

**37:575:201:08 US Labor and Work Before the End of Reconstruction
Rutgers University, Fall 2020**

Instructor: Dr. James Robinson

Email: jameswjrobinson@gmail.com or jr1589@rutgers.edu

Class Schedule: Fridays 12:00-3pm (Zoom)

Office Hours: Fridays 3-5pm or by appointment (Zoom)

Zoom Log-in:

Join Zoom Meeting:

Register in advance for this meeting:

<https://rutgers.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJcvduuvrDsoH9AkyKRKYESQ--abzPAvpO2D>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting, and you can use that information to log-in for future meetings.

Special Information for the Fall 2020 Semester:

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, this course, which is normally taught in-person on the College Ave campus, will be conducted remotely, through a combination of synchronous class meetings using Zoom, and asynchronous discussions and assignments, all using Canvas. The standard weekly meeting on Zoom will take place at the same starting time that the original course was scheduled for, at 12:00 p.m. ET on Fridays, but most weeks we will be meeting for only half of the scheduled time, or about 90 minutes. This will be supplemented by increased use of asynchronous Canvas discussion forums and weekly assignments, and optional but recommended individual meetings with the instructor in Zoom Office Hours. Quizzes will be timed and open-book, and conducted in Canvas.

We will aim to make the experience of this course as close as possible to the in-person class, and the weekly Zoom meetings will be a combination of (1) the instructor discussing highlights of the weekly lectures and other important course topics, and (2) participation by everyone in discussions and other activities, often using break-out rooms for smaller-group interaction. After a short non-recorded section of the class each week for open discussion, the lectures and activities will be recorded and posted in Canvas each week for later review.

I understand that we are all living through difficult times, and I strongly encourage you to contact me at any time about any problems related to COVID or otherwise. Together we will be able to make this work for everyone. If you anticipate any technology issues with accessing and using Zoom or Canvas, contact me immediately so we can take care of any issues. I will be asking for your help and feedback in improving the course throughout the semester, so you can expect some changes, but I will keep the course as straightforward and stable as possible.

Course Description:

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.

Please note that this course also 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 to provide constructive feedback to other students' writing. At the conclusion of the course, students should demonstrate an increase in their knowledge and skills in writing/revising academic essays. Specifically, student should be able to:

- enter into a dialogue with specialists in a particular field of study,
- read essays and extract and explain key points and terms,
- organize a paper from thesis, to topic sentence, to conclusion,
- interact with texts by using meaningful citations in their papers,
- use a range of sentence structures, and
- write meaningful, clear, and organized papers.
- thesis development
- logic and organization
- tone, vocabulary, and spelling

Learning Objectives: 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:"

In the history and social science of the core:

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 conventions of attribution and citation correctly.
V: Analyze and synthesize information and ideas from multiple sources to generate new insights.

In the 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).
- Apply those concepts, and substantive institutional knowledge, to understanding contemporary developments related to work. (Goal 2).
- Analyze the degree to which forms of human difference shape a person's experience of work. (Goal 6)

In the School of Management and Labor Relations:

- Demonstrate an understanding of relevant theories and apply them given the background context of a particular work situation. (Goal IV)
- Evaluate the context of workplace issues, public policies, and management decisions (Goal V).
- Demonstrate an understanding of how to apply knowledge necessary for effective work performance (Goal VI)

Remote Class—Some Perspective:

We will try to replicate the in-person classroom, but it is not entirely possible, and therefore I want you to reach out when you need it and we will make this work. These are not normal times, but I am committed to contributing to your overall education even in these circumstances. Someday we can reflect on these historic days, but for now, we move forward through events beyond our control with a focus on what we can control.

Evaluation Breakdown

Discussion Board Posts and Responses: 25%

Paper 1: 20%

Paper 2: 20%

Final Paper: 35%

(you must hand in all three papers to pass the course.)

Lateness Policy: On all assignments, lateness will result in deduction of one letter grade per day from the point it is late on from the total grade.

Discussion Board Post and Responses: You will do discussion posts each week in response to the readings due by the end of Wednesday, and then respond to another students' post, due by classtime on Friday.

You will do one paragraph in response to each reading, including the textbook. So if there is two readings in a week, you owe two paragraphs, one for each reading. Then, due on Friday by classtime, you will respond to one of your classmates' posts (your choice on who). For the post responses, I'm looking for a paragraph.

By paragraph, I want at least three to five sentences. Less than that will result in lower grades. You won't be penalized for writing more than that, however.

Wednesdays 11:59PM Reading Posts Due

Friday 11:59AM Responses to Other Students' Posts Due

Writing assignments: Students will write two 5-page essays (1250 words minimum) related to course themes. Students will also write one 8 page (2000 words minimum) Final Paper. See class schedule for related due dates.

For the drafts, I will ask students to use Pro Writing Aid (<https://prowritingaid.com/>), which will help with grammar and writing in general. Submitting your draft here will help immensely with grading your work, since I will be able to concentrate on your arguments and not as much the grammar. At the end of the day, making a historical argument with critical thinking skills is much more what I care about than good prose, though good prose makes grading easier. I will provide a handout on Pro Writing Aid as we get closer to when your drafts are due.

All written assignments for this class should be typed, double-spaced with 12-point Times New Roman font, and one-inch margins. They should be carefully edited and free of grammatical, spelling, or typographical errors. All essays need a purposeful title. Essays should directly answer the prompt question. When you can distill your answer down to one sentence, this is your thesis statement (argument). The body of your essay proves (or defends) your answer. This should be your analysis (defined as your thoughts/opinions plus reasoning/evidence), not a summary of readings or class discussion. No outside sources. All source material should come from class readings, discussion, and/or films. Use simple parenthetical citations (Author last name [comma] page number). For example (Clark & Hewitt, 312).

Late papers will be penalized by one letter grade for each portion of 24 hours beyond the due date (up to one-day late, an A paper becomes a B paper). While you will not receive a separate grade on your drafts or peer-review of colleagues' papers, your active and timely participation will be calculated in your final participation grade. All drafts and final papers are due at the beginning of class. You will submit papers online through Canvas and be prepared to share copies of your paper with other students.

All writing assignments should be emailed to your designated reader before class time the day they are due.

Extra Credit:

I offer two extra credit opportunities up front.

1. Tutoring for Late Adds- Every semester, students drop and pick up the class a few classes in, which is fine and part of the normal deal. However, it bogs me down a lot to catch up each new student. So when we get new students who have missed the class, I will send out an alert for volunteer tutors. You will catch up the student on what they missed, and they will email me who tutored them. There is no limit on the number of tutors per student. I will add 5 points to the lower of your first two papers.
2. Student evaluations: I value feedback from my students, which I incorporate into future editions of the course. At the end of the course, fill out the instructor evaluations and send me a screenshot of the receipt that you did it (NOT the actual evaluation.) I will add 5 points to the lower of your first two papers.

Additionally, I am open to proposals from students for extra credit and may offer other opportunities as they present themselves.

Disability Statement: 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>.

This course is open to all students who meet the academic requirement for participation. Any student who has a need for accommodation based on the impact of disability should refer to the Rutgers Office of Disability Services and then contact the instructor privately to discuss the specific situation as soon as possible.

Statement on Academic Freedom: Freedom to teach and freedom to learn are inseparable facets of academic freedom. This class will introduce an array of sometimes conflicting ideas and interpretations of U.S. history, and all who partake in the course should feel encouraged to express their views in an open, civic forum.

Please note that the syllabus may change during the semester as I deem necessary.

Canvas: This course uses the web-based classroom management system Canvas—please access the site for posted readings and announcements.

Required Book. The following required book is currently out of print but has been uploaded onto the class Canvas site. You do not need to purchase the book.

Rosenweig, et al. *Who Built America? Working People and the Nation's History Volume 1: To 1877*, 3rd edition, Bedford/St. Martin Press, 2008

The online readings compliment the material in the text. Some of the online readings are primary sources and will be noted as such on the syllabus. Other online readings are secondary sources—commentaries and historical analysis provided after the events have taken place.

Primary Sources and some of the secondary readings are from the following books:

Zinn and Arnove, *Voices of A People's History of the United States*. (2004)

Baron and Lichtenstein, *Major Problems in the History of American Workers*. (1991)

Weekly Class Summary

Week 1: September 4: Introduction to the Class.

Syllabus presented in class. No assigned class readings.

Week 2: September 11: A Meeting of Three Worlds: Europe, Africa and American Colonization, 1492-1680.

Read:

Who Built America? 7-56.

Bartolome de las Casas, “*In Defense of the Indians*” (1550)

C.L.R James, “The Old United States.”

Due:

Wednesday September 9th 11:59PM- Who Built America, de las Casas, James posts.

Friday September 11th 11:59AM- Who Built America, de las Casas, James posts responses.

Week 3: September 18: Servitude, Slavery, and the Growth of the Southern Colonies, 1620-1760.

Read:

Who Built America? 63-106

Traveler Peter Kalm on *Unfree Labor in Pennsylvania* (1753)

Due:

Wednesday September 16th 11:59PM- Who Built America?, Peter Kalm posts.
Friday September 18th 11:59AM- Who Built America?, Peter Kalm posts.

Week 4: September 25: Family Labor and Growth of the Northern Colonies, 1640-1760.

Read:

Who Built America? 111-155.

In-Class reading: “First Mate Edward Coxere Describes a Storm at Sea.” (1659)

In-Class Film: “A Midwives Tale.”

Due:

Wednesday September 23rd 11:59PM: **Draft of paper 1**, Who Built America post [in-class materials no posts required]

Friday September 25th 11:59AM: Who Built America post response.

Week 5 October 2nd: Toward Revolution, 1750-1776.

Read:

Who Built America? 160-209.

“Samuel Drowne’s Testimony on the Boston Massacre,” March 16, 1770.

“New York Mechanics Declaration of Independence,” May 29, 1776.

Wednesday September 30th 11:59PM: Who Built America, Samuel Drowne, NY Mechanics Posts

Friday October 2nd 11:59AM: Who Built America, Samuel Drowne, NY Mechanics Post Responses

Week 6: October 9th: Writing Consultation -NO CLASS – Schedule individual meetings

Read:

None!

Due:

None!

Week 7: October 16th: A Revolution, Constitution, and the People, 1776-1815.

Read:

Who Built America? 210-257.

Peter Bestes and Other Slaves Petition for Freedom (April 20, 1773)
Thomas Paine, *African Slavery in America*, 1775

Due:

Wednesday October 14th 11:59PM: Who Built America, Bestes, and Paine posts.

Final Draft of Paper 1

Friday October 16th 11:59AM: Who Built America, Bestes, and Paine post responses

Week 8: October 23rd: The Consolidation of Slavery in the South.

Read:

Who Built America? 271-318.

Harriet A Jacobs, *“Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl, Written by Herself,”* (1861)

Due:

Wednesday October 21st 11:59PM: Who Built America, Jacobs posts

Friday October 23rd 11:59AM: Who Built America, Jacobs, post responses

Week 9: October 30: Northern Society and the Growth of Wage Labor, 1790-1837.

Read:

Who Built America? 324-375.

David Johnson remembers apprenticeship life in the artisan shoe shop. (1830)

Due:

Wednesday October 28th 11:59PM: Who Built America, Johnson posts

Friday October 30th 11:59AM: Who Built America, Johnson post response

Week 10: November 6: Immigration, Urban Life and Social Reform in the Free Labor North, 1838-1860.

Read:

Who Built America? 377-425.

A Reporters Account of Lynn Women’s Mass Meeting During the Great Strike. (1860)

Due:

Friday November 6th 11:59PM: **Rough Draft of Paper 2 [extension because of the election]**

Who Built America, Reporters Account post

Friday November 6th 11:59AM: Who Built America, Reporters Account post

Week 11: November 13th: The Spread of Slavery and the Crisis of Southern Society, 1836-1848.

Read:

Who Built America? 426-475.

Frederick Douglass Confronts Working Class Racism. (1836)

Marc Parry, "Shackles and Dollars: Historians and economists clash over the role slavery played in capitalism." (2016)

Due:

Wednesday November 11th 11:59PM: Who Built America, Douglass, Parry posts

Friday November 13th 11:59PM: Who Built America, Douglass, Parry post responses

Week 12: November 20th: The Settlement of the West and the Conflict Over Slave Labor.

Read/Listen

Who Built America? 483-527.

15 Minute History podcast: Episode 105- Manisha Sinha, *Slavery and Abolition*

In class reading: "The Western Dialect" (1880) (no post required)

Due:

Friday November 20th 11:59PM: Who Built America, 15 Minute History posts

Final Draft of Paper 2 [extension because of the election]

Friday November 20th 11:59AM: Who Built America, 15 Minute History

Week 13: November 25 (Designation Day for Thanksgiving Holiday): The Civil War: America's Second Revolution, 1861-1865.

Read:

Murolo, *From the Folks Who Brought You the Weekend*, chapter 4

John Brown's Last Speech. (November 2, 1859)

A Mechanic, "Voting by Classes." (October 13, 1863)

Due:

Monday November 23rd 11:59PM: Who Built America, Brown, A Mechanic posts

Topic for Final Paper Due

Wednesday November 25th (Designation Day) 11:59AM: Who Built America, Brown, A Mechanic post responses

In-class film: *The West*, "Death Runs Riot"

Week 14: December 4th: Reconstructing the Nation, 1865-1877.

Read:

Who Built America? 589-626.

Martin Delany's advice to former slaves (July 23, 1865)

A Northern Unionist Lectures Ex Slaves on the Work Ethic (1865)

Due:

Wednesday December 2nd: Who Built America, Delany, Northern Unionist posts

Friday December 4th: Who Built America, Delany, Northern Unionist post responses

Week 15: December 11th: Final Class Overview.

Due:

December 11th 11:59AM: **Optional Rough Draft**

No Final Exam – Final Paper due Friday December 18th 2020 at 11:59PM

Paper Assignments:

Development of the Labor Movement

Paper Assignment 1

“The beginning of European settlement of the Americas from 1492 was marked by an extensive demand for labor. As the assigned class readings and film documentaries show, the earliest forms of labor involved both coerced labor and forms of indentured servitude that utilized the work of Europeans, Native Americans and African peoples. By the late 1600s, this fluid labor arrangement became more restrictive and formalized, with a form of racially (African) based slavery imposed in North America. What factors contributed to this development? How and why did this transformation occur?”

Write a 5 page paper (1250 words) that addresses the question posed above. In your response, be sure to base your claims on materials read in the assigned readings (you do not need to read additional sources for this assignment.)

Drafts of the paper are due Wednesday, **September 23**. You will be given feedback from the TAs assigned to work with you in the following week. The final draft is due via the Canvas Drop Site and as an email attachment to your designated reader by the end of the day, Wednesday, **October 14**.

All papers should follow standard grammar, punctuation and citation methods.

Final drafts are to be submitted electronically to your designated reader by class time the day they are due.

Development of the Labor Movement Paper Assignment 2

As the industrial revolution developed in the United States, traditional patterns of work were disrupted and replaced by more ridged, structured, factory-based workplaces. The older notion of the “Artisan Republic”—in which craftsmen could aspire to the status of a master within their given field—was threatened. American workers resisted this change. In what ways did Americans seek to maintain these older traditions of work, and how successful were they?

Write a 5 page paper (minimum 1250 words) that addresses the question posed above. In your response, be sure to base your claims on materials read in the assigned readings (you do not need to read additional sources for this assignment.)

The first draft is due **November 4th**. You will be given feedback from me in the following week. The final draft of the paper should be submitted via the Canvas drop site and as an email attachment to your assigned reader by the end of the day **November 18th**.

It is important that you know who your assigned reader is: please consult the group listed provided on the Canvas site. Paper drafts that are not sent in a timely fashion to the appropriate reader will be downgraded.

Final Paper:

You will do a research paper of 8 pages (2000 words minimum) of a topic of your choosing. You may use sources outside the course, though using sources provided in the course is allowed as well. Your topic should fall within the theme of the course (US Labor and Work until 1877).

Your paper should use at least two sources, with more the better, and a works cited page at the end. Not all sources are the same: academic books are better than popular books. Primary sources are better than secondary sources, etc. Please proofread your paper, put your name on it, and attach page numbers.

You should submit a topic proposal to me by **November 23rd** of what you'd like to write on. Email it to me. For the final paper, the first draft is optional and is due **December 11th**. You will be given feedback from me in the following week for a better grade. The final draft of the paper should be submitted via the Canvas drop site by **December 18th 11:59PM**.