

DARTMOUTH COLLEGE
Department of Sociology

Spring Term 2020

Sociology 26
9 L

Professor Misagh Parsa

Capitalism, Prosperity and Crisis
Satisfies the Soc, and W requirements

Office: Room 308D Blunt
Phone: 6-3166

Office Hours:
MWF 8-9am

Capitalism in the last five centuries generated great wealth and prosperity in Western societies. In the last few decades, capitalism assumed a global character affecting social and economic life of the vast majority of the people in the world. Yet, capitalism has also been plagued by economic decline and failures, causing massive human suffering. This course will study the nature of capitalism, sources of prosperity and crisis, inequality in distribution of economic and political power, and globalization of capitalism. Finally, the course will examine the impact of these processes on social conflicts, social change, and likelihood of revolution.

Any student with a documented disability needing academic adjustments or accommodations is requested to speak to me and give me a copy of your accommodations form by the end of the second week of the term. All discussions will remain confidential, although the Director of Student Disabilities may be consulted if questions arise.

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This course enforces the Academic Honor Principle, described in the Dartmouth College Student Handbook.

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If you have a religious observance that conflicts with your participation in the course, please meet with me before the end of the second week of the term to discuss appropriate accommodations.

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Course Requirements:

1. Two take-home exams
2. Attendance will be taken at every class meeting. Missing more than three classes will impact the grade progressively: 10% after missing more than three classes, 20% after missing more than six classes, 30% after missing more than nine classes.

Reserved Readings:

APSA Task Force, "American Democracy in an Age of Rising Inequality," *Perspectives on Politics*, Vo. 2, No. 4, December 2004.

Bendix, R. and Lipset, S.M. *Class, Status, and Power: Social Stratification in Comparative Perspective*. New York: Free Press, 1966.

Bowles, S. and Edwards, R. *Understanding Capitalism: Competition, Command, and Change in the U.S. Economy*. New York: Harper Collins, 1993.

Dahl, R. "Why All Democratic Countries Have Mixed Economies," in *Democratic Community*, 1993.

Edwards, R. Reich, M. and Weisskopf, T. *The Capitalist System*. Englewood: Prentice Hall, 1978.

Foran, J. *Taking Power: On the Origins of Third World Revolutions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Friedman, M. *Capitalism and Freedom*. The University of Chicago Press. 1962.

Friedman, Milton and Rose. *Free to Choose*. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. 1990.

Krugman, P. *The Return of Depression Economics*. New York: Norton, 2009.

Moore, Barrington. *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy: Landlord and Peasant in the Making of the Modern World*. Beacon Press, 1966.

Parsa, M. *States, Ideologies, and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of Iran, Nicaragua, and the Philippines*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Phillips, K. *Bad Money: Reckless Finance, and the Global Crisis of American Capitalism*. New York: Viking, 2008.

Reich, R. *Supercapitalism*. New York: Vintage, 2008.

Rueschemeyer, Stephens and Stephens, *Capitalist Development and Democracy*, University of Chicago Press, 1992.

Skocpol, T. *States and Social Revolutions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979.

Smith, J. "Violence, Property Rights, and Economic Growth...",
Research in Law and Sociology, Vol. 3, pg. 87-106, 1980.

Stiglitz, J. *The Price of Inequality*. New York: Norton, 2012.

Tilly, C. *Regimes and Repertoires*. The University of Chicago Press, 2006.

Thurow, L. *The Future of Capitalism: How Today's ... Tomorrow*. 1996.

Weber, M. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*.

Williams, E. *Capitalism and Slavery*. New York: Capricorn, 1966.

SCHEDULE:

WEEK 1

Mar. 30-Apr 3

Introduction to Capitalism

Readings:

Reich, Introduction

Karl Marx and capitalist development, Lecture

M. Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*

Smith, in *Research in Law and Sociology*

WEEK 2

Apr. 6- 10

Capitalism and Prosperity

Readings:

Reich, Chapters 1-2

Bowles and Edwards, Chapter 1

Friedman, *Free to Choose*, Chapter 1

Film: "Taken for a Ride"

WEEKS 3-4

Apr. 13- 24

Capitalism, Contradictions, Crisis

Readings:

Thurow, Chapters 4 and 14

Hobsbawm in Edwards, Chapter 10.1

Krugman, Chapters 1 and 10

Phillips, Chapters 1 and 7

Film: "Inside Job" (12115)

First Assignment, date to be announced

WEEK 5-6

Ap. 27 – May 8

Capitalism and Democracy

Readings:

Friedman, Chapter 1

Williams, Chapter 1

Reich, Chapters 4-5

Dahl, “Why All...

APSA Task Force

Moore, Ch. 7-8

Rueschemeyer, Ch. 1-3

Film: “Campaign Finance”

WEEKS 7-8

May 11 – May 22

Capitalism and Inequality

Readings:

Davis and Moore, in Bendix

Tumin, in Bendix

Stiglitz, Chapters 1-3

Film: “Who’s Getting Rich And Why Aren’t You?”

WEEKS 9-10

May 25 – Jun 3

Capitalism, Conflicts and Revolution

Readings:

Tilly, 2006, Chapter 7

Skocpol, Chapter 1

Foran, Chapter 1

Parsa, Chapters 1- 3

Film: “Revolution”

Final Assignment