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MARX'S *CAPITAL* AND ITS READERS, I

Political Science 44501, Winter Quarter 2018
Thursdays, 9:30am–12:20pm, Pick 506

This is the first part of a two-quarter graduate seminar on Marx's *Capital*, volume 1, and on how some twentieth-century and contemporary readers have interpreted and responded to Marx's work. In the first quarter of the seminar, we will read and discuss volume 1 of *Capital* in five large chunks, accompanied by major portions of David Harvey's *Companion to Marx's Capital*, as well as briefer pieces that are focused on relatively specific topics (e.g. value, abstraction, exploitation, free and unfree labor, class-formation, the history of capitalism, and the relationship of capitalism to racial domination). In the second quarter of the seminar, we will read several longer interpretations of *Capital*, which are likely to include (much of) Althusser et al., *Reading Capital*; Moishe Postone's *Time, Labor, and Social Domination*; William Clare Roberts's *Marx's Inferno*; and Fredric Jameson's *Representing Capital*. The seminar has been designed so that students may take either quarter or both, depending on their interest and on the availability of places; but priority for the second part may be given to students who have already taken the first part and wish to continue.

TEXTS: The primary texts for this quarter are Karl Marx, *Capital, Volume One*, translated by Ben Fowkes (Penguin or Vintage), and David Harvey, *A Companion to Marx's Capital*, which have been ordered at the Seminary Co-op. Please use this edition of *Capital* (and not the Kindle version!) so that we can literally all be on the same page. *All other readings will be available through the course's Canvas site.*

GRADES AND WRITING ASSIGNMENTS: Your grade for the seminar will be based on a seminar paper of 15–20 pages, on a topic of your choice, approved in advance by me. Papers are due March 14, unless you have made prior arrangements for an incomplete. Students who take both quarters of the seminar may, if they wish, submit a single, longer research paper of article length (25–35 pages) in the Spring and receive the grade for both quarters at that time.

THE QUESTION CONCERNING TECHNOLOGY: You're welcome to use a laptop or tablet *to access course materials or to take notes* during the seminar, although recent studies suggest that doing so may be hazardous to your education and the education of those around you. In any case, please do not use these devices for any other purpose, including "research," in the seminar; if you fear you won't be able to resist, please disable your wireless connections. Also, please fully silence cell phones while in class.

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WEEKLY MEETINGS AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

1: January 4. Introductory session (no reading)

2: January 11. "Commodities and Money"

Marx, *Capital* 1, chapters 1–3 (89–120, 125–244).

3: January 18. Labor, Value, and Abstraction

David Harvey, *Companion*, 15–83.

G. E. Cohen, “The Labor Theory of Value and the Concept of Exploitation,” *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 8, 4 (Summer 1979): 338–60.

Diane Elson, “The Value Theory of Labour,” in *Value: The Representation of Labour in Capitalism*, 115–80.

Alfred Sohn-Rethel, *Intellectual and Manual Labor*, excerpts TBA.

4: January 25. “The Hidden Abode of Production”

Marx, *Capital* 1, chapters 4–11 (247–426).

5: February 1. The Exploitation of Labor

David Harvey, *Companion*, 85–162.

G. E. Cohen, “The Structure of Proletarian Unfreedom,” in Roemer, ed., *Analytical Marxism*, 237–59.

Selma James, “Marx and Feminism,” in *Sex, Race, and Class*, 143–60.

Edward Baptist, “Toward a Political Economy of Slave Labor,” in Sven Beckert and Seth Rockman, *Slavery’s Capitalism*, 31–61.

6: February 8. “The Struggle between Worker and Machine”

Marx, *Capital* 1, chaps. 12–15 (429–639).

David Harvey, *Companion*, 189–235.

7: February 15. “The Process of the Accumulation of Capital”

Marx, *Capital* 1, chaps. 16–25 (643–870).

8. February 22. Capital, Labor, and Class

David Harvey, *Companion*, 237–287.

Harry Braverman, “The Structure of the Working Class and its Reserve Armies,” in *Labor and Monopoly Capital*, 261–78.

Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, “Metamorphoses of the Composition of Capital” and “Class Struggle from Crisis to Exodus,” in *Commonwealth*, 131–64.

Kathi Weeks, “Working Demands: From Wages for Housework to Basic Income,” in *The Problem with Work*, 113–50.

Wendy Brown, “Educating Human Capital,” in *Undoing the Demos*, 175–200.

Annie McClanahan, “Becoming Non-Economic: Human Capital Theory and Wendy Brown’s *Undoing the Demos*,” *Theory & Event* 20, no. 2 (April 2017): 510–19.

9. March 1. “So-Called Primitive Accumulation”

Marx, *Capital* 1, chaps. 26–33 (873–940).

David Harvey, *Companion*, 289–313.

Ellen Meiksins Wood, “Marxist Debates” and “Marxist Alternatives,” in *The Origin of Capitalism: A Longer View*, 35–70.

10: March 8. Capitalism, Violence, and Race

Walter Johnson, "The Pedestal and the Veil: Rethinking the Capitalism/Slavery Question," *Journal of the Early Republic* 24, 2 (Summer 2004): 299–308.

Nancy Fraser, "Behind Marx's Hidden Abode," *New Left Review* 86 (March–April 2014): 55–72.

Michael Dawson, "Hidden in Plain Sight: A Note on Legitimation Crises and the Racial Order," *Critical Historical Studies* 3, 1 (Spring 2016): 143–61.

Nancy Fraser, "Expropriation and Exploitation in Racialized Capitalism: A Reply to Michael Dawson," *Critical Historical Studies* 3, 1 (Spring 2016): 163–78.

Nikhil Pal Singh, "On Race, Violence, and So-Called Primitive Accumulation," *Social Text* 34, 3 (September 2016): 27–50.

Onur Ulas Ince, "Between Equal Rights: Primitive Accumulation and Capital's Violence" (2017).

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