

PERSPECTIVES ON LABOR STUDIES

Spring 2012, January 19 to May 13

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Scott Hall, Room 121

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INTRODUCTION

Perspectives on Labor Studies provides advanced Labor Studies students and other interested students with the opportunity to apply and compare some of the landmark scholarship that defines the fields of Labor Studies and Employment and Industrial Relations with contemporary scholarship that extends or challenges this landmark scholarship. Students will read and analyze classic scholars like Adam Smith, Karl Marx, Max Weber, John Dunlop, Frederick Winslow Taylor, Samuel Gompers, and John Commons. These scholars identified and analyzed issues like the relationship between labor and markets, the rights of labor and managers, the function and nature of collective bargaining and unions, the workings of rational authority, and the methods of managing workers (to name a few). Students will also have the opportunity to read and analyze contemporary scholarship that challenges or supports the classic scholarship. Contemporary issues like managing workers, the formation and functions of unions in an age of globalization and new technologies, defining and extending labor's rights and freedoms in an increasingly insecure world, and creating systems to increase efficiency and workplace satisfaction will be read along with the classics. The juxtaposition of classic scholarship to contemporary scholarship will encourage students to create their own hypotheses and solutions to some of the issues that define the field of Labor Studies.

CONTACT

I will hold "office hours" by email. **On Fridays, from Thursday, January 19, 2012 to May 13, 2012, between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m.**, you may email your questions or concerns to me. You will receive an answer within 24 hours. Questions emailed outside of this time and day will be answered at my convenience. You may email your questions to tpoor@aleph-naught.net.

READINGS

All readings will be posted on SAKAI or handed out during class.

CLASSES

1. January 19: INTRODUCTION

- Discuss Syllabus and Requirements
- Introduce the readings due next week, January 26.
- Group and Paper Assignments

2. January 26: INTRODUCING PERSPECTIVES ON LABOR STUDIES

- READINGS DUE
 - (i) “The Communist Manifesto, Part 1”, by Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels.
 - (ii) “A Theory of the Labor Movement”, by Selig Perlman
 - (iii) “Free to Choose: A Personal Statement”, by Milton and Rose Friedman
 - (iv) “Lessons for Resisting Useless Vices”, in Upside Down: A Primer for the Looking Glass World, by Eduardo Galeano.

3. February 2: WORK & EXPECTATIONS, PT. 1

- READINGS DUE
 - (i) “Groundskeeper Busted Reading in the Custodial Water Closet”, “Lose Yourself”, and “Turn the Radio to a Gospel Station”, in Working Words: Punching the Clock and Kicking Out the Jams, ed. M.L. Liebler.
 - (ii) “Alienation”, by Karl Marx
 - (iii) Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs

GROUP 1 FACILITATES

4. February 9: WORK & EXPECTATIONS, PT. 2

- READINGS DUE
 - (i) “Exploring the Managed Heart” and “The Search for Authenticity”, by Arlie Hochschild.
 - (ii) “Work”, from White Collar, by C. Wright Mills

Movie: Office Space

5. February 16: LABOR AND THE MARKET, PT 1

- READINGS DUE
 - (i) Chapters 1, 2, and 3, from An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations, by Adam Smith.
 - (ii) “The Process of Creative Destruction”, in Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy, by Joseph Schumpeter
 - (iii) “American Shoemakers, 1648-1895”, by John Commons

- GROUP 2 FACILITATES

6. February 23: LABOR AND THE MARKET, PT 2

- READINGS DUE
 - (i) “Globalization: A Long-Term Trajectory of the World-System”, in The Decline of American Power, by Immanuel Wallerstein.

- (ii) “Markets, State, and Social Opportunity” and “Social Choice and Individual Behavior”, in Development as Freedom, by Amartya Sen.
- (iii) “What Do Unions Do”, Richard Freeman and James Medoff

- GROUP 3 FACILITATES

7. March 1: PROPERTY AND LABOR, PT 1

- READINGS DUE
 - (i) “How American Workers Lost the Right to Strike, and Other Tales”, by James Gray Pope. Rutgers Law School, Faculty Papers. 2004, Paper 3.
 - (i) Samuel Gompers v. Governor Allen Debate, 1920.
 - (ii) Readings on the Boeing Debate

6. March 8: PROPERTY AND LABOR, PT 2

- CLASS DEBATE

8. March 22: LABOR AND INSTITUTIONS, PT 1

- READINGS DUE
 - (i) “Bureaucracy”, by Max Weber.
 - (ii) “Scientific Management”, by Frederick Winslow Taylor
 - (iii) Selected readings from Labor and Monopoly Capital: The Degredation of Work in the 20th C., by Harry Braverman.

- GROUP 4 FACILILITATES

9. March 29: LABOR AND INSTITUTIONS, PT 2

- READINGS DUE
 - (i) “The Uses of Industrial Power” in Workers in Industrial America: Essays on the Twentieth Century Struggle, by David Brody
 - (ii) “The Assumptions of Trade Unionism”, by Beatrice and Sydney Webb
 - (iii) Chapter 1, Workers Centers: Organizing Communities at the Edge of the Dream, by Janice Fine

- GROUP 5 FACILITATES

10. April 5: LABOR AND EFFICIENCY

- READINGS DUE
 - (i) Selected readings on high performance work systems.
 - (ii) Chapters 3 and 4, from Rivthead: Tales from the Assembly Line, by Ben Hamper.

(iii) “Where We Are Now” in How to Tell When You’re Tired: A Brief Examination of Work, by Reg Theriault.

(iv) “Uplifting the Sisters in the Craft”, in Dishing it Out: Waitresses and Their Unions in the 20th C., by Dorothy Sue Cobble

- Movie: The Take

11. April 12: LABOR AND IDENTITY

- READINGS DUE

(i) “The Echoes of Slavery: Recognizing the Racist Origins of the Agricultural and Domestic Workers Exclusion in the National Labor Relations Act”, by Juan Perea, in Ohio State Law Journal, Vol. 72:1

(ii) “On Language, Gender, and Working Class History”, in Gender and the Politics of History, by Joan Wallach Scott.

- GROUP 6 FACILITATES

13. April 19: LABOR AS A MOVEMENT, PT 1

- READINGS DUE

(i) “The Structuring of Protest” in Poor People’s Movments: How They Succeed and Why They Fail, by Frances Fox Piven and Howard A. Cloward.

- GROUP 7 FACILITATES

14. April 26: LABOR AS A MOVEMENT, PT 2 and REVIEW

- READINGS DUE

(i) “The Industrial Workers’ Movement” in Poor People’s Movments: How They Succeed and Why They Fail, by Frances Fox Piven and Howard A. Cloward.

15. May 9: FINAL AND PAPER RE-WRITES DUE

ASSIGNMENTS, GRADING, AND EXPECTATIONS

Attendance and Participation (15% of your total grade)

Rutgers University has an attendance policy:

Students are expected to attend all scheduled course meetings, although no special provisions are normally made for reporting occasional absences from class. It is the policy of the university to excuse without penalty students who are absent because of religious observance and to allow the makeup of work missed because of such absences. A student absent from an examination because of required religious observance will be given an opportunity to make up the examination without penalty.

You will, therefore, be expected to attend all scheduled classes unless you are absent due to religious observance. You will get one excused absence that does not hinge on religious observance. All other absences, excluding absences due to religious observances, will be unexcused unless you experience a serious, documentable, medical or family emergency. Your grade will be docked two points for each unexcused absence. Attendance will be taken at the end of each class.

To participate well you must first read all of the assigned materials and come to class prepared to discuss these readings. Connecting personal experience to the themes of the readings can aid learning. However, personal experience is limited. Participation that expands knowledge moves beyond personal experience to focus on the evidence and logic of the arguments. Your participation will be graded on your contributions to the discussions of the readings and your ability to avoid lingering too long on personal experiences.

Group Facilitation Assignment:

The Assignment

Students will be broken down into SEVEN (7) separate Groups on the second day of class. Each Group will help me to lead discussion once during the semester. The task of helping me lead discussion is as follows:

- a. Each group will help me facilitate once during the semester.
- b. Two weeks before the date of facilitation, I will provide the Group scheduled to facilitate with a list of questions related to the readings.
- c. Students must provide a written answer to each question and then give the written answers to me one week prior to the readings' due date, by email at tpoor@aleph-naught.net. I will then send your answer to one other student in the group, and I will provide each student with the relevant email addresses.
- d. Each student will review the answers of the one other student and provide a brief comment on the quality of the answers provided. I.e., each student will "grade" the answers of the one other student in the group.
- e. A copy of the comments you write on the answers provided by other students in the group must be provided to the author of the answers on the Tuesday prior to the date the reading assignment is due. Send you comments by email.
- f. The comments must also be emailed to me on the Tuesday prior to the date the reading assignment is due. My email address, again, is tpoor@aleph-naught.net.
- g. On the date of facilitation, each student in the Group will provide me with a hardcopy of their answers and the comments on their answers.
- h. On the date of facilitation, members of the group will lead a small group discussion that will deal with the questions already posed to the Group.

Grading the Assignment (30% of your total grade)

Each student will be graded on the quality (not quantity) of the answer provided in response to each question, and on the quality of the comments provided to each student in your group. You

will be docked 2 points for failing to timely provide your written comments to your fellow group members, and your emailed comments to me.

The final grade for this assignment will be based on its timeliness and on the hardcopy you provide to me on the date the reading is due, i.e. the due date. Late assignments will not be accepted, at all.

The Paper Assignment: (30% of your total grade)

Each student will be expected to write one paper on one of the themes presented in class.

The first purpose of this paper is to provide you with the opportunity to explore in more depth a theme that you find interesting. For example, you may want to develop a better understanding of the relationship between labor and property, the representation of labor, or work systems, etc.

The second purpose of this paper is to help you improve your writing skills. Therefore, you will submit a draft and a final draft. The first draft will be submitted to me, and I will send your draft to one other student. Each student will be expected to write a paper and comment on one other student's paper. I will provide a comment and a temporary grade on each student's first draft. Student may, if they want to improve their grades, re-write their first draft and submit a final draft to me.

I will grade each paper on the quality of the exploration of the theme, the structure, and grammar. Part of the grade will also factor in the comments you provide to other students.

Late draft papers and final papers will not be accepted unless the student is observing a religious holiday or has a documentable medical or family crisis. A very short extension of time will be granted in these cases.

The Final (25% of your total grade)

A short answer take-home final will be handed out during class on April 26, 2012. It is due by 5 p.m. on May 9, 2012. LATE FINALS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED UNLESS THE STUDENT IS OBSERVING A RELIGIOUS HOLIDAY OR HAS A DOCUMENTABLE MEDICAL or FAMILY EXCUSE. In these instances, a very short extension will be granted.