Today, in the United States and around the world, we’re seeing dramatic evidence of economic crises: attacks on unions in Wisconsin and Michigan (and Ontario), the imposition of austerity measures in Greece and Spain, the drive for massive cuts in public spending emanating from state legislatures and Washington, D.C. And in each of these cases, widespread resistance has emerged among those most likely to experience hardship – in the form of the Occupy movement, for example, and recent strikes by low-wage service employees.

These upheavals challenge widely-held assumptions about economic affairs. Over twenty years ago, as the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union came to an end, the capitalist system seemed triumphant; is it now in a state of collapse? Are we truly facing a crisis of scarce resources, or is the real problem the unequal distribution of resources between “haves” and “have-nots”?
In this course, we will consider these and other key questions by exploring the history of U.S. capitalism in the United States. We will examine the role of diverse economic actors (workers, business leaders, government officials, social reformers, etc.) in shaping U.S. society; the relationship between economic and political power; the formation of classes and class identity; the influence of race, ethnicity, and gender in shaping workers’ experiences; and the impact of competing ideas about how to organize economic life. By investigating the interplay between wealth, work, and power, we can more fully comprehend sharp contradictions in U.S. history, such as the persistence of economic inequality alongside the popular belief that anyone can achieve the “American dream.”

One major goal of this course is to strengthen your ability to read and think critically about the past. We will examine both primary sources (documents produced by people who directly experienced and shaped events we are studying) and secondary sources (work by historians who use primary sources to understand and explain the past). You will gain experience identifying, contextualizing, and comparing the perspectives of a variety of historical actors, as well as analyzing and evaluating the validity of scholars’ interpretations and claims. You will also refine your research and writing abilities by using historical evidence to develop and articulate your own arguments. Finally, the course will help sharpen your verbal communication skills, as you engage in group discussion and work with a partner to organize and guide discussion yourself.

**REQUIRED READING**

The following required texts are available for purchase at the Brock University Campus Store. They are also on 3-hour reserve in the James A. Gibson Library:


Horatio Alger, Jr., *Ragged Dick or, Street Life in New York with the Boot Blacks*. 1868; New York: Penguin/Signet Classic, 2005 [novel]


Additional required readings are in a course packet available for purchase at the Campus Store (designated as CP in the “Course Outline” section of this syllabus); on 3-hour library reserve (designated as R); available electronically (designated as E); or some combination of these.

The following book is strongly recommended:

ASSIGNMENTS

15% Seminar participation You must attend weekly seminars. However, seminar attendance alone will not count significantly toward your seminar grade. You must come to seminar having attended lectures and completed the week’s readings. You are expected to participate actively and thoughtfully in seminar discussions. For help preparing for seminar, see Rampolla, chapter 2; and seminar participation guidelines (handout).

10% Seminar facilitation You will co-facilitate one seminar discussion. You must work with your partner in advance to plan the seminar, preparing 1) a concise overview in essay form that identifies central arguments and key themes in the week’s seminar readings (to serve as a guide for introducing your seminar), and 2) a list of substantive discussion questions. You must provide me with your overview (1-2 pages, typed, double-spaced) and typed question list no later than 1 p.m. on the day before “your” seminar meets, so I can provide feedback. Failure to do so will negatively affect your facilitation grade. You are welcome (and strongly encouraged) to consult with me earlier – by email or in person – about your plans. For more information, see seminar facilitation guidelines (handout) and assignment guidelines (attached to this syllabus).

5% Primary-source analysis (2-3 pages) You will analyze any primary source of your choice that we are reading for Seminars 2, 3, or 4, due in seminar on the day we are discussing your source. See assignment guidelines.

10% Secondary-source analysis (3-5 pages) You will analyze any secondary source of your choice that we are reading for Seminars 5, 6, 7, 8, or 9, due in seminar on the day we are discussing your source. See assignment guidelines.

35% Research paper (10-12 pages) You will write a paper on a topic of your choice related to the course, in two parts: 1) proposal and annotated bibliography (10% of grade, due in lecture on Oct. 31; and 2) final paper (25% of grade, due in my office on Dec. 3). You must consult with me about your topic no later than Oct. 10. You cannot proceed with your proposal/annotated bibliography without approval of your topic, and you cannot proceed with your final paper without approval of your proposal/annotated bibliography. See assignment guidelines.

25% Final exam Date/time TBA.

CLASS POLICIES

• You must complete all components of the course in order to pass the course.
• If an assignment is late, the grade will be reduced by 5% for each day past the due date (including weekend days). Late penalties will be waived only in the event of a documented medical or family emergency, at the discretion of the instructor.
• Assignments that are more than 10 days late (including weekend days) without prior authorization of the instructor will not be accepted.
• Seminar absences will result in a grade of 0 for missed seminars (except for documented emergencies, at the instructor’s discretion). There are no “free” missed seminars.
To be excused from a missed seminar, late assignment, etc., for medical reasons, you must obtain an official Brock medical certificate beforehand and submit it to the History Department; see www.brocku.ca/health-services/policies/exemption for details.

- You must keep backup copies of all written work you have turned in.
- You must keep all original assignments that have been graded and returned to you.
- Do not submit your work electronically unless authorized in advance by the instructor.
- Do not submit your work to the History Department drop box. If you cannot turn in an assignment when scheduled, you must contact me to make alternative arrangements.
- Do not bring laptops to seminar unless absolutely necessary. Instead, bring seminar readings or your detailed notes on the readings.

PLAGIARISM

If you use someone else’s words or ideas, you must give credit. Otherwise you are committing plagiarism – a serious form of academic misconduct that can have severe consequences for your academic career. For more information, consult Rampolla, chapter 6; this web page: http://www.brocku.ca/webcal/2013/undergrad/areg.html#sec68; and the resources on this web page: http://www.brocku.ca/library/help-lib/writingandciting/plagiarism.

UNIVERSITY DEADLINES

Please note the following deadlines (see the Undergraduate Calendar for other deadlines).

- **Mon., Sept. 16** – Last day for late registration and course changes without instructor’s permission; last day to drop without financial penalty
- **Wed., Nov. 6** – Last date to withdraw without academic penalty; last day to change from Credit to Audit without academic penalty

ACCOMMODATIONS

If you require disability-related accommodations, please obtain the necessary documentation from the Student Development Centre (ST 400, ext. 3240), so I can be informed of your needs.

COURSE OUTLINE

<table>
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<th>LECTURE SCHEDULE</th>
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**Week 1: Sept. 5**
- Introduction
- The economics of conquest

**Week 2: Sept. 12 – first seminars this week, Sept. 10-11; introductions; co-facilitation sign-up**
- Slavery and servitude
- The American Revolution: a class conflict?

*Reading for lecture*
- Heilbroner and Singer, chapters 1-4 (15-67, 71-90)
Week 3: Sept. 19
- Production, property, and power in early America
- The Civil War: a fight over “free labor”

Reading for lecture
- Heilbroner and Singer, chapters 5-6 (91-147)

Week 4: Sept. 26
- The new economic order
- Class ideology in the Gilded Age

Reading for lecture
- Heilbroner and Singer, chapters 7-9 (151-215)

Week 5: Oct. 3
- Challenges from below [film: 1877: The Grand Army of Starvation, 30 min.]
- Economics and immigration

Reading for lecture
- Heilbroner and Singer, chapter 10 (216-42)

Week 6: Oct. 10 – consult about research paper topic no later than Oct. 10
- Sex segregation and the family wage ideal
- Who controls the workplace? [film: “The Quest of the One Best Way,” 25 min.]

Reading for lecture
- Heilbroner and Singer, chapter 11 (243-59)

Oct. 14-18 Fall Break Week: NO CLASS

Week 7: Oct. 24
- The economics of Jim Crow
- “War is the health of the state”

No reading for lecture

Week 8: Oct. 31 – proposal/annotated bibliography due in lecture on Oct. 31
- Dollar diplomacy
- The marketing revolution

No reading for lecture

Week 9: Nov. 7
- Capitalism in crisis: The Great Depression [film: 1937 Memorial Day Massacre, 17 min.]
- The rise of the “broker state”

Reading for lecture
- Heilbroner and Singer, chapters 12-13 (263-306)

Week 10: Nov. 14
- Selling free enterprise [film: It's Everybody's Business, 20 min.]
- The myth of a classless society
Reading for lecture
- Heilbroner and Singer, chapter 14 (307-21)

Week 11: Nov. 21
- The military-industrial complex
- From production to consumption
No reading for lecture

Week 12: Nov. 28
- The end of prosperity?
- Summing up
Reading for lecture
- Heilbroner and Singer, chapters 15-17 (322-63)

*Final research paper due in my office on Dec. 3*

SEMINAR SCHEDULE

Seminar 1: Sept. 10-11 Native notions of property and power
Reading for seminar
- Heilbroner and Singer, introduction (1-10)
- Handouts

Seminar 2: Sept. 17-18 Liberty for whom?
Reading for seminar
- [CP] “‘The Trappan’d Maiden: Or the Distressed Damsel,’” in ibid., 22-24
- [CP] Olaudah Equiano, *The Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African* (1814; Toronto: Dover, 1999), 31-36
- [CP] “Slaves’ Petition for Freedom, 1773,” in ibid., 24-25

Seminar 3: Sept. 24-25 “I will not be a slave”
Reading for seminar
- [E] Lise Vogel, “Their Own Work: Two Documents from the Nineteenth-Century Labor Movement,” *Signs*, 1, no. 3 (Spring 1976), 787-802

[handout] Middlesex Company regulations for employees and boarding houses


[CP] George Fitzhugh, Sociology for the South, or the Failure of Free Society (Richmond, Va.: A. Morris, 1854), 245-55

Seminar 4: Oct. 1-2 Getting ahead in the Gilded Age
* Last seminar to submit primary-source analysis*

Reading for seminar
- Alger, Ragged Dick [entire]

Seminar 5: Oct. 8-9 Diversity and division in the working class

Reading for seminar

Oct. 14-18 Fall Break Week: NO CLASS

Seminar 6: Oct. 22-23 Reorganizing industrial production

Reading for seminar
- Taylor, Principles of Scientific Management [entire]

Seminar 7: Oct. 29-30 War on the home front
* Proposal/annotated bibliography due in lecture this week*

Reading for seminar
• [CP] *Debs' Address to the Jury and Statement to the Court* (Chicago: Socialist Party, 1918), 1-16

**Seminar 8: Nov. 5-6**       The advertising age  
*Reading for seminar*
• [CP] “Christine Frederick Advises Retailers on Selling to Women, 1920,” in Blaszczyk and Scranton, 281-83

**Seminar 9: Nov. 12-13**       The rising of the workers  
*Last seminar to submit secondary-source analysis*
*Reading for seminar*

**Seminar 10: Nov. 19-20**       A white-collar world  
*Reading for seminar*
• Miller, *Death of a Salesman* [entire]

**Seminar 11: Nov. 26-27**       In defense of unions  
*Reading for seminar*
• Register, *Packinghouse Daughter* [entire]
ASSIGNMENT GUIDELINES

(For all written work, you must adhere to the logistical requirements in Section V.)

I. Seminar (co-)facilitation (10%)

- You must meet with your partner in advance and work together to prepare your seminar.
- No later than 1 p.m. on the day before “your” seminar, you must provide me with 1) a concise overview that identifies central arguments and key themes in the week’s readings (to serve as a guide for introducing your seminar), and 2) a list of substantive discussion questions.
- However you divide up the work, you must submit one overview and one set of questions, representing your combined efforts.
- Your overview should not simply be a detailed description of the contents of individual readings. Give yourself enough time to meet the requirements of this assignment.
- Your overview and question list should reflect that 1) you have paid attention to all readings for your week, and 2) you expect students to demonstrate familiarity with all readings.
- Be sure you and your partner contribute equally to preparing for seminar and guiding discussion. How you divide up tasks in seminar is up to you. However, if it is clear that one partner did most of the work, co-facilitators may receive different grades.
- You are not expected to cover textbook material in seminar. However, feel free to ask a question or two pertaining to the textbook if this fits with your overall seminar plan.
- For more information, see the “Assignments” section of the syllabus.

II. Primary-source analysis (5%)

For this assignment, choose any one primary-source document from Seminars 2, 3, or 4 and critically analyze it in 2-3 pages. Use the primary-source worksheet (handout) as a guide.

III. Secondary-source analysis (10%)

For this assignment, choose any one secondary source from Seminars 5, 6, 7, 8, or 9 and critically analyze it in 3-5 pages. In your paper, be sure to clearly identify the author’s thesis, and use concrete examples to show whether or not it is convincing and why. Use the secondary-source worksheet (handout) as a guide.

IV. Research paper (35%)

For this assignment, you will write a 10-12 page research paper on a topic of your choosing related to the course that interests you. The lecture and seminar topics and the course readings are good places to start, but there are many other possibilities.
Important: You must consult with me about your paper topic no later than Oct. 10. You will not be able to proceed with your proposal/annotated bibliography without approval of your topic, and you will not be able to proceed with your final paper without approval of your proposal/annotated bibliography. NOTE: Consultation involves an actual conversation or email exchange.

Once you have identified a general topic of interest (e.g., the rise of corporate capitalism, women and work, the U.S. labor movement, etc.), consider a specific question you’d like to explore. Here are a few examples:

- Is it fair to call Gilded Age business moguls “robber barons”?
- Was protective legislation limiting or liberating for women workers?
- Why are U.S. unions so weak? (Okay, this one is pretty broad, but there are interesting ways to narrow the focus.)

The goal of your paper is to answer your question. Your “answer” is your thesis.

Sources

You must use a minimum of eight sources for your paper. At least two must be book-length secondary sources, and at least two must be primary sources. The other four can be any combination of primary and secondary sources (scholarly books, journal articles, essays, memoirs, treatises, etc.). You are welcome to use more than eight sources.

Of your eight sources, one can be an item we are already reading in class (including one that you are using for your primary- or secondary-source analysis). You can certainly use other articles from class, but they will count as extra sources (above the minimum of eight).

Many of the authors whose work we are reading in class have written entire books on their subjects. You should consider using their books for your paper. But if you do, you cannot also count as one of your eight sources an article by the same author – if the article is also a chapter from the book or mainly summarizes content from the book.

Internet sources are acceptable if they are 1) legitimate primary sources, 2) published scholarly articles, or 3) books available in their entirety online (the latter would include E-books available through the campus library but would exclude many items on Google Books that are only partially available). When citing primary sources found online, please supply (along with the standard citation) the URL where you found the item and the date you accessed it.

You can use reference works, such as textbooks or encyclopedias, for background information—but these will count as extra sources (above your minimum of eight). Be sure to consult reference works whose authorship and accuracy can be verified (i.e., not Wikipedia).

Finding sources

For secondary sources, one place to start is with the “Suggested Readings” at the end of the textbook chapters (but these are not as up-to-date as one might wish). If there is an article on the
syllabus that deals with your topic, look at the citations to see what sources the author used – and see if the s/he has written other articles or books about the topic.

Because of the wide variety of possible topics, I have not placed books on reserve for this course. Be sure to conduct book searches using Brock’s online catalogue (try relevant subject and keyword searches, among others). If you need a book not in our library, consider the following:

- University of Toronto online library catalogue
- Online bookseller websites (e.g., Amazon): back-cover reviews and excerpts can help you decide if a book will be useful
- Interlibrary Loan: You can borrow books from other universities if Brock doesn’t own them, and you can even obtain journal articles that are inaccessible through the Brock library.

For journal articles (and book reviews), look at databases available through the Brock library, particularly “America: History and Life” and “Historical Abstracts” (note, however, that these are not all-inclusive). Some excellent relevant journals include:

- Business and Economic History: [www.thebhc.org/publications/BEHprint/aboutbeh.html](http://www.thebhc.org/publications/BEHprint/aboutbeh.html)
- Business History Review
- Enterprise and Society
- International Labor and Working-Class History
- Labor History
- Labor: Studies in Working-Class History of the Americas

Some very useful online resources include:

- Business and Economic History Online: [www.thebhc.org/publications/BEHonline/beh.html](http://www.thebhc.org/publications/BEHonline/beh.html)
- Economic History Association: [http://eh.net/](http://eh.net/)
- Labor and Working Class History Association: [http://lawcha.org/wordpress/](http://lawcha.org/wordpress/)
- Labor History Links (Prof. Rosemary Feurer): [www.laborhistorylinks.org/](http://www.laborhistorylinks.org/)

**Part 1: Proposal/annotated bibliography (10%)**

Your *paper proposal* should be just a few paragraphs long. Be sure to include the following:

- A clear statement of your research question. What do you want to explain, understand, etc.?
- A hypothesis (the possible “answer” to your research question)
- A brief explanation of why your topic is significant. Why does it matter? What might your investigation help us explain or understand more fully? When you tell someone about your research and s/he says, “So what?” what will you say?

**NOTE:** Be sure to include historical context that will make your proposal make sense.

The *annotated bibliography* will contain the sources you plan to use in your paper. (If you find more sources later, that’s fine.) For each source, provide the following:
• A complete, correct bibliographic citation (see Rampolla, chapter 7)
• A few sentences providing basic information about the source (what it is; who wrote it, when and why; what it is about, etc.)
• A brief explanation of why you are using the source. Be specific! How is it relevant to your paper? How will it be useful to you in writing your paper?

NOTE: Your bibliography must reflect the requirements for sources indicated on p. 10.

For help preparing a proposal and bibliography, see relevant sections of Rampolla, chapters 3-5.

**Part 2: Final paper (25%)**

Your final paper should be 10-12 pages long (longer is okay, but talk to me first). You must attach your original proposal/annotated bibliography (with comments and grade) to the paper. Remember to prepare a regular (not annotated) bibliography to go with your paper.

**V. Logistical requirements for all written work**

• See Rampolla for help interpreting sources, writing papers, quoting and citing sources, etc.

• Type and double-space your paper, using Times New Roman 12-point type and leaving 1-inch margins (please, no padding with extra spacing or giant margins!). Yes, this applies to your proposal/annotated bibliography.

• For your *proposal/annotated bibliography* and *final research paper*, include a separate title page with a title, your name, course number, and date. *NOTE: Give your paper a title that communicates your thesis.* (For other written work, include this information at the top of the first page; a title is optional in these cases but is still a good idea.)

• Number your pages and staple them together (the title page doesn’t get a number).

• For your *two source analyses* and your *final research paper*, you can use footnotes or endnotes to cite your sources. For proper citation style, see Rampolla, chapter 7.

• For your *final research paper*, include a separate bibliography. Its pages get numbered but aren’t part of your official page count. For proper style, see Rampolla, chapter 7.

• Before turning in any final written assignment, ask yourself:
  ○ Do I begin with a strong, clear introduction?
  ○ Does my introduction contain a strong, clear thesis?
  ○ Have I supported my assertions with concrete, relevant evidence and examples?
  ○ Is my paper well organized and clearly written?
  ○ Have I proofread my paper and corrected any grammar and spelling errors?
  ○ Are my sources properly quoted and documented? (See Rampolla, chapter 7.)

For help avoiding plagiarism, see Rampolla, chapter 6.