

RC SOCIAL SCIENCE 302: SOCIAL SCIENCE THEORY II

Contemporary Social and Cultural Theory

Professor Tom Weisskopf

Winter 2010

DESCRIPTION

This course provides students with the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the work of prominent interdisciplinary social scientists who have tackled important issues facing the contemporary world. These scholars, most of whose work has been published over the past half century, are all highly original thinkers who have contributed greatly to the advancement of social and cultural theory as well as to the understanding of the world we live in. Each of them, in varying ways, draws on and builds on several different social science disciplines to develop their own distinctive and influential approach to such issues as the nature and desirability of capitalism and “the market;” the social goals of equality, justice, freedom, democracy and community; the rise and decline of nations and societies; and the sources of social change.

READING LIST

Course reading assignments are listed by general topic area, and by week, on the following pages. All readings are required except for those marked by an asterisk, which are recommended. Because it would be prohibitively expensive to make the reading materials available via course-packs, I am planning to make all of the readings available on-line at the course CTools website (under Resources/Required Readings or Resources/Recommended Readings). I will ask each student to take responsibility for some of the book-page scanning needed to digitize the required readings. I will take responsibility for digitizing the recommended readings.

The required readings will be drawn from the following books, listed under two broad headings.

1. Capitalism, the Market, and the Goals of a Good Society

Rebecca Blank and William McGurn, *Is the Market Moral?* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2004).

Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2001 edition).

Milton Friedman, *Capitalism and Freedom* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962).

Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom* (New York: Knopf, 1989).

Robert Dahl, *On Political Equality* (Yale University Press, 2006).

Joseph Stiglitz, *Making Globalization Work* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2007).

Herman Daly, *Beyond Growth* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1996).

2. Individuals, Groups and Society: Self-interest & Social Commitment

Mancur Olson, *The Rise and Decline of Nations* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982).

Albert Hirschman, *Exit, Voice and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations, and States* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1970).

Robert Frank, *Passions Within Reason; The Strategic Role of the Emotions* (New York: W.W. Norton, 1988).

Glenn Loury, *The Anatomy of Racial Inequality* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002).

Nancy Folbre, *The Invisible Heart: Economics and Family Values* (New York: The New Press, 2001).

Robert Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000).

All of these books will be available at the Shapiro Undergraduate Library, and they can be bought on-line. I urge you to consider buying copies of the ones you find most interesting.

1. Capitalism, the Market, and the Goals of a Good Society

Jan. 7 **Introduction**

Jan. 12-14 **Rebecca Blank and William McGurn, *Is the Market Moral?***

Blank: pp. 11-56, 91-101, 111-128 (75 pages)

McGurn: pp. 57-90, 102-110, 129-144 (59 pages)

*Goodwin, Weisskopf et al., "Markets, Politics and the State" (19 pages)

Jan. 19-21 **Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation***

Foreword by Joseph Stiglitz: pp. vii-xvii (11 pages)

Introduction by Fred Block; pp. xviii-xxxviii (21 pages)

Chs. 6-7, 11-12, 14-17, 21; pp. 71-89, 136-57, 171-217, 257-268 (95 pages)

Jan. 26-28 **Milton Friedman, *Capitalism and Freedom***

Introduction and chs. 1-2, 6-7, 10-12: pp. 1-36, 85-118, 161-195 (105 pages)

*Samuel Bowles, "What Do Markets Do?," *Challenge* (July-Aug. 1991), pp. 11-16 (6 pages)

Feb. 2-4 **Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom***

Introduction, chs. 1-2, 4-6, 8; pp. 3-53, 87-159, 189-203 (139 pages)

Feb. 9-11 **Robert Dahl, *On Political Equality***

Chs. 1-7; pp. 1-120 (120 pages)

Feb. 16-18 **Joseph Stiglitz, *Making Globalization Work***

Chs. 1-2, 3, 6-7, 10; pp. 3-59, 61-74, 81-90, 97-101, 161-210, 269-292 (158 pages)

Feb. 23-25 **Herman Daly, *Beyond Growth***

Introduction, Parts I, V, VII; pp. 1-23, 27-70, 143-167, 201-224 (116 pages)

2. Individuals, Groups and Society: Self-interest & Social Commitment

March 9-11 **Mancur Olson, *The Rise and Decline of Nations***

Chs. 2-3, 4, 6, pp. 17-74, 75-117, 146-180 (136 pages)

March 16-18 **Albert Hirschman, *Exit, Voice and Loyalty***

Chs. 1(part), 2-9; pp. 1-5, 21-129 (114 pages)

*Albert Hirschman, "Exit and Voice: An Expanding Sphere of Influence,"
ch. 4 in *Rival Views of Market Society and Other Recent Essays* (Viking 1986),
pp. 77-101 (25 pages)

March 23-25 **Robert Frank, *Passions Within Reason***

Chs. 1-3, 9-12; pp. 1-70, 163-236, 253-259 (151 pages)

Ma. 30-Apr. 1 **Glenn Loury, *The Anatomy of Racial Inequality***

Chs. 1, 2 (pp. 17-23 only), 3-5; pp. 1-13, 17-23, 55-169 (129 pages)
[Also skim the Appendix tables, pp. 175-204.]

April 6-8 **Nancy Folbre, *The Invisible Heart***

Introduction, chs. 1-5, 8; pp. xi-xx, 1-135, 185-208 (169 pages)

April 13-15 **Robert Putnam, *Bowling Alone***

Chs. 1, 2-3, 8, 9(part), 10, 15, 16-17, 21-22, 24: pp. 15-28, 31-64, 134-147, 169-180, 183-88, 277-84, 287-306, 336-363, 402-14 (151 pages)

*Robert Putnam, "Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital,"
Journal of Democracy 6.1 (1995), p. 65-78 (14 pages)

April 20 **Conclusion**