

## 575:201:06 Labor and Work in the US before 1877 – Fall 2021

Professor: Dr. James Robinson  
Class meetings: Tuesday, 7PM-10PM (roughly)  
Location: Labor Education Center 137  
Office hours: 1PM-2PM Wednesdays via Zoom or by appointment  
Zoom: <https://rutgers.zoom.us/my/jr1589?pwd=MDRYMkhCaGNIRkVQdE9EUDV1OXRWQT09>  
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Teaching Assistant: Matthew Aramayo  
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### INTRODUCTION

History has often been presented as the story of how powerful people have changed human societies over the course of time, with presidents, generals, and the wealthy playing central roles. This course will turn the standard approach on its head and instead look at America and the changes it has undergone through the eyes of working people.

This class will introduce the important developments and themes in the history of work in the Americas from the period of initial contact between European, African and Native American cultures to the period up until end of Reconstruction. The approach will center on the historical shifts that influenced the decisions that shaped early American concepts of work, including slavery, indentured servitude, free labor and the rise and impact of industrialization and the early labor movement.

This course is aimed primarily at students who have little or no experience with college-level history and assumes no prior knowledge of the historical developments we will cover.

### 2021 Pandemic Note

We seemed to be rounding the corner, but as of late summer, the Delta variant seems to be forcing covid back into our lives as it incubated in the unvaccinated. Because of that, we will have to wear masks during this class. This is mandatory by Rutgers policy. I hope this is as bad as it gets, but I am prepared if Rutgers mandates it to turn this class into a virtual class if things continue to spiral. But for now, this will be a live class with masks. Wear them, and wear them correctly (over the nose). If you refuse to wear a mask, you will be asked to leave the class and written up to Student Conduct. Please inform me if you test positive and need to isolate, as well.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The student is able to:

#### Core Curriculum: SCL, HST, WCr and WCd

- Explain the development of some aspect of a society or culture over time. (Goal K)
- Understand different theories about human culture, social identity, economic entities, political systems, and other forms of social organization. (Goal M)

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- Communicate complex ideas effectively, in standard written English, to a general audience, and respond effectively to editorial feedback from peers, instructors, and/or supervisors through successive drafts and revision. (Goal S)
- Communicate effectively in modes appropriate to a discipline or area of inquiry; evaluate and critically assess sources and use the conventions of attribution and citation correctly; and analyze and synthesize information and ideas from multiple sources to generate new insights. (Goal T)

### **School of Management and Labor Relations:**

- Communicate effectively at a level and in modes appropriate to an entry-level professional. (Goal I)
- Demonstrate an understanding of relevant theories and apply them given the background context of a particular work situation. (Goal IV)

### **Labor Studies and Employment Relations Department:**

- Demonstrate an understanding of the perspectives, theories and concepts in the field of labor and employment relations. (Goal 1)
- Make an argument using contemporary or historical evidence. (Goal 4)

### **REQUIRED TEXT**

Clark, Hewitt, Brown, Jaffee, *Who Built America? Vol. 1* (Third Edition, ISBN 9780312446918)

The textbook will be provided to you as a PDF on Canvas, but used copies are quite inexpensive online, if you desire a tangible version.

### **YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES**

Read the syllabus

Do the readings

Turn in your assignments on time

Make sure your assignments are submitted

Attend the meetings

### **EVALUATION**

#### **Written assignments**

You will write two papers this semester, on topics to be announced. Each accounts for 20% of your final grade. You will write several drafts of each. All are mandatory, as is participation in peer review. If you miss a peer review session, it is your responsibility to make it up, or you will receive no credit for it. Missing your writing conference, or coming unprepared, will earn you a significant reduction on your paper grade. Each part of the process counts toward your final assignment grade. I expect an honest attempt at a full paper for all drafts. Doing otherwise will negatively impact your grade. It is your responsibility to make sure you turn in each draft and your peer editing form. If you do not have a submission receipt from Canvas, then you have not submitted your essay, and you will be graded accordingly. Declining to make substantial changes to your drafts (unless otherwise advised) will result in a failing grade. Turning in no final paper, or turning in only a final paper, or turning in the same paper multiple times, will result in a zero.

#### **Lateness Policy**

All late assignments will be marked down. One grade will be deducted for every 24-hour period (or portion thereof) your paper is late. That is, a B paper will turn into a C paper if it is up to 24 hours late, and into a D paper if it is up to 48 hours late. While the drafts are not assigned letter grades, failing to turn them or turning them in late will have the same effect on the final draft you hand in for a grade.

**You must complete all written assignments in order to receive credit for this course.** We will turn back all assignments in a timely manner. If we do not turn back your assignment, it is your job to bring this to our attention. If you believe we have not recorded a grade for an assignment you have turned in, you must clear this up during the semester. After the semester is over, we will not be able to consider claims that you turned in an assignment if we have no record of it.

### **Discussion forums**

Due to the continued Covid-19 pandemic, I have decided to scrap the in-class quizzes and revert to Discussion posts instead. They will be pass/fail and be similar to what the quizzes would have been, but will be done at home and be open-book.

For most classes, you will have discussion posts due on Canvas. I will post primary sources and several questions for you to answer about each. You are also required to respond to at least one of your discussion group members, for each discussion topic, which helps to make what you are doing actual discussions, one day later. All posts will be due on Tuesdays 11:59PM and response to a classmate's post on Thursdays 11:59PM.

For example: your first discussion posts will be due at 11:59 PM on Tuesday September 30<sup>th</sup>. Your response to at least one of your peers, in each discussion topic, will be due by 11:59 PM on Thursday, September 30<sup>th</sup>. All discussion posts will be due on Tuesdays at 11:59PM, and discussion responses to other students due on Thursday at 11:59PM. See syllabus for specific dates.

Please indicate which questions you are answering, and separate each into its own paragraph.

Your initial answers and responses should both be substantive contributions, every time. A single-sentence answer and "I agree!" as a response will not earn credit. Please put some time into these, as they are not box-checking exercises to take up your time. I don't expect multiple-paragraph answers (though if you are really feeling it, go for it!), but these discussions are a prime method of learning, and the more work you put into them, the better off we all are.

All discussions are mandatory, and any that you do not complete will result in a lower grade.

I will drop two missed discussion posts at the end of the semester.

### **Class Discussion**

We will often discuss readings in the course. It is on you to come prepared to discuss issues related to the materials. Discussions will engage with the material, so class participation is required. If you don't keep up with the readings, you will not do well on this part of the course. Come ready to ask questions and answer questions as best as you can.

### **Cheating/plagiarism**

There are serious consequences, including expulsion, for both cheating and taking someone else's work without attribution. The university has clear, strict policies on these matters. I will report all violations. If you have not done so already, please familiarize yourself with the university's academic integrity policy by visiting [academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/](http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/) The relevant parts are brief and straightforward. If you have any questions, please ask me.

### **Exams**

There will be a first exam due ---, and a second exam due ----. They will be written long answer essays that are take-home exams (not in class.)

**Your final grade** will be calculated as follows:

Discussions	10%
Quizzes	10%

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Paper I	20%
Paper II	20%
First exam	20%
Second exam	20%

I grade according the following grade breakdown:

A	90		
B+	87	B	80
C+	77	C	70
		D	60

### Use of Class Materials

The materials used in this class, including, but not limited to, the syllabus, exams, lecture materials, and assignments are copyright protected works. Any unauthorized copying of the class materials is a violation of federal law and may result in disciplinary actions being taken against the student. Additionally, the sharing of class materials without the specific, express approval of the instructor may be a violation of the University's Code of Student Conduct and an act of academic dishonesty, which could result in further disciplinary action. This includes, among other things, uploading class materials to websites for the purpose of sharing those materials with other current or future students. You may not make audio or video recordings of any part of this class without my consent.

### Statement on Abilities and Accommodations

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: [ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form](https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form).

## CLASS SCHEDULE

### September 7 Introduction

### September 14 Rise of the Atlantic World

**Reading** *Who Built America* Chapter One, King Alfonso Letter, Spanish New World Scene

**Handing Out** First paper prompt

### September 21 The Evolution of Slavery

**Reading** *Who Built America* Chapter Two, Barbot, South Carolina Slave Codes

**Due** Outline of first paper

### September 28 Family Labor and the Growth of Northern Colonies

**Reading** *Who Built America* Chapter Three, Justifying Slavery (for paper), Indentured Contract, Byrd

### October 5 Securing Independence

**Reading** *Who Built America* Chapter Four, Slaveholders Argue Against Abolition, The Right of Free Suffrage

**Due** Discussion Posts October 1<sup>st</sup>, Response to classmate Oct 4<sup>th</sup> 11:59PM, **First draft of first paper by classtime** (Peer Reviews assigned after class, due Oct 8 11:59PM)

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- October 12**      **Launching the New Republic**  
**Reading**      *Who Built America* Chapter Five, Shays, Jefferson  
**Due**              Discussion Post October 8<sup>th</sup> 11:59PM, Response to classmate Oct 11 11:59PM  
Second draft of first paper by classtime
- October 19**      **The Transformation of American Society**  
**Reading**      *Who Built America* Chapter Six, Johnson  
**Due**              Discussion Post October 15 11:59PM, Response to classmate Oct 18 11:59PM
- October 26**      **Writing conferences (Zoom!)**
- November 2**      **The Age of Reform**  
**Reading**      *Who Built America* Chapter Seven, Walker, Grimke  
**Handing Out**      First exam prompt  
**Due**              Discussion Post October 29<sup>th</sup> 11:59PM, Response to classmate November 1<sup>st</sup> 11:59PM,  
Final draft of first paper due
- November 9**      **The Old South and Slavery**  
**Reading**      *Who Built America* Chapter Nine, Harriet A Jacobs, “*Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl, Written by Herself*,” (1861), Rules of Highland Plantation  
**Handing Out**      2<sup>nd</sup> Paper Prompt  
**Due**              Discussion Post November 5<sup>th</sup> 11:59PM, Response to classmate Nov 8<sup>th</sup> 11:59PM,  
First exam
- November 16**      **Immigration, Expansion and Sectional Conflict**  
**Reading**      *Who Built America* Chapter Eight, A Reporters Account of Lynn Women’s Mass Meeting During the Great Strike. (1860), Shackles and Dollars (Parry on Baptist)  
**Due**              Discussion Post November 12<sup>th</sup> 11:59PM, Response to classmate November 15<sup>th</sup> 11:59PM
- November 23**      **From Compromise to Kansas and Harpers Ferry**  
**Reading**      *Who Built America* Chapter Ten, Douglass on 4<sup>th</sup> of July, Manifest Destiny, 15 Minute History podcast: Episode 105- Manisha Sinha, *Slavery and Abolition*  
**Due**              Discussion Post November 19<sup>th</sup> 11:59PM, Response to classmate November 22<sup>nd</sup> 11:59PM  
**First draft of second paper due**
- November 30**      **The Civil War**  
**Reading**      *Who Built America* Chapter Eleven, Cornerstone Speech, John Brown’s Last Speech  
**Due**              Discussion Post MONDAY November 29<sup>th</sup>, Response to classmate due Wed Dec 1 11:59PM
- December 7**      **Reconstruction**  
**Reading**      *Who Built America* Chapter Twelve, MLK Jr., Black Codes  
**Assignment**      **Final draft of second paper due**  
**Handout**        **Second exam prompt**  
**Due**              Discussion Post due Mon December 7th 11:59PM, no response to classmate due
- December 14**      **Second exam due (by 11:59PM, no class)**