

Course No. 37:575:202:02

Development of the Labor Movement II

**Rutgers School of Management and Labor Relations
Fall 2015**

Instructor: Dr. Daniel Sidorick
Labor Education Center – Room 133
Thursday 12:35 a.m.-3:35 p.m.

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Office hours: Before and after class
and by appointment

Overview

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.

What was life like for office workers, sharecroppers, housewives, coal miners, immigrants, teachers, and fast-food workers over the last century, and how did their actions affect the course of history? This course will tackle these questions, looking at the development of the labor movement and other movements of "ordinary" people and the enormous changes they have wrought in American history. We will not ignore the important roles of the powerful, but we will examine them in concert with the actions and ideologies of working-class people and their organizations. And we will look at the world surrounding the labor movement--the businesses, politics, and cities, the issues of immigration, race, ethnic, and gender relations, and the social and cultural changes in each period.

We will also study the differing forms and ideologies of numerous workers' organizations to understand why some made a real difference and others had little lasting effect. The labor movement has changed dramatically from the early period of industrialization, when the United States was still primarily an agricultural country, through the explosive growth of mass production, to the decline of manufacturing and the increasing importance of the service sector. Our approach will highlight the fact that American history has not been a smooth narrative of progress, but rather that change has come about only after struggle over different views of what path the country should take.

The course will examine both historical periods and recurring themes. Topics will include the growth of industrial capitalism, corporations, labor unions, and finance; the rise of monopolies and the efforts to control their negative effects; impacts of wars and the military on working people; mass production and mass distribution; consumerism; the "new economy" of the 1920s and its collapse in the Great Depression; the New Deal and the role of government in the American economy; the post-World War II dominance of American capitalism; the economic crises of the 1970s and growing global competition; and recent developments in the information revolution, globalization, deindustrialization, the growth in inequality, and the spread of the market into ever more areas of American life. We will study well known organizations like the Knights of Labor and the AFL-CIO as well as lesser known groups like the Southern Tenant Farmers Union and today's worker centers.

An important goal of the course is for students to learn to think logically and critically about ideas and events in American history and to evaluate arguments from a variety of perspectives. This course also satisfies several specific Rutgers learning objectives that are detailed below after the course schedule. Please contact me at daniel.sidorick@rutgers.edu if you have any questions about the course.

Statement on Disability: 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: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>.

Student Requirements

1. *Class participation* (15% of your grade). Your active participation in class is essential for the success of the class. This part of your grade is based on attendance, coming to class prepared by finishing all readings on time, and taking an active part in class discussions.
2. *Online discussion forums* (15% of grade). Frequently throughout the course I will post questions or topics in Sakai. In the discussion forums you will post responses to these topics and to other students' postings by the deadlines listed, basing your comments on class readings and other materials. Often the forum topic will be used as a starting point for in-class discussions in the following class.
3. *Mid-term exam* (15% of grade). The mid-term exam will consist of essay questions and identification questions (people, events, concepts, etc.), and will be based on lectures, readings, films, and discussions.
4. *Final exam* (15% of grade). The final exam will consist of essay questions and identification questions (people, events, concepts, etc.), and will be based on lectures, readings, films, and discussions, covering the entire course but concentrated on the second half of the semester.
5. *Two class papers* (40% of grade). For each of two papers on assigned topics, you will submit a draft version and later a final version (the draft is required in order to submit a final version). For the second paper you will also peer review another student's paper.

Required Text

The following required book is available for purchase at the Rutgers University Bookstore (732-246-8448). It may also be purchased online at bn.com and other online booksellers.

Rosenzweig, et al., *Who Built America?: Working People and the Nation's History, Volume II: Since 1877*, 3rd ed., Bedford / St. Martin's Press, 2008. (Referred to as WBA in following pages.)

All other readings listed below will be available on the Sakai system or via the Web. In order to participate actively in discussions, you must complete the readings by the day that they are listed on the syllabus.

Class Schedule

Changes may be made in the schedule and readings -- be sure to check Sakai and your email often.

GETTING STARTED

Thursday, Sep. 3

Introduction and overview. What is the Labor Movement? Why 1877?
Studying history "from the bottom up." The U.S. and working people in 1877.

THE "GREAT UPHEAVAL OF 1877"; INDUSTRIAL CAPITALISM IN THE GILDED AGE (1877 to 1893)

Thursday, Sep. 10

Readings:

- Jeremy Brecher, "The Great Upheaval," pp. 138-148.
- WBA Ch. 1 - pp. 23-49, 70-71.

WORKING PEOPLE'S RESPONSES TO INDUSTRIAL CAPITALISM IN THE GILDED AGE

Thursday, Sep. 17

Readings:

- WBA Ch. 2 – pp. 77-79, 91-120.
- Susan Levine, "Labor's True Woman"

THE TRIUMPH OF INDUSTRIAL CAPITALISM AT HOME AND ABROAD (1893 to 1900)

Thursday, Sep. 24

Readings:

- WBA Ch. 3 – pp. 124-157, 167-174.
- "Statement from the Pullman Strikers" [PS]
- Eugene Debs, "Interview from Jail" and "A Call to the People." [PS]

REFORM & RADICALISM IN THE PROGRESSIVE ERA (1900 to 1914)

Thursday, Oct. 1

Readings:

- WBA Ch. 4 - pp. 181-202, 216-217
- WBA Ch. 5 – pp. 223-225, 241-269
- "Frederick Winslow Taylor Explains...." [PS]
- "Machinist Testifies on the Taylor System..." [PS]
- "Lawrence Textile Strike" [PS]

Assignment – Submit 1st Draft of Writing Assignment 1 (by Thursday, 10/1)

WORLD WAR I AND THE “LEAN DECADE” FOR AMERICAN WORKERS (1914 to 1929)

Thursday, Oct. 8

Readings:

- WBA Ch. 6 - pp. 279-280, 292-312, 320-329
- WBA Ch. 7 – pp. 335-339, 343-352, 375-384
- Jacquelyn Dowd Hall, "Disorderly Women"

THE GREAT DEPRESSION & THE FIRST NEW DEAL (1929 to 1935)

Thursday, Oct. 15

Reading:

- WBA Ch. 8
- Sidorick, "The Dorrance Dynasty" and "Camden in the Great Depression"

Assignment -- Final Version of Writing Assignment 1 (by Thursday, 10/15)

LABOR UPSURGE: THE INDUSTRIAL UNION MOVEMENT AND THE SECOND NEW DEAL (1935 to 1939)

Thursday, Oct. 22

Readings:

- WBA Ch. 9
- “Dollinger Remembers the Flint Sit-down Strike,” pp. 345-349. [PS]
- (Optional) Graphic Comic:
“Flint Sit-down Strike Comic”: <http://tinyurl.com/FlintSitDownComix>

MID-TERM EXAM

Thursday, Oct. 29

Brief lecture: Summing up the state of labor in 1939; overview of the remainder of the course.

Exam #1

WORKING PEOPLE & WORLD WAR II (1939 to 1946)

Thursday, Nov. 5

Readings:

- WBA Ch. 10, 497-505, 517-547.
- Robert Korstad and Nelson Lichtenstein, "Opportunities Lost and Found: Labor, Radicals, and the Early Civil Rights Movement," *Journal of American History* (December 1988)

THE COLD WAR BOOM & THE SOCIAL COMPACT (1946 to 1960)

Thursday, Nov. 12

Readings:

- WBA Ch. 11
- "McCarthyism and Organized Labor: Fifty Years of Lost Opportunities"

THE TURBULENT '60s & THE RISE OF PUBLIC SECTOR UNIONISM (1960 to 1973)

Thursday, Nov. 19

Reading:

- WBA Ch. 12

Assignment: Submit 1st Draft of Writing Assignment 2 (by Thursday, 11/19 before class)
In-Class Peer Review of Another Student's 1st Draft

ECONOMIC ADVERSITY & THE DECLINE OF PRIVATE SECTOR UNIONISM (1973 to 1989)

Thursday, Dec. 3

Readings:

- WBA Ch. 13
- Sidorick - "Campbell Soup Shutdown in Camden"

Assignment: Final Version of Writing Assignment 2 (by Thursday, 12/3)

NEW CHALLENGES FOR LABOR IN THE ERA OF GLOBALIZATION (1989 to the present)

Thursday, Dec. 10

Readings:

- WBA Ch. 14
- "Sweeney's Victory Speech, Union Strike Victory at UPS" pp. 522-529. [PS]
- "Seattle Protest Against the WTO: Two Views," pp. 490-494. [PS]
- Rachleff -- "The Past, Present, and Future of Collective Bargaining":
<http://www.tcdailyplanet.net/blog/rachleff/present-past-and-future-collective-bargaining>
- Friedman -- "Why Passengers Cheered Vermont Bus Strike":
<http://www.labornotes.org/2014/04/why-passengers-cheered-vermont-bus-strike>

FINAL EXAM – xxday, Dec. xx, 2015: -- confirm with Registrar's Office.

Learning Objectives for This Course

The following learning objectives of the course are based on Rutgers University's "Permanent Core Curriculum Learning Outcome Goals" (May 2008) and relate to the overall objective of a liberal arts education. "A Rutgers SAS graduate will be able to:"

H: Understand the basis and development of human and societal endeavors across time and place.

K: Explain the development of some aspect of a society or culture over time

L: Employ historical reasoning to study human endeavors

M: Understand different theories of human culture, social identity, economic entities, political systems, and other forms of social organization.

In the writing and communication area of the core:

S1: Communicate complex ideas effectively, in standard written English, to a general audience.

S2: Provide and respond effectively to editorial feedback from peers and instructors/supervisors through successive drafts.

T: Communicate effectively in modes appropriate to a discipline or area of inquiry.

U: Evaluate and critically assess sources and use the conventions of attribution and citation correctly.

V. Analyze and synthesize information and ideas from multiple sources to generate new insights.

Please note that this course partially meets the writing distribution requirement for the School of Arts and Sciences. In addition to developing your own writing skills through writing successive drafts, you will learn how to provide constructive feedback to other students' writings.