

Doing History: The Pullman Strike

The purpose of this tutorial is to sharpen your sense of the ways in which history is constructed, educate you about the standards governing that construction, and develop your own skills for engaging in such construction. We will use the story of the Pullman strike to develop reading, research, and writing strategies and to ponder the multiple choices every historian must make in writing a narrative that both recounts and analyzes a historical event. So this is a course in skill-building, story-telling, and scholarly ethics. It is also a course about a fascinating moment in American history when it was obvious that the old world had passed and the new was yet to be born. The Pullman strike marked a dramatic shift from the Gilded Age to the Progressive Era, which means we have a great story to trace while we are exploring the general principles and practices that guide all historians in their work.

Texts:

Course pak: xeroxed copies of primary sources

Pullman Microfilm: clippings of news coverage of the strike kept by the Pullman Company: on Reserve in Burling Library. We have only one copy which all must share.

U.S. Strike Commission, "Report on the Chicago Strike of June-July, 1894," on Reserve in Burling Library. We have only three copies which all must share.

David Ray Papke, The Pullman Case (1999). This book will be available in the campus bookstore later in the semester. Cost: about \$15.00.

Writing assignments:

You will have frequent, short writing assignments over the course of the semester. In weeks 2,3,4,6, 7,11,12,13, and 14, you will have between a half page and two pages of prose due. You will also work with some questionnaires and structured exercises in order to dissect materials you are reading. Typically, your written work will be due, via e-mail, the evening before class meets so that I can design the class meeting around what you have written.

At the end of the semester, you will write a 5-7 page research paper. This will be your opportunity to more fully explore a topic raised during our study of the Pullman strike and to use research, analytical, and writing skills developed during the semester. You will be urged to select a limited topic on which you can do a thorough job within space and time constraints.

Evaluation of Performance:

12 graded homework assignments = 110 points (10 points each, you can drop one grade)

3 oral presentations = 60 points (20 points each)

1 research paper = 80 points

Class participation = 100 points (see handout for definition of “participation”)

Total points possible = 350

(In my experience, those who earn 90% or more of the possible points receive an “A” grade; those who earn between 80% and 89% receive a “B” grade; those who earn between 70% and 79% receive a “C” grade. Keep in mind: there is no “C-” grade at Grinnell.)

Note: every Grinnell student must complete Tutorial with a “C” or better. Any student earning a grade of “D” or “F” will automatically be placed on academic probation and required to take – and pass – an appropriate make-up course in the spring semester.

V. Brown’s Office Hours & Contact Information:

FYI: I live in Iowa City, 70 miles east of Grinnell. I will be on campus every day this semester, but not all day every day. Pay attention to my office hours schedule. If you need to see me at a time that does not fit that schedule, contact me via phone, e-mail or in person about making an appointment. I am happy to make myself available to you. I just need you to be aware of my schedule and my own time constraints.

I will be the first to concede that the information superhighway is often a rutted road so we cannot depend entirely on e-mail. However, I will growl unattractively if you say to me “I couldn’t reach you.” Phones usually work when e-mail does not. Notes on office doors or in mailboxes also work. You can always reach me somehow.

Monday: 2:30 - 5:30 (I will be in my campus office on Monday evenings)
Tuesday: 10:00 - Noon (I will leave campus at noon; will be in Iowa City until Wed. at 11:00)
Wednesday: 2:30 - 4:00 (I will be in my office on Wednesday evenings)
Thursday: 10:00 - Noon (I will leave campus at noon; will be in Iowa City until Fri. at 11:00)
Friday: 2:30 - 5:00

Campus office phone: 641-269-3087
Campus office: Mears Cottage 303 (top floor, southeast corner of building; next to Main)
Home phone: 319-354-8867
E-mail: brownv@grinnell.edu

Schedule of readings and activities

Week One: Getting Started

August 28: Brainstorming session: What do we need to know in order to do a history of the Pullman strike?

Reading: Newspaper articles and chronologies on the strike. These will be handed out in our August 24 meeting. Be sure to read before first class meeting as preparation for brainstorming.

Writing: After reading the newspaper articles and chronologies, make a list of four or five (very basic) questions you feel must be answered in order to even begin a history of the Pullman strike.

Week Two: The Immediate Causes of the Strike

September 2: The Workers' Standpoint

Reading: U.S. Strike Commission testimony, pp. 416-459, 466-468 (47 pages total)
(There are only three copies of the U.S. Strike Commission Report on 2-hour Reserve in Burling Library. Don't wait until the last minute to do this reading!)

Writing: One-page (i.e. two-paragraph) summary of the workers' testimony on conditions in Pullman town and in the Pullman company which caused the strike. Send to me via e-mail by 7:30 p.m., Monday, Sept. 1.

September 4: The Company's Standpoint

Reading: U.S. Strike Commission testimony, p. 528/bottom (i.e. start of George Pullman testimony)-546; 570-587; 495-526 (65 pages total)

Writing: One-page (i.e. two-paragraph) summary of the company's position on town conditions and company conditions preceding the strike. Again, send to me via e-mail by 7:30 p.m., Wednesday, Sept. 3.

Week Three: Immediate Causes of Immediate Causes

September 9: Mr. Pullman's Company Town

Reading: Richard Ely, "Pullman: A Social Study," Harper's Monthly Magazine, LXX (Feb. 1885): 452-466; Henry Demarest Lloyd, unpublished mss. re: Pullman for Harper's. R.R. Bowker letter to H.D. Lloyd. Biographical sketches of Lloyd and Ely.

Writing: One-page description of the differences you see between the Ely article and the Lloyd manuscript followed by a comment on why you think Harper's published the Ely article instead of the Lloyd article. Send to me via e-mail by 7:30 p.m., Monday, Sept. 8.

Bring to class a typed transcript of handwritten letter from R.R. Bowker to H.D. Lloyd.

September 11: Mr. Pullman's Company Town continued

Reading: James Gilbert, "Second City: Our Town," Perfect Cities, pp. 131-68 & 251-56.

Writing: There are 85 paragraphs in this 37-page chapter from Gilbert's book. As you read, put an "A" next to those paragraphs in which you see Gilbert setting forth his overall interpretation of the evidence. When you are done, re-read the paragraphs with an "A" in the margin and select that paragraph which you think best articulates Gilbert's central thesis/argument/interpretation.

Write a paragraph in which you identify (by page number and topic sentence) what is, for you, the chapter's key paragraph *and* in which you explain why you think that particular paragraph is the most significant statement of Gilbert's point in this chapter. Send to me via e-mail by 7:30 p.m., Wednesday, Sept. 10

Bring to class your completed questionnaire on "Unpacking the Endnotes" for this Gilbert chapter.

Week Four: More on Immediate Causes of Immediate Causes

****I will meet individually with each of you this week****

September 16: The World's Columbian Exposition

Reading: James Gilbert, "First City: Form and Fantasy," Perfect Cities, pp. 75-130 & 243-51. (Be sure to read the endnotes in preparation for discussion of Gilbert's use of evidence).

Writing: One paragraph/half page in which you state, using your own words, what you think Gilbert's argument or "thesis" is in this chapter. You may quote one sentence from Gilbert (citing the pg. number, of course), if you find language that elegantly encapsulates his point. Then write a second paragraph in which you comment on why you think I included the topic of the "fair" in our class on the Pullman strike. Send to me via e-mail by 7:30 p.m., Monday, Sept. 15.

In class, we will look at web sites re: the Columbian Exposition and discuss how to evaluate the reliability of web sites. We will also look at photos of the Exposition.

September 18: The Depression of 1893

Reading: Articles on "the unemployed" in Course Pak. Study Guide will direct you to several web sites that address this topic and will provide tables on income and economic productivity.

**** You will receive assignment for October 14 & 16 oral presentations on key figures in the Pullman Strike****

Week Five: Back to the Pullman Strike

September 23: Meet with Burling Library reference librarian re: search strategies, history sources on the internet, Guide to Periodical Literature, American National Biography, etc. You will also get acquainted with the Burling microfilm readers and the newspaper reels you will be using in the coming weeks.

September 25: News coverage of the strike, May 12 - June 9

Reading: Teams of three will be responsible for reading a week's worth of news coverage on the strike using the Pullman Strike microfilm on Reserve in Burling.

Writing: You will receive a questionnaire regarding the news coverage and each team will post its responses to the questionnaire on class Blackboard by Wednesday, 7:30 p.m.

Week Six: The Strike Heats Up and Expands

September 30: News coverage of the strike, June 10 - June 25

Reading: Teams will be responsible for reading 4 days' worth of news coverage on the strike using the Pullman Strike microfilm on Reserve in Burling.

Writing: After your team has read and discussed the events for your assigned days, use your notes to write your own two-page (4-5 paragraph/500-word) narrative in which you tell the story of what happened over the course of your four days. Send to me via e-mail by 7:30 p.m., Monday, September 29.

October 2: The Press and the Boycott, June 26 - July 7

Reading: Each student will be responsible for reading and reporting in class on one day's news coverage using the Pullman Strike microfilm on Reserve in Burling. All of you will also read Harry Jebsen, Jr., "The Role of Blue Island in the Pullman Strike of 1894," Journal of the Illinois State Historical Society LXVII (June, 1974): 275-293.

Writing: Structured analysis of Jebsen's narrative, including an analysis of his use of newspaper sources. Due in class.

Week Seven: ARU's National Railway Boycott

October 7: The Press and the Boycott, July 8 - July 11

Reading: Team reading of Pullman microfilm news articles for July 8-11 from Chicago Tribune, Chicago Times, and Chicago Daily News; David Paul Nord, "The Business Values of American Newspapers: The 19th Century Watershed in Chicago," Journalism

Quarterly 61 (Summer, 1984): 265-273.

Writing: Two-page analysis of news coverage in which you support or challenge Nord's argument. You may discuss this with your team before writing your own analysis. Send to me via e-mail by 7:30 p.m. on Monday, October 6

October 9: Pulling it All Together

Reading: Two chapters from Almont Lindsey's "classic" book, The Pullman Strike.

Writing: Each of you will be asked to look up 2 or 3 of Lindsey's endnotes, xerox the sources, and bring them to class to discuss the link between the source and his text.

Week Eight: The Key Figures in the Pullman Strike & its Denouement

October 14: Oral presentations on: George Pullman, Eugene V. Debs, Grover Cleveland, Peter Altgeld, and Carroll D. Wright, *and* on the creation of "Labor Day."

October 16: Oral presentations on Samuel Gompers, Nelson Miles, Lyman Trumbull, Clarence Darrow, Mayor John P. Hopkins, William Carwardine, and William Stead

****You will each receive your "script" for the Strike Commission role-play for the week after Fall Break. You will also receive guidelines and topic ideas for your research paper****

Week Nine: Fall Break

Week Ten: The U.S. Strike Commission Investigates, August 15 - August 29, 1894

****Individual meetings this week to discuss your ideas and interests for the research paper****

October 28: Strike Commission role-play re: rioting, violence, and the ARU

October 30: Strike Commission role-play re: the Pullman Company, the General Managers' Association, and the American Federation of Labor

Week Eleven: Post Mortems on the Pullman Strike

November 4: The U.S. Strike Commission Publishes its Findings

****Sign-up sheet for pre-registration meetings will circulate in class****

Reading: U.S. Strike Commission Report, pp. xv-liv; "The Humiliating Report of the Strike Commission," Forum, January, 1895.

Writing: 1-2 paragraph analysis of the key difference between the Commissioners' conclusions re: the Pullman strike and The Forum's conclusions. Send to me via e-mail by 7:30 p.m., Monday, Nov. 3

November 6: Players and Commentators Debate the Strike

Reading: “The Lesson of the Recent Strikes,” The North American Review, pp. 181-206; Thomas B. Grant, “Pullman and Its Lessons,” American Journal of Politics, pp. 190-204; Grover Cleveland, The Government and the Chicago Strike of 1894; Eugene V. Debs, “The Federal Government and the Chicago Strike;” Carroll D. Wright, “The Chicago Strike.”

Writing: Each of you will be responsible for presenting the views of the author in one of the day’s readings and should come to class prepared to take your author’s position in a debate format. Everyone should read Grant and Cleveland in addition to the author you are assigned. If assigned Grant or Cleveland, be sure to read Wright as well.

Week Twelve: Reviewing the Issues in the Pullman Strike

****Note that this is the first week of pre-registration for Spring classes****

November 11: Pullman and Paternalism

Reading: Jane Addams, “A Modern Lear,” The Survey, November 2, 1912, pp. 131-37; V. Brown, “Advocate for Democracy: Jane Addams and the Pullman Strike,” The Pullman Strike and the Crisis of the 1890's (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1999), pp. 130-58.

Writing: 1-2 paragraph commentary on why you think Thomas B. Grant was able to get his article on the Pullman strike published in 1894, but Jane Addams was not able to get her article published. Use specific examples from each to support your argument. Send via e-mail by 7:30 p.m. Monday, Nov. 10; I will distribute to all that evening.

November 13: Making Sense of the Age

Reading: Carl Smith, Chapter 11, Urban Disorder and the Shape of Belief (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), pp. 232-270. Review Debs’ June 30 “Appeal to Railroad Employees.”

Writing: One-page analysis of Debs’ “Appeal” in which you specifically discuss and use Carl Smith’s arguments. Send via e-mail by 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday Nov. 12; I will distribute to all that evening.

Week Thirteen: The Pullman Strike on Trial

November 18: David Papke’s Summary of the Pullman Strike

Reading, Papke, The Pullman Case, pp. ix-58.

Writing: Papke does not include endnotes. Keep a list of claims he makes for which you

would like to see a citation. Alongside each claim, note where you think he got the information or where you would look first for corroboration. Due in class.

November 20: The Supreme Court Case

Reading: Papke, The Pullman Case, pp. 59-107 (yes, skim the Bibliographical Essay; you may find sources of interest for your own research papers)

Writing: 1-2 page “review” of Papke stating what you learned from Papke that you did not know before reading his book, what you regard as the greatest strength of the book, and what you regard as the greatest weakness. Send to me via e-mail by 7:30 on Wednesday, Nov. 19; I will distribute to all that evening.

Week Fourteen: Considering our own and others’ research & writing:

November 25: The Pullman strike in memoir and imagination

Reading: Debs, McLean, Baker, and Addams recollections

Writing: Half-page statement of your research topic and the question you are asking in your research. This should be accompanied by a list of the bibliographical sources you are planning to use. That list should include both primary and secondary sources. Send to me via e-mail by 7:30 p.m. Monday. I will let you know on Tuesday if I see any problem with your proposal.

November 27: Happy Thanksgiving!

Week Fifteen: Ethics and History

December 2: Small group work on the difference between paraphrasing and plagiarizing and role-play disciplinary meeting re: academic dishonesty case.

Reading: Judy Hunter, “Advice for Students on Citation and Scholarship”

December 4: Each student will report on research progress. We will discuss note-taking and outlining strategies.

Reading: You will visit a website that discusses recent plagiarism scandals in the historical profession.

Week Sixteen: Reporting on your Research

December 9: Half the class will give a 10-minute oral presentation on her/his research paper.

December 11: Half the class will give a 10-minute oral presentation on her/his research paper.

Week Seventeen: Finals week

Monday, December 15: First draft of research papers is absolutely due by 5:00 p.m. No extensions.

Tuesday, December 16: 1:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. : I will meet with each of you re: revisions of your papers.

Thursday, December 18: Research papers due at 4:00 p.m. Again, no extensions.