and the Shaping of the American Labor Movement* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1991). \$27.00/20.25.

Jack Metzgar, *Striking Steel, Solidarity Remembered* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2000). \$27.95/20.95.

Jacob S. Hacker and Paul Pierson, *Winner-Take-All Politics: How Washington Made the Rich Richer – And Turned Its Back on the Middle Class* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2010). \$15.00/11.25.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS and GRADING:

- 1. Class Attendance and Participation (30%)
- 2. Weekly Response Papers (60%)
- 3. Final Individual or Group Project (10%) (See page 6 for a fuller explanation of each of these requirements)

COURSE OUTLINE

Week 1 (Sept 6) ORIENTATION AND INTRODUCTIONS

Week 2 (Sept 13) FAMILY ECONOMIES

Reading:

*Jeanne Boydston, "To Earn Her Daily Bread: Housework and Antebellum Working-Class Subsistence," in *Unequal Sisters* (London: Routledge University Press, 2000), 80-92.

*Christine Stansell, "The Origins of the Sweatshop," In *Working-Class America*, ed. Michael Frisch and Daniel Walkowitz (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1983), 78-103. *Evelyn Nakano Glenn, "From Servitude to Service Work: Historical Continuities in the Racial Division of Paid Reproductive Labor," in *Unequal Sisters* (London: Routledge University Press, 2000), 436-465.

Assignment: Response Paper #1

Week 3 (Sept 20) SLAVERY AND FREEDOM

Reading:

Frederick Douglass, *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass* (Boston, 1845), entire, 1-76.

*Eric Foner, "Emancipation and the Reconstruction of Southern Labor," excerpts from *A Short History of Reconstruction* (NY: Harper & Row, 1990), reprinted in Boris and Lichtenstein, eds. *Major Problems in the History of American Workers*, 112-123

Assignments:

- 1. Response Paper #2 on Douglass. Answer these questions: What effect does slavery have on the slaves and on the slave owners? What strategies do slave owners rely upon to sustain the system of slavery? What do slaves do to survive the system? How does Douglass define freedom?
- 2. Be prepared in class to offer an oral evaluation of Foner's arguments.

Week 4 (Sept 27) IMMIGRATION AND MIGRANT WORKERS

Reading:

*Cindy Hahamavitch, "Creating Perfect Immigrants: Guestworkers of the World in Historical Perspective," *Labor History* 44:1 (2003): 69-94.

*Douglas S. Massey, Jorge Durand, and Nolan J. Malone, *Beyond Smoke and Mirrors: Mexican Immigrant in an Era of Economic Integration* (NY: Russell Sage, 2002), chapters 3, 7.

Assignment: Response Paper #3

Week 5 (Oct 4) GILDED AGE CAPITALISM AND ITS DISCONTENTS

Reading:

Forbath, Law and the Shaping of the American Labor Movement, ch. 2.

*Andrew Carnegie, "An Employer's View of the Labor Question," (1886) in *The Gospel of Wealth and Other Timely Essays*, 92-105.

*Samuel Gompers, "Economics and Ethics of High Wages;" and "The Shorter Working Day," in *Labor and the Employer* (E.P Dutton & Co., 1920), 58-63; 81, 86-91; and Samuel Gompers, "What Does Labor Want? A Paper Read before the International Labor Congress, Chicago, Illinois, September, 1893," in *Samuel Gompers Papers*, vol. 3, Stuart Kaufman and Peter J. Albert, eds. (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1989), 388–396.

*Visit http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/carnegie, the PBS website on Carnegie. Click on "People and Events" and read "Andrew Carnegie," "Herbert Spencer," and "The Homestead Strike." Click on "Special Features" and read "Meet Andrew Carnegie."

Assignment: Response Paper #4

Week 6 (Oct 11) LABOR AND THE LAW

Reading:

Forbath, *Law and the Shaping of the American Labor Movement*, preface, chapters 3-5, conclusion.

Assignment:

Response Paper #5 on Forbath. Questions: Forbath argues that the courts made the American labor movement more conservative by the early twentieth century. What evidence does he give to support his argument? Do you agree or not? Why or why not?

Week 7 (Oct 18) NEW DEAL REVOLUTIONS

Reading:

*Franklin Delano Roosevelt, "Fireside Chats" (May 7, 1933; September 30, 1934; April 28, 1935; January 11, 1944), selected and formatted on Sakai or accessed July 15, 2010, at http://docs.fdrlibrary.marist.edu/FIRESI90.HTML.

*Cass Sunstein, "The Myth of Laissez –Faire," from *The Second Bill of Rights: FDR's Unfinished Revolution and Why We Need it More Than Ever* (NY: Basic Books, 2004), 17-34.

Metzgar, Striking Steel, 1-57.

Assignment:

- 1. Response Paper #6
- 2. Be prepared to discuss possible final projects in class.

Week 8 (Oct 25) THE RISE AND FALL OF COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Reading:

Metzgar, Striking Steel, 58-148, 202-229.

Assignment:

Response Paper #7 on Metzgar. Questions: How did the rise of industrial unionism and of collective bargaining affect workers according to Metzgar? Why did the steel industry decline? Does it matter how the 1950s are remembered? Why or why not?

Week 9 (Nov 1) WELFARE CAPITALISM

Reading:

*Jacoby, *Modern Manors: Welfare Capitalism Since the New Deal* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 3-34, 193-267.

Assignment:

- 1. Response Paper #8
- 2. Submit a paragraph describing your or your group's proposed final project. Include a preliminary list of sources

Week 10 (Nov 8) OTHER LABOR MOVEMENTS

Reading:

*Dorothy Sue Cobble, "Women's Job Rights," "Wage Justice" and "The Politics of the Double Day," in *The Other Women's Movement: Workplace Justice and Social Rights in Modern America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), 69-144.

*Michael Honey, "Martin Luther King and the Memphis Sanitation Strike," in Boris and Lichtenstein, eds. *Major Problems in the History of American Workers*, 420-431.

Assignment: Response Paper #9

Week 11 (Nov 15) RAISING THE GLOBAL FLOOR

Reading:

*Jody Heymann and Alison Earle, Raising the Global Floor: Dismantling the Myth That We Can't Afford Good Working Conditions for Everyone (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010), preface, chapters 3, 7.

*Ron Blackwell, "Building a Member-Based International Program," in Greg Mantsios, ed. *A New Labor Movement for the New Century* (1998), 320-328. *Jennifer Gordon, "Workers Without Borders," *New York Times*, 10 March 2009.

Assignment:

- 1. Response Paper #10
- 2. Revised Proposal Due for Final Project.

Week 12 (Nov 22) THANKSGIVING BREAK

Week 13 (Nov 29) NO CLASS

Reading:

Hacker and Pierson, Winner-Take-All Politics, 1-160.

Assignment: Response Paper #11 on Parts 1 and 2 of Hacker and Pierson. Questions: What is the winner-take-all economy? Why is it a problem according to Hacker and Pierson? Do you agree? Why or why not?

Week 14 (Dec 6) THE POLITICS OF INEQUALITY

Reading:

Hacker and Pierson, Winner-Take-All Politics, 161-306.

Assignment: Response Paper #12 on Part 3 of Hacker and Pierson. Questions: What is winner-take-all politics? Why is it a problem according to Hacker and Pierson? Do you agree? Why or why not?

Week 15 (Dec 13) STUDENT PRESENTATIONS/CLASS PARTY

Final Papers Due by 10 pm December 20.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS and GRADING:

1. CLASS ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION (30%)

Class Attendance. Students are expected to attend class regularly. Class attendance involves arriving on time and staying the full class session. If you anticipate a problem with attendance or timeliness, you should discuss the matter with me *before* signing up for the class. The grade for attendance will be lowered for students who miss more than two classes.

In case of an absence, you should arrange with another student in the class to get the material you missed or talk with me during my office hours. If you are unable to meet during my office hours, you can call or e-mail me to set up an appointment for a different time.

Class Participation. Students should read carefully the assigned texts *prior* to each class meeting. Come to class prepared to summarize and discuss what you have read and to participate actively in class discussion. Please also print out and bring copies of each reading (books and articles) to class. Students will be assigned to help facilitate class discussion at least one time over the course of the semester.

The following questions should be kept in mind as you read: What are the major assertions of the author? What evidence does s/he use to back up these claims? Are the author's arguments convincing? Why or why not? Are there different perspectives on the topic that are missing or are more convincing? What have you learned from this reading? What is significant or original or interesting about it? What questions remain for you after finishing the reading?

2. Weekly Response Papers on Required Reading (60%)

Student will submit short response papers on required reading ten times over the fifteen weeks of the semester. Five response papers should be submitted by week 7 (October 18); five papers should be submitted after week 7. Students also may submit two additional response papers for extra credit. The response papers should be 2-3 pages, typed and double-spaced. Longer papers are discouraged. Papers should be posted on Sakai by 10 pm on Monday, the day *before* the class meets. Late

papers will be graded down. No paper will be accepted after the class meets to discuss the reading.

For the response papers on the required books, students should answer the questions posed by the instructor listed on the syllabus for that week. On weeks when no specific questions are listed, students should submit response papers that 1) identify and briefly describe the main ARGUMENTS in each reading and 2)offer an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of each reading.

The response papers will be graded on a scale of 1 to 6, with 6 being the highest score. A cumulative grade will be awarded at the end of the semester using the following conversion from points to grades:

51-60 = A-/A 41-50 = B/B+ 31-40 = C/C+ 21-30 = D/D+Below 21 = F

3. GROUP or INDIVIDUAL PROJECT (10 %)

Students should work individually or in groups of two or three to prepare a classroom presentation and a written paper based on a project chosen from either A, B, C or D below. A short preliminary paragraph describing the proposed project (who is in your group; the historical figure/film/public site/special topic the group has chosen; the sources you or your group will consult) is due November 1. A revised proposal is due November 15.

Student presentations will be scheduled December 13. Classroom presentations should be no longer than TEN minutes. Following each presentation, FIVE minutes will be set aside for discussion and feedback from the class. There are no formal guidelines for the classroom presentation, but you are encouraged to use your creativity in coming up with imaginative ways of "teaching" the material to the class. Web-based visuals and/or short clips from videos, etc. are encouraged. But remember, your time is limited and the questions listed under each project below should guide your presentation.

The final paper should be 3-4 pages, typed, double-spaced, and answer the questions posed by the instructor on the syllabus. The paper is due December 20 and should be submitted on SAKAI. Group members may submit individual or coauthored papers. Grades for late papers will be lowered.

A. LABOR LIVES PROJECT

Choose an important historical figure in labor and employment history. Read at least TWO sources (autobiography, biography, or memoir) that offer contrasting perspectives on the individual. A list of recommended books is posted on Sakai. The class presentation and paper should answer the following questions:

- *Why did you choose this individual?
- *How did this person change or influence the course of history?
- *How have historians judged this individual? What is your assessment?
- *What did you learn from this person's life that affirms, contests, or extends course themes?

B. LABOR HISTORY THROUGH FILM

Choose a film related to the themes of the course. A list of recommended films and source materials is posted on Sakai. View the film and read at least TWO substantial written accounts about the events, the era, the figures, or the issues portrayed in the film. The classroom presentation and written paper should answer the following questions:

- *Why did you choose this film?
- *What message(s) or images concerning labor or labor relations are communicated in the film?
- *How accurate are these messages or images in your opinion?
- *How does this film affirm, contest, or extend course themes?

C. VISITING A LABOR HISTORY PUBLIC SITE

Choose a public history site (museum, monument, restored historic site or town, significant on-line exhibit) relevant to this course. Visit the site in person or virtually. Consult at least TWO substantial written sources related to the site. The classroom presentation and the written paper should answer the following questions:

- *Why did you choose this particular site?
- *Why is this site important historically?
- *What message(s) or images concerning labor or labor relations are communicated by this public site?
- *How accurate are these messages or images in your opinion?
- *How does this public site affirm, contest, or extend course themes?

D. A Proposed Individual or Group Project Relevant to the Course Approved by the Instructor.

PLEASE NOTE: Papers you have written or are writing for other classes are not acceptable submissions. In addition, using phrases from another's writing without quotation marks, or paraphrasing another's ideas without crediting the source of the idea is plagiarism. Plagiarism or any form of cheating can result in failure in this course and disciplinary action through University channels. For Rutgers University's Policy on plagiarism, http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtm.

INCOMPLETE GRADES ARE GRANTED IN ONLY THE MOST EXTREME CIRCUMSTANCES AND ONLY WITH PRIOR PERMISSION.

August 5, 2011.