

Economics 305: Marxist economic theory: an introduction to marxian theory and modern political economy
Monday & Wednesday 2:30-3:45
Machmer W-25

Lawrence King
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Office Hours: Tuesday 11:30-1:00
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All readings are downloadable at www.lawrenceking.net.

This is a class in marxian political economy, focusing on advanced capitalist countries, with a special emphasis on the US. The goal of the course is to teach students how to approach research from a marxian political economy perspective. In addition to some Marxist concepts, students will also be exposed to some crucial Weberian theory. While Marxist analysis focusses on development of the mode of production, classes and class conflict as the prime movers of history, Weber emphasized the independent role of administration, status groups, political parties, and authority relations. While there will be some abstract theory most of the readings will be on empirical applications.

The final grade will consist of the following components:

Three very short assignments summarizing documentaries: 10%

Class attendance and participation: 30%

Three short papers (4-5 pages) on one of the assigned readings (eligible readings are denoted with an *): 30%

A take-home final exam: 30%

At least one week prior to class a set of questions will be posted on the class Moodle site. These questions should be kept in mind while reading the material, and provisional answers should be written down for use in class discussion.

Suggested background reading on marxian political economy:

Martin Carnoy, *The State and Political Theory*. Princeton University Press. 1984.

Maurice Zeitlin, *Classes, Class Conflict, and the State: Empirical Studies in Class Analysis*, Boston: Little, Brown. 1980.

Thomas Weisskopf, Richard Edwards and Michael Reich, *The Capitalist System: A Radical Analysis of Contemporary American Society*, Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, N.J., 1986.

September 5: The transition from feudalism to capitalism and the relative separation of economics and politics

Robert Brenner, "Property and Progress: Where Adam Smith Went Wrong" in Chris Wickham, *Marxist History-writing for the Twenty-first Century*, British Academy Occasional Papers, 2007. Pp. 49-111. ([Download](#)) *

September 10: Marx's critique of capitalism

Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels, "Manifesto of the Communist Party." In *The Marx-Engels Reader Second Edition*. Edited by Robert C. Tucker. Norton. 1978. Pp. 473-491. ([Download](#))

September 12: Forms of authority

Max Weber "The Concepts of Power and Domination" (Pp.117-118) in *Max Weber: Basic Concepts in Sociology*, ed. H.P. Secher, Citadel Press Books, 1990. ([Download](#))

Frank Parkin, "Domination and Legitimacy" Pp. 71-89 in *Max Weber (revised edition)*, Key Sociologists Series, Routledge, 2002. ([Download](#))

Maurice Zeitlin. 1960. "Max Weber on the Sociology of the Feudal Order." *Sociological Review* 8 (December): 202-207. ([Download](#))

Max Weber, "Bureaucracy" (p.196-244) in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, eds. Gerth and Mills, Oxford University Press, 1958. ([Download](#)) *

September 17: Class, Status, Party

"Class, Status, Party" (pp.180-194) in *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology*, eds. Gerth and Mills, Oxford University Press, 1958. ([Download](#))

G. William Domhoff. "What is a Social Class" & "Social Class According to Social Scientists" *Who Rules America: The Triumph of the Corporate Rich*. Seventh Edition. McGraw Hill. 2015. Pp.8-13. ([Download](#))

Reinhard Bendix, "Inequality and Social Structure: A Comparison of Marx and Weber" in *American Sociological Review* 39(2) April 1974: Pp. 149-161. ([Download](#))

September 19: Class formation

Adam Przeworski, "Proletariat Into a Class: The Process of Class Formation from Karl Kautsky's 'The Class Struggle' to Recent Controversies," in *Politics and Society* 7(4) 1977: Pp. 343-401. ([Download](#)) *

September 24: Historical Materialism and Ideology

Karl Marx, selections from *The German Ideology*. In *The New Economic Sociology*: Ed. Frank Dobbin. Princeton University Press. 2004. Pp. 392-394. ([Download](#))

Terry Eagleton, "What is Ideology?" and "From Lukács to Gramsci" in *Ideology: An Introduction*. Verso. 1991. Pp.1-32; 112-123. ([Download](#))

September 26: The political economy of racism I

Marvin Harris. (1974). *Patterns of Race in the Americas*. W.W. Norton & Company: New York. "The Brazilian Pattern", "The Myth of the Friendly Master", "The Origin of the Descent Rule" & "Epilogue" pp. 54-99. ([Download](#)) *

October 1: The political economy of racism II

Jeffrey Prager. (1972/73). "White racial privilege and social change: An examination of theories of racism." *Berkeley Journal of Sociology* Vol 17: 117-150. ([Download](#)) *

October 3: The political economy of the civil rights movement and the transformation of racism

In class documentary "Ethnic Notions." (Director: Marlon Riggs. 1986.)

Doug McAdam, "The Historical Context of Black Insurgency 1876-1954" in *Political process and the development of black insurgency, 1930-1970*, University of Chicago Press, 1999. Pp. 65-116. ([Download](#)) *

October 9: The US Civil War

Barrington Moore, Jr., "The American Civil War: The Last Capitalist Revolution." In *The Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Landlord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World*. 1966. Boston: Beacon Press. Pp. 111-158. ([Download](#)) *

October 10: The state and capitalist development

Ha-Joon Chang, "Kicking Away the Ladder: The 'Real' History of Free Trade", FPIF Special Report December 2003: Pp. 1-20. ([Download](#))

Richard Kozul-Wright, "The myth of Anglo-Saxon Capitalism: Reconstructing the history of the American State" in H.-J. Chang & R. Rowthorn (eds.), *The Role of the State in Economic Change*, Clarendon Press, 1995. Pp. 81-113. ([Download](#)) *

October 15: Capitalism and the rise of democracy

Goran Therborn, "The Rise of Capital and the Rule of Democracy" in *New Left Review* (103) 1977: Pp. 3-41. ([Download](#)) *

October 17: Working class formation in the US

Prior to class watch the documentary "Seeing Red." (Directors: Jim Klein, James Klein. 1983). Prepare a 1.5 page comment on the documentary that includes a summary and raises at least one question.

Daniel Fusfeld, *The Rise and Repression of Radical Labor USA, 1877-1918*. Charles H. Kerr. 1980. Pp.5-64. ([Download](#))

October 22: The rise of the corporation

William Roy, selections from *Socializing Capital: The Rise of the Large Industrial Corporation in America* in *The New Economic Sociology*: Ed. Frank Dobbin. Princeton University Press. 2004. Pp.433-456. ([Download](#)) *

William Roy. "A quantitative test of efficiency theory." In *Socializing Capital: The Rise of the Large Industrial Corporation in America*. Princeton University Press. 1997. Pp.21-41. ([Download](#)) *

Editors of *Harvard Law Review*. "Incorporating the Republic: The Corporation in Antebellum Political Culture Source": *Harvard Law Review*, Vol. 102, No. 8 (Jun., 1989), pp. 1883-1903. ([Download](#)) *

October 24: The corporate community and the separation of ownership and control

Maurice Zeitlin, "Corporate Ownership and Control: The Large Corporation and the Capitalist Class". *American Journal of Sociology*. Vol. 79, No. 5 (Mar., 1974), pp. 1073-1119. ([Download](#)) *

G. William Domhoff. 2015. *Who Rules America: The Triumph of the Corporate Rich*. Seventh Edition. McGraw Hill. Pp. 16-73.* ([Download](#))

Eric Posner, Fiona Scott Morton and Glen Weyl. "A Monopoly Donald Trump Can Pop" *New York Times*, Dec. 7, 2016. 3 pages. ([Download](#))

John Scott. "The Corporation and Capitalist Classes" in *Corporate Business and Capitalist Classes*. 1997. OUP. Pp.274-282. ([Download](#))

October 29: The candidate selection process and the policy planning network

G. William Domhoff. 2015. *Who Rules America: The Triumph of the Corporate Rich*. Seventh Edition. McGraw Hill. Pp. 74-108. ([Download](#)) *

Theda Skocpol and Alexander Hertel-Fernandez. "The Koch Network and Republican Party Extremism." 2016. *Perspectives on Politics*. Vol. 14/No. 3: 682-699. ([Download](#)) *

November 31: How the power elite dominate the state

G. William Domhoff. 2015. *Who Rules America: The Triumph of the Corporate Rich*. Seventh Edition. McGraw Hill. Pp.132-189. ([Download](#)) *

Martin Gilens & Benjamin Page, "Testing Theories of American Politics: Elites, Interest Groups, and Average Citizens" (2014) *Perspectives on Politics*. Vol. 12/No.3: 564-581. ([Download](#)) *

November 5: The corporation as externality machine

Prior to class watch "The Corporation" (2003) Directors: Mark Achbar and Jennifer Abbot. Write a 1.5 double-spaced summary and comment, due in class.

November 7: Private planning by corporations

Taken for a Ride (1996). Director: Jim Klein. Prepare a 1.5 page comment on the documentary that includes a summary and raises one question.

November 14: The political economy of deindustrialization

Barry Bluestone & Bennet Harrison. *The Deindustrialization of America*. 1982. New York: Basic Books. Pp. 3-24, 111-192. ([Download](#)) *

November 26: Corporations and religion

Kevin M. Kruse, *One Nation Under God: How Corporate America Invented Christian America*. Basic Books. 2015. Introduction & Part I. pp.ix-xvi, 1-66. ([Download](#)) *

November 28: Corporations and mass media

Edward Herman & Noam Chomsky, *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*, Pantheon Books, 1988. Pp. 1-35. ([Download](#)) *

Noam Chomsky & Edward Herman (interview by Andrew Mullen Andrew Mullen), "The Propaganda Model after 20 Years" in *Westminster Papers in Communication and Culture* (November) 2009. (6 pp.) ([Download](#))

December 3: The structural dependence of the state on capital

Ralph Miliband. *The State and Capitalist Society*. 1969. Chapter 6: "Imperfect Competition." Pp. 146-178. ([Download](#)) *

Maurice Zeitlin. 1973. "Chile: The Dilemmas of Democratic Socialism." *Working Papers for a New Society* 1, No. 3 (Fall): 16-26. ([Download](#)) *

December 5: Social Democracy

Adam Przeworski, "Social Democracy as a Historical Phenomenon" in *New Left Review* (122) 1980: Pp. 27-58. ([Download](#)) *

Gosta Esping-Andersen, *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism*. Polity Press. 1996: Pp. 35-78. ([Download](#)) *

Charles Sackrey, Geoffrey Schneider, and Janet Knoedler. "The Middle Way: Swedish Social Democracy" in *Introduction to Political Economy*. 8th Edition. Economic Affairs Bureau. 2016. Pp. 279-304. ([Download](#)) *

December 10: Capitalism and Nazism

Ian Kershaw, "Politics and Economics of the Nazi State" in *The Nazi Dictatorship*, Oxford University Press, 2000. Pp. 47-68. ([Download](#)) *

December 12: The rise of neoliberalism

David Kotz. *The Rise and Fall of Neoliberal Capitalism*. Harvard University Press. 2017. Pp.8-84. ([Download](#)) *

Guidelines for Short Papers

I. Goal: For each paper, the goal is to write a review of one of the assigned readings, including analysis of strengths and weaknesses of that article or chapter.

II. Due Dates:

Paper #1: October 1 (in class); Paper #2: October 29 (in class); Paper #3: November 5 (in class)

Late papers will be graded down at a rate of one grade increment per day (for example, an A will become an A- if it is one day late, etc.) For example, papers submitted after 2:30 p.m. on October 1 will be considered to be one day late, papers submitted after 2:30 p.m. on Thursday, on October 2 will be considered to be two days late, etc.

Papers must be submitted both in hard copy and electronically. Both versions must be submitted by 2:30. on the due date. If either version is not submitted, late penalties will be applied. Weekend days count as days for the late penalties.

II. The Basics

Length: 4-5 pages, not including any endnotes, bibliography, reference list, tables, or graphs.

Format: Double-spaced, in 12-point type, with 1-inch top and bottom margins and 1.25- inch left and right margins.

Choice of Reading: For each paper, you may select any one of the eligible readings (marked with an *).

The reading can be one that we have not yet covered in class at the time the paper is due. In your papers, you need to include your own analysis, rather than only reproducing what is in another reading or what is in your notes from class lectures.

Required Components: A) synopsis of the author's argument and summary of main points of the reading B) critical analysis and review, including reasons and evidence for your views and identification of one strength and one weakness of the reading C) two other questions sparked by the reading and historical evidence that might be used to answer them. D) you also must attach a photocopy or printout of a page, table, or graph from a relevant source for each of the questions in C) above.

Approximate Length of Each Component: A) one page or less B) two to three pages C) one to

two pages

Six pages is an absolute maximum for the text of the paper (not including any endnotes, bibliography, reference list, tables, or graphs).

Writing: Papers must have an introduction, body, and conclusion. Since these are short papers, introductions and conclusions probably will not exceed one paragraph each. Papers must have correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling. Use the Chicago Manual of Style citation format for any endnotes, bibliography, or reference lists, if your paper includes them. A "Chicago-Style Citation Quick Guide" can be found at http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html.

If you use the author-date citation format for parenthetical references in the body of your paper, your reference list will include items arranged alphabetically by author(s), with the date of publication immediately following the author(s) name in the reference list.

III. Components

A. Synopsis of Argument and Summary of Main Points

Summarize the author's main argument and provide a brief summary of main points the author makes in the article or chapter. What are the most important three points that a reader should take away from this reading? You may find the discussion of abstracts in the book by Steven A. Greenlaw, *Doing Economics* (pp. 118-119) useful for this part of your paper.

B. Critical Analysis and Review

Discuss one important issue raised in the reading, giving reasons as to why you agree or disagree with the author on this issue. Support your argument with evidence from the reading and your own economic reasoning. Refer to specific pages in the reading. As part of your discussion of this issue, identify at least one strength and one weakness of the author's argument.

If you include notes, they should be endnotes rather than footnotes. If you use any sources other than the assigned reading (for example, to present evidence that contradicts the argument in the assigned reading), you must cite the sources either in endnotes or by using parenthetical citations in the text of your paper (using the author-date system).

Wikipedia is not an acceptable source for these scholarly papers, although it can be a very useful starting point and can help you to find more reliable sources of information. The critical analysis and review should be your own work, not a quotation or paraphrasing of someone else's analysis and review of the reading.

You may find chapter 6 in the book by Steven A. Greenlaw, *Doing Economics*, useful for this part of your paper. Note especially Tables 6.1 and 6.2, the discussion of them on pp. 110-116, and

the discussion of critical reviews on pp. 116-119. Your critical review will be longer than the sample critical review on p. 119.

You also might want to look at the sections in chapter 4 of Greenlaw's book on "The Structure of an Argument," "Examining an Argument," and "What Makes for a Persuasive Argument?" (pp. 51-57, 59-63).

C. Other Questions

Pose two historical questions that are sparked in your mind by this reading. What else are you curious to know more about as a result of the reading? For each question, indicate what historical evidence might be used to answer it. For each of the questions, provide a citation for a specific source you have consulted that includes relevant evidence.

If the source is an online source, it must be an official data source or archive, or a published journal article or book (i.e., not an unofficial web page or blog). For online sources, include the URL for the source as part of your citation. Attach a photocopy or print-out of a page, table, or graph taken from each of the two sources to the hard copy of your paper that you submit in class. Include complete citation information for each source on the photocopy or printout. These pages will not count as part of the 4-5 pages of your paper.

IV. Note on Academic Honesty: Penalties for any breach of academic honesty are severe and include University disciplinary action. Student papers may be submitted to Turnitin by the instructor to check for possible plagiarism. Submitted assignments will be included in the UMass Amherst dedicated database of assignments at Turnitin and will be used solely for the purpose of checking for possible plagiarism.

For the purposes of this course, plagiarism means presenting someone else's work as your own (for example, copying all or part of someone else's paper, buying a pre-written paper, or having someone else do a paper for you) or using outside sources without proper acknowledgment. Footnotes always must be provided for direct quotations and in cases where you are paraphrasing or summarizing another author's ideas or research.

Any material, including material from internet web sites, that is a direct quotation must be put in quotation marks. Students are advised to consult a standard manual such as the one by Turabian et al. listed above, or to speak with Professor King, if questions arise while working on your papers.

Information on the University's Academic Honesty Policy is available at:

http://www.umass.edu/dean_students/academic_policy An "Academic Honesty Guide for Students" is available at:

http://www.umass.edu/honesty/sites/default/files/academic_honesty_guide_for_students_1617.pdf

For a good discussion of plagiarism and why it matters, see "Richardson's Rules of Order, Part

VIII: Plagiarism: Who Cares?" by Professor Heather Cox Richardson, Sept. 7, 2009.
<http://histsociety.blogspot.co.uk/search/label/Richardson%27s%20Rules%20of%20Order>

Other posts by Professor Richardson on this site include many suggestions that you may find useful for writing papers, taking exams, and speaking in class.