The United States was a nation born in rebellion, an experience that has been the wellspring of democratic revitalization ever since. Yet despite this tradition, American elites quickly developed an aversion to movements that engaged in rebellion or individuals who challenged the status quo. When rebellion threatened fundamental social and political change, when it raised questions of class division and the inequitable distribution of wealth—in short, when it questioned institutions or practices that seemed to prevent the realization of the democratic promise—its advocates often found themselves the targets of state repression or unofficial persecution. We will explore this historical dynamic and consider those moments when rebellion challenged the dominant consensus. Equally important, we will ask the question: what impact did dissent have? What social or political legacy did it leave? No less significant is how frequently repression has followed dissent. This, too, is a key theme of the course. We seek to understand the intellectual content of this tradition of resistance.

Let’s be clear about something from the beginning: the success of this class depends largely on your willingness to read thoughtfully, participate actively, and take detailed notes. If you miss class and ignore readings, you can expect disappointing results. It really is that simple. The good news is you know exactly what you need to do in order to succeed. Even better, I’m sincerely interested in seeing you succeed. Let’s work together to achieve that goal.

Please note also: computers should be used for note taking only; extracurricular use of the computer is not permitted and will not be tolerated.

**Required Readings**

Louise Knight, *Spirit in Action: Jane Addams*
Michael Dennis, *Blood on Steel: Chicago Steelworkers and the Strike of 1937*
Harry Fisher, *Comrades: Tales of a Brigadista in the Spanish Civil War*

**Course requirements**

Midterm test: 10%.

Book commentary: 15%. On Knight’s *Jane Addams*. What were the origins and historical significance of Addams’s rebellion? How was Addams a product of her time? How did she transcend it? Should be 3-4 pgs.

Class participation: 20%. This is based on class attendance, participation in class discussions that provide evidence of a *thoughtful consideration of assigned texts*, and involvement in class activities, including the production of a play. You need not appear onstage, but you are expected take some active part in the production.

Essay: Use *Blood on Steel, Comrades*, and two other sources to present an analysis of social dissent in the 1930s. What motivated labor activism and anti-fascism in the 1930s? What were the achievements and limits of the popular front movement? Should be 6-8 pages.
Final exam: 30%. This will cover most of what we have learned, with a few exceptions. *It will rely extensively on class lectures and discussions*, and will take place during the regular exam schedule.

**Assignment due dates and percentages:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midterm test, 10%</td>
<td>Friday October 3rd (in my office)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Book commentary 15%</td>
<td>Tuesday October 14th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay, 25%</td>
<td>Thursday, November 20th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam 30%</td>
<td>Exam schedule</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class participation, 20%</td>
<td>Throughout the term</td>
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**Course reading schedule**

Please note: the links to the electronic versions of readings will be available via Acorn. Some readings will be available only on reserve in the library. Please note: the professor reserves the right to make reasonable adjustments to the reading schedule.

**September 4:** Welcome and course introduction. The tremors of the Gilded Age and its social ramifications.


**September 16, 18:** The Industrial Workers of the World, working-class revolt in urban America, mineworkers and companies, dissent and repression during wartime. Required reading: Stephen Burwood, “Debsian Socialism Through a Transnational Lens”; *Jane Addams*, chapter two.

**September 23, 25:** Bohemian radicals, the literary left, and the significance of Greenwich Village in the 1910s. Required reading: *Jane Addams*, chapters three and four; John McGuire, "From Socialism to Social Justice Feminism: Rose Schneiderman and the Quest for Urban Equity, 1911-1933."

**September 30, October 2:** The progressives, the lyrical left, and the First World War; a wave of repression and the drive for conformity; the upheaval of 1919. Michael Cowen, “‘The Ku Klux Government’: Vigilantism, Lynching, and the Repression of the IWW”; *Jane Addams*, chapter 5-6. Quizz will be distributed on Thursday; it will be due in my office by Friday, October 3rd at 6:00 pm.

**October 7, 9:** Prohibition and the rural campaign against urban America. Required Readings: Thomas Pegram, “Hoodwinked: The Anti-Saloon League and the Ku Klux Klan in 1920s Prohibition Enforcement;” *Jane Addams*, chapter seven, postscript.

**October 14, 16:** Marcus Garvey, W.E.B. Du Bois, the Harlem Renaissance, and the “new negro.” Reading commentary due: October 14th.

**October 21, 23:** The Algonquin Round Table, the New Yorker, and the Smart Set; women and the persistence of reform; urban nightlife, women and social non-conformity. Readings: Donald Miller, “The Nightclub Era.”
October 28, 30: Reading Week.

November 4th: the turbulent decade—the unemployed organize; labor resurgent, communists and socialists move into the mainstream. Required Readings: Dennis, Blood on Steel; November 6th: performance.

November 13th: Harry Fisher, Comrades (in its entirety.)


December 2, 4: C. Wright Mills and the renewal of dissent in the 1950s; the question of labor then and now. Required Reading: Harold Meyerson, “If Labor Dies, What’s Next?” http://prospect.org/article/if-labor-dies-whats-next

If you are a student with a documented disability who anticipates needing accommodations in this course, please inform me after you meet Jill Davies or Kathy O'Rourke in Disability Access Services, Student Resource Centre, lower floor of the Old SUB (Old Student Union Building). Their contact information is disability.access@acadiau.ca <mailto:disability.access@acadiau.ca> 585-1823.