

History 4730H: Marx and Marxism Spring 2010 Allan Kulikoff

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This is an undergraduate reading and research course on Marx and Marxist history. The readings, most from Marx and Engels, cover four issues: political revolutions, the transition from feudalism to capitalism, the contours of industrial capital, and the role of women in pre-capitalist and capitalist societies.

Although the instructor will lecture the first week and give mini-lectures to introduce materials, this is not a lecture course. We will spend class time discussing texts. For this reason, attendance is mandatory; you have two absences after add-drop before your grade is docked; all absences, except dire health problems with a doctor's excuse, count against those two. There are two requirements for the course: participation in discussions (each student will turn in a log of their participation after each class) and a 10-15 (3,500 to 4,500 word) page term paper. The paper will test a proposition or idea found in the readings. You can choose any area or time period from the medieval era to the present. The paper can take one of two forms: reading and analysis of a small set of secondary sources (e.g. E. P. Thompson and his critics on the English working class; the fate of Marxist interpretations of the French Revolution) or a testing of such a proposition using a small body of primary sources (e.g. Was Marx right about the American Civil War?)

Books for Course:

John Towes, ed., *Communist Manifesto by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels with Related Documents*

Marx Karl, *Precapitalist Economic Formations*. Eric J. Hobsbawm, ed. (1965) ISBN 0-7178-0165-9

Barbara Ehrenreich, *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America*. 0805063897

All other assignments either at online library sites or class handouts.

Why Should We Care About Marx and Marxist History?

Jan 7 Lecture: Who was Marx and why should we pay attention to him?

Jan 12 Lecture: Marxist language and terms. Reading: Marx, *Manifesto*, 1-59

Jan 14 Structure and structural determination. Reading: Marx, *Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon*, ch. 1, <http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1852/18th-brumaire/ch01.htm>; E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, 9-13

Marx the Revolutionary and Marx on Political Revolutions

Jan 19 Reading: Marx, *Manifesto*, 63-85, 132-36; 150th Anniversary Responses to the *Manifesto*; Schumpeter, *Capitalism*, chap. I-II. **Topic paragraph, 150 words due.**

Jan 21 Reading: Marx, *Manifesto*, 85-96, 99-104, 110-23, 150-51

Jan 26 **One-two page (400 word) precis of term paper, with attached sources due. No regular class. Student conferences on term papers throughout that day.**

Jan 28 Paris Commune of 1870-71. Reading: Marx, *Civil War In France*, chaps 3-5 <http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1871/civil-war-france/ch03.htm>, [chap04html](http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1871/civil-war-france/chap04html), and [chap05html](http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1871/civil-war-france/chap05html)

Feb 2 Newer interpretations: Thomas, R., "Enigmatic Writings: Karl Marx's the Civil War in France and the Paris Commune of 1871," *History of Political Thought* 1997 18(3): 483-511 (at Ingenta database).

Transition from Feudalism to Capitalism

Feb 4 Reading: Marx, *Precapitalist Economic Formations*, 9-38 and 67-99

Feb 9 Reading: Marx, *Precapitalist Economic Formations*, pp. 100-20 and 39-66; *Manifesto*, 154-63

- Feb 11 Reading: Marx, *Capital*, vol. 1: chaps 26-28, at marxists.org.
- Feb 16 Reading: Marx, *Capital*, vol. 1: chaps. 29-32 at marxists.org
- Feb 18 E. P. Thompson, "The Moral Economy of the English Crowd in the Eighteenth Century," *Past & Present* 1971 50: 76-136 (JSTOR).
- Feb 23 Marx, *Capital*, vol. 1: chap. 33; Winifred B. Rothenberg, "The Market and Massachusetts Farmers, 1750-1855," *Journal of Economic History* 41(1981): 283-314 (JSTOR).
- Feb 25 Michael Merrill, "Putting 'Capitalism' in its Place: A Review of Recent Literature," *William and Mary Quarterly* 1995 52(2): 315-326, and Richard Lyman Bushman, "Markets and Composite Farms in Early America," *ibid* 1998 55(3): 351-374, both at JSTOR

Industrial Capitalism

- March 2 Reading: Marx, *Capital*, 1: chap. 10 at marxists.org
- March 4 ***No class meetings; individual meetings with students on papers.***
- March 16 Reading: E. P. Thompson, "Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism," *Past & Present* 1967 (38): 56-97 (JSTOR).
- March 18 Reading: Marx, *Capital*, 1: chap. 14, at marxists.org.
- March 23 Reading: Marx, *Capital*, 1: chap. 15, parts 1-4, at marxists.org.
- March 25 Reading: Marx, *Capital*, 1: chap. 15, parts 5-8, at marxists.org.
- March 30 Reading: Herbert G. Gutman, "Work, Culture, and Society in Industrializing America, 1815-1919," *American Historical Review*, 78 (1973): 531-88, JSTOR. ***Four page (1200+ word) segment of term paper due.***
- April 1 ***No class meetings; individual meetings with students on papers.***

Economic Crises of Capitalism

- April 6 Marx and 19th Century Economic Crisis. Reading: Marx, "Reflections on Money," 1851; *Capital*, vol 3, chap. 29, both at Marxists.org; Stuart Easterling, "Marx's theory of economic crisis," *International Socialist Review* #32 (2003), http://www.isreview.org/issues/32/crisis_theory.shtml
- April 8 Schumpeter on 20th Century Economic Crisis. Reading: Schumpeter, *Capitalism*, part II, prologue and chaps. 7-8. ***Rough Draft of Essays Due.***
- April 13 Reading: Ehrenreich, *Nickel and Dimed*
- April 15 Marx & the current financial crisis. Reading: Bryce Edwards, " Did Marx predict the current economic crisis?" <http://liberation.typepad.com/liberation/2009/01/did-marx-predict-the-current-economic-crisis.html>; Rick Wolff, "Capitalist Crisis, Marx's Shadow," <http://www.monthlyreview.org/mrzine/wolff260908.html>
- April 20 Minsky & the current crisis. Reading: Hyman P. Minsky, "Securitization," http://www.levy.org/pubs/pn_08_2.pdf; Stephen Mihm, "Why capitalism fails,," *Boston Globe*, Sept. 13, 2009, http://www.boston.com/bostonglobe/ideas/articles/2009/09/13/why_capitalism_fails?mode=PF
- April 22 ***No class meeting; final drafts of essays due at 5 PM via email. Instructor will be available for final consultations.***
- April 27 Short presentations of term papers