

# History 3332

## The Canadian Worker Since 1914

Intersession 2007  
Tuesday & Thursday 4:30PM - 7PM; Tilley 125  
Instructor: Benjamin Isitt (ben.isitt@unb.ca)  
Office Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays 3PM - 4PM, Kierstead 116

### OVERVIEW

This course focuses on the changing relationships between Canadian workers, employers, and governments from 1914 to the present – and how workers embraced collective agency to advance their interests. Major themes and debates in Canadian labour history will be explored through class lectures, assigned readings, group discussions, and multi-media such as films. Written assignments will encourage a critical approach to this subject and help students develop primary and secondary research skills.

### REQUIRED READING

There is no textbook for this course. Readings can be found on Reserve at the Harriet Irving Library and History Department Reading Room. Some articles are available online at < <http://www.lib.unb.ca/eresources/e-Journals.php> >. Please return materials as quickly as possible to ensure all students have access to them.

### EVALUATION

Class Participation: 15%  
Literature Review: 15%  
Mid-Term Test: 20%  
Research Essay: 25%  
Final Take-Home Exam: 25%

#### ***Class Participation***

Includes group discussion, attendance, and quizzes on assigned readings.

Students are expected to attend each scheduled class. Exemptions may be granted with prior approval of the instructor, or in the case of family or medical emergencies where appropriate documentation is provided.

**Literature Review (2-3 pages)**

**Due: 15 May**

You will select three (3) journal articles or one (1) book relating to the topic of your Research Essay (see below). This assignment should *compare and contrast* the articles you selected and discuss how they contribute to your research topic. If you choose a book, you should *reflect critically* on how the work helps you approach your essay topic.

**Mid-Term Test**

**29 May**

This test will consist of multiple-choice, short-answer, and short-essay questions relating to the themes and debates presented in lectures, readings, and group discussions.

**Research Essay (7-12 pages)**

**Select Topic: 8 May  
Essay Due: 8 June**

Explore an event in Canadian working-class history since 1914 through the pages of a newspaper. Newspapers can be accessed on microfilm at the Harriet Irving Library. Secondary sources (articles, books) should provide context to this primary-source research and situate your topic within debates in labour history. Your Literature Review provides the opportunity to reflect critically on these secondary sources in preparation for writing the Research Essay.

Essay topics must be presented to the instructor by email no later than **8 May**. I am happy to consult with you prior to this date to discuss research topics.

**Final Take-Home Exam**

**Pick-up: 14 June class  
Due: 18 June at Noon**

The final exam is an open-book, take-home exam. Your answers should incorporate material from course readings, lectures, class discussions, and films. Late exams will not be accepted. Submit Exams to the History Department Office by noon on June 18.

**STYLE:** Your Literature Review and Research Essay should conform with the History Department Style Guide. All work should be double-spaced in 12-point font. Quotations and facts should be referenced with Footnotes. All works cited or consulted should be listed in a Bibliography at the end of the assignment.

\* **PLAGIARISM:** Plagiarism is presenting another person's work as your own. Quoting from sources without proper footnotes is a form of plagiarism, which may result in disciplinary action by the instructor and/or the University. Assignments that have been plagiarized will receive a mark of zero. If you have any questions about how to properly cite your sources, and avoid plagiarism, please ask.

## CLASS SCHEDULE

1 May: Introduction

3 May: The First World War and 1919 Canadian Labour Revolt

*Required Reading:*

David Jay Bercuson, "The Winnipeg General Strike," in Irving Abella, ed., *On Strike: Six Key Labour Struggles in Canada, 1919-1949* (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, 1975): 1-32

Gregory S. Kealey, "1919: The Canadian Labour Revolt," *Labour/Le Travail*, 13 (Spring 1984): 11-44

8 May: Workers Respond to Industrial Change: Cape Breton and New Brunswick

**Research Topic due (submit by email before start of class)**

Frank, David. "The Miner's Financier: Women in Cape Breton Coal Towns, 1917," *Atlantis* 8:2 (1983): 137-43

Don Macgillivray, "Military Aid to the Civil Power: The Cape Breton Experience in the 1920s," in Michael Cross and Gregory S. Kealey, eds., *The Consolidation of Capitalism 1896-1929* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1983): 116-140

10 May: Working-Class Women

Elaine Bernard, "Last Back: Folklore and the Telephone Operators in the 1919 Vancouver General Strike," in Barbara Lantham and Roberta Pazdro, eds., *Not Just Pin Money: Selected Essays on the History of Women's Work in British Columbia* (Victoria: Camosun College, 1984): 279- 86

Meg Luxton, "From Ladies' Auxiliaries to Wives' Committees," in Linda Briskin and Lynda Yanz, eds., *Union Sisters: Women in the Labour Movement* (Toronto: The Women's Press, 1983): 333-347

15 May: Immigrant Workers

Gillian Creese, "Exclusion or Solidarity? Vancouver Workers Confront the 'Oriental Problem,'" *BC Studies*, 80 (Winter 1988-89): 24-51

Barbara Roberts, "Shovelling Out the Mutinous": Political Deportation from Canada before 1936," *Labour/Le Travail*, 18 (1986): 77-110.

Franca Iacovetta, "From *Contadina* to Worker: Southern Italian Immigrant Working Women in Toronto, 1947-62," in Jean Burnet, ed., *Looking Into My*

*Sister's Eyes: Exploration in Women's History* (Toronto: Multicultural History Society of Ontario, 1986): 195-222

17 May: The Great Depression and the Rise of Industrial Unionism

**Literate Review due (in class)**

“On-to-Ottawa” (pamphlet)

Patricia Wejr and Howie Smithy, eds., “The Hungry Thirties, 1930-1939,” *Fighting for Labour: Four Decades of Work in British Columbia, 1910-1950* (Victoria: Sound Heritage, 1978): 41-59.

Irving Abella, “Oshawa 1937,” in Abella, ed, *On Strike: Six Key Labour Struggles in Canada, 1919-1949* (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, 1975): 93-128

22 May: Working-Class Politics: Part I

John Manley, “Preaching the Red Stuff: J.B. McLachlan, Communism, and the Cape Breton Miners, 1922-1935.” *Labour/Le Travail*, 30 (1992): 65-114

Joan Sangster, “‘Women and the New Era’: The Role of Women in the Early CCF, 1933-1940,” in William J. Brennan, ed., *Building the Cooperative Commonwealth: Essays on the Democratic Socialist Tradition in Canada* (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Center, 1984): 69-98

*Regina Manifesto* (1933)

24 May: The Canadian Worker During the Second World War

James Naylor, “Pacifism or Anti-Imperialism?: The CCF Response to the Outbreak of World War II,” *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association*, 8 (1997): 213-237

Laurel Sefton MacDowell, “The Formation of the Canadian Industrial Relations System During World War Two,” *Labour/Le Travailleur*, 3 (1978): 175-196

29 May: **Mid-term Test (in class)**

31 May: Postwar Industrial Relations and the Rise of Public-Sector Unionism

David Moulton, “Ford Windsor 1945,” in Irving Abella, ed., *On Strike: Six Key Labour Struggles in Canada, 1919-1949* (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, 1975): 129-161

Isbester, Fraser, "Asbestos 1949," in Irving Abella, ed., *On Strike. Six Key Labour Struggles in Canada, 1919-1949* (Toronto, James Lorimer & Company, 1975): 163-196

5 June: Working-Class Politics: Part II

Laurel Sefton MacDowell, "Paul Robeson in Canada: A Border Story," *Labour/Le Travail*, 51 (Spring 2003): 177-221

Patrick J. Smith and Marshall W. Conley, "Empty Harbours, Empty Dreams': The Democratic Socialist Tradition in Atlantic Canada," in William J. Brennan, ed., *Building the Cooperative Commonwealth: Essays on the Democratic Socialist Tradition in Canada* (Regina: Canadian Plains Research Centre, 1984): 227-252

7 June: Breakaway Unionism and the Rank-and-File Revolt

Paul Knox, "Breakaway Unionism in Kitimat," in Knox and Phillip Resnick, eds., *Essays in BC Political Economy* (Vancouver: New Star, 1974), 42-51

*Manifesto for an Independent Socialist Canada* (1969) ("The Waffle Manifesto")

**8 June: Research Essay due, 12 noon, History Department office**

12 June: Neoliberalism and the Working-Class Response

Leo Panitch and Donald Swartz, "Permanent Exceptionalism," (Chapter 2), in Panitch and Swartz, *From Consent to Coercion: The Assault on Trade Union Freedoms* (Aurora, ON: Garamond, 2003) *Selected Pages*

Bryan Palmer, "The Rise and Fall of British Columbia's Solidarity," in Palmer, *Character of Class Struggle* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1986): 176-200

14 June: Final Review: The Canadian Worker in the 21 Century

**Pick up Final Exam (Due Monday, 18 June, noon in the History office)**

Naomi Klein, "The Tourist Trap," *Saturday Night* (September 1999)

Joan McFarland, "Call Centres in New Brunswick: Maquiladoras of the North?" *Canadian Woman Studies*, 21/22 (Spring/Summer 2002): 65-70