

HARVARD UNIVERSITY
FALL 2014

Sociology 26

Introduction to Global Social Change

Tuesdays and Thursdays 12:00–1:00
Pound Hall 201

Instructor: Rachel Meyer

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course explores the development of global capitalism with a focus on changing relationships between markets, states, and civil societies. Questions of power and inequality will be central to our approach, as will various forms of resistance to globalization. We will begin from a macro political economy perspective, exploring global social change through the lens of world-system theory, neoliberalism, deindustrialization, and ‘flexible accumulation.’ We will then turn to globalization “on the ground” in a variety of local contexts—from Seattle to Chiapas, Pittsburgh to Porto Alegre and beyond. How are social relations shaped in the global north and south in the context of global capitalist development? How can we understand the relationship between global capitalism and democracy? And how can we conceptualize the different forms of resistance to globalization and their significance? Throughout the course we explore the possibilities for and limitations of global social change through a variety of cases of both transnational and community-based activism. We will consider mobilizations of workers and students and the global justice movement. The course ends with a discussion of Internet activism, social media, and the Arab Spring.

As an introduction to sociology this course explores stability as well as conflict and change; it examines both social structure and resistance to inequality. The course demonstrates the strengths of sociology's interdisciplinary perspective with its attention to economics, politics, history, and culture. Students will explore sociological approaches at multiple levels of analysis, from macro structures to micro interactions. Through considering the topic of global social change, students will be exposed to sociology's rich and fruitful analytical lens for understanding social relations at local, national, and international scales.

REQUIREMENTS

Students are expected to do each week's readings in advance of class, and to attend each lecture and section meeting. Your attendance and participation, and your level of engagement with the readings, are crucial to the quality of your experience as well as your success in the course. There are six major components of the course, all of which are required:

- 1) Participation and Attendance in Lecture
- 2) Participation and Attendance in Section
- 3) Analytical Questions on the Course Readings (6 submissions)
- 4) Unit 1 Paper (6-7 pages) – DUE FRIDAY OCTOBER 3RD AT 5:00 PM
- 5) Unit 2 Paper (6-7 pages) – DUE FRIDAY OCTOBER 31ST AT 5:00 PM
- 6) Final Paper (7-9 pages) – DUE TUESDAY DECEMBER 9TH AT 5:00 PM

There may be additional exercises or assignments throughout the course.

Final grades will be determined as follows:

- Participation and Attendance in Lecture: 5%
- Participation and Attendance in Section: 10%
- Analytical Questions on the Course Readings: 5%
- Unit 1 Paper: 25%
- Unit 2 Paper: 25%
- Final Paper: 30%

Participation: Sections will be run in a discussion format, and lectures will include discussion as well. Please come prepared to discuss the readings, lectures, assignments, and your own analytical questions. **The quality of your contribution**

and the level of your engagement with course material is crucial to the evaluation of your participation. Being able to listen closely, respect the perspectives of your peers, and refrain from dominating discussion is as important as speaking in class and contributing directly to the conversation.

Attendance: To ensure that your attendance is accounted for there will be a sign in sheet every lecture. Please make sure to sign in each time. Attendance will be taken beginning the second week of the course. Absences from lecture and section will be excused for medical reasons or for religious observance. In these cases you must email the TF in advance unless there is a medical emergency, in which case you should contact them within 24 hours. Other than excused absences you can miss lecture two times without penalty and you can miss section once without penalty. Please be aware, however, that your attendance has everything to do with your success on course papers, and so there is a strong incentive to attend all lectures and sections.

Analytical Questions on the Course Readings: You will submit an analytical question on the course readings for two weeks of each unit—which will amount to submitting questions six times. On a week that you choose to submit a question you will do so via email, copied to both the instructor (meyer2@fas.harvard.edu) and the TF (cassandrarobertson@fas.harvard.edu) (subject line: global social change question). Questions are due at 9:00 PM on Monday evenings before lecture. (The only exception to this is the first week of class, when you would submit them on Wednesday evening by 9:00 PM.) These questions should demonstrate a critical engagement with the material. Focus on something you find particularly interesting, enlightening, or troubling about the reading. Perhaps you discover a contradiction, or there is something that you find confusing. You may relate the readings to other material that has been covered in class or to something you observed in your everyday life. You can give some context or offer some framing for your question, but please attempt to keep questions short and to the point. (They should not exceed one paragraph.) While some great questions may emerge from a deep reading of a single text, many of the best questions will aim to treat multiple readings and their relationship to each other. **Please bring your analytical questions to class, and be prepared to share and discuss them.**

Grading System and Standards: The course will follow the grading system for Harvard College. The complete Harvard College grading system can be found online in the *Handbook for Students* and on the course website, but please make sure to review the following, which will be adhered to:

A, A– Earned by work whose excellent quality indicates a full mastery of the subject and, in the case of the grade of A, is of extraordinary distinction.

B+, B, B- Earned by work that indicates a good comprehension of the course material, a good command of the skills needed to work with the course material, and the student's full engagement with the course requirements and activities.

C+, C, C- Earned by work that indicates an adequate and satisfactory comprehension of the course material and the skills needed to work with the course material and that indicates the student has met the basic requirements for completing assigned work and participating in class activities.

D+, D, D- Earned by work that is unsatisfactory but that indicates some minimal command of the course materials and some minimal participation in class activities that is worthy of course credit toward the degree.

E Earned by work which is unsatisfactory and unworthy of course credit towards the degree.

If you have any problems—understanding the material, completing assignments, attendance, etc.—contact the teaching fellow or instructor as soon as possible. If we know about problems ahead of time we will be better able to solve them.

The Sociology Department's Departmental Writing Fellow is available to meet with students to discuss their papers. Please also remember that the Harvard College Writing Center is available to assist in any stage of the writing process. Information about both can be found online.

COURSE POLICIES

Late Policy for Papers: One partial grade will be deducted from papers that are turned in late (for example, an A- paper would be given a B+). Another partial grade will be taken off for each additional day that the paper is late. Extensions can be given in the case of medical emergency or religious observance. **All requests for extensions should go directly to the professor and must be made in advance of the relevant deadline (if at all possible).**

Electronic Devices: Students are not permitted to use electronic devices—including laptops, tablets, or cell phones—during either lecture or section. Violation of this policy will strongly affect your participation grade due to the pedagogical importance of the policy and out of fairness to your fellow students.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND COLLABORATION

Discussion and the exchange of ideas are essential to academic work. For assignments in this course you are encouraged to consult with your classmates on the choice of paper topics and to share sources. You may find it useful to discuss your chosen topic with your peers, particularly if you are working on the same topic as a classmate. However, you should ensure that any written work you submit for evaluation is the result of your own research and writing and that it reflects your own approach to the topic. You must also adhere to standard citation practice in this discipline and properly cite any books, articles, websites, lectures, etc. that have helped you with your work. If you received any help with your writing (feedback on drafts, etc.), you must also acknowledge this assistance.

READINGS

All readings are required, and it is expected that each week's readings will be completed before Tuesday's lecture. The readings are a crucial part of the course, and they are essential to your learning and success in the class. All readings will be available on the course website. Additional readings may be assigned.

SCHEDULE

UNIT 1: GLOBAL CAPITALISM

WEEK 1 (SEPTEMBER 2 & 4) – COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE VS. WORLD-SYSTEM THEORY

Baumol, William J. and Alan S. Blinder. 2009. *Economics: Principles and Policy* (11th ed.). Mason, OH: South-Western Cengage Learning. (Pp. 724-728, 731-732, selections from Chapter 34: "International Trade and Comparative Advantage")

J. Timmons Roberts and Amy Bellone Hite. 2007. "Dependency and Beyond: Introduction." Pp. 71-75 in *The Globalization and Development Reader*, edited by J. Timmons Roberts and Amy Bellone Hite. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Wallerstein, Immanuel. 1974. *The Modern World-System: Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century*. New York: Academic Press. (chapter 7)

Wallerstein, Immanuel. 2007. "The Rise and Future Demise of the World Capitalist System: Concepts for Comparative Analysis (1979)." Pp. 103-113 in *The Globalization and Development Reader*, edited by J. Timmons Roberts and Amy Bellone Hite. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

WEEK 2 (SEPTEMBER 9 & 11) – CIVIL SOCIETY AND DEMOCRACY

Polanyi, Karl. 2001 [1944]. *The Great Transformation: the Political and Economic Origins of Our Time*. Boston: Beacon Press. (pp. xxii-xxxviii from introduction by Fred Block, pp. 146-7, 154-7)

Somers, Margaret. 2008. *Genealogies of Citizenship: Markets, Statelessness, and the Right to Have Rights*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (pp. 1-5, 48-49)

Stiglitz, Joseph E. 2003. *Globalization and Its Discontents*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company. (chapters 1, 2 & 3)

WEEK 3 (SEPTEMBER 16 & 18) – FLEXIBLE ACCUMULATION, DE-INDUSTRIALIZATION AND THE GREAT U-TURN

Harvey, David. 1990. *The Condition of Postmodernity*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell. (chapters 9 & 10)

Harrison, Bennett and Barry Bluestone. 1988. *The Great U-Turn: Corporate Restructuring and the Polarizing of America*. New York: Basic Books. (preface, selections from chapters 1 & 2)

WEEK 4 (SEPTEMBER 23 & 25) – GLOBAL LABOR AND LABOR MOVEMENTS

Silver, Beverly. 2003. *Forces of Labor: Workers' Movements and Globalization since 1870*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. (pp. 1-25 & chapter 2)

Bonacich, Edna and Jake B. Wilson. 2008. *Getting the Goods: Ports, Labor, and the Logistics Revolution*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press. (selections from chapter 1 & pp.244-249)

UNIT 2: GLOBALIZATION ON THE GROUND

WEEK 5 (SEPTEMBER 30 & OCTOBER 2) – POST-MODERNITY

****UNIT 1 PAPER DUE: FRIDAY OCTOBER 3RD AT 5:00****

Roy, Ananya. 2009. "The 21st-Century Metropolis: New Geographies of Theory." *Regional Studies* 43(6):819-830. (read selections from pp. 820-821, 824-829).

Ong, Aihwa. 1991. "The Gender and Labor Politics of Postmodernity." *Annual Review of Anthropology* 20:279-309. (read pp. 279-284, 295-296, 304-305)

Castells, Manuel. 1997. *The Information Age, vol. 2: The Power of Identity*. Oxford: Blackwell. (pp. 1-2, 6-12, 60-67)

Cowie, Jefferson. 1999. *Capital Moves: RCA's Seventy-Year Quest for Cheap Labor*. New York: The New Press. (introduction & pp. 176-179)

WEEK 6 (OCTOBER 7 & 9) – LOCAL CONTEXTS

Taussig, Michael. 1977. "The Genesis of Capitalism amongst a South American Peasantry: Devil's Labor and the Baptism of Money." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 19(2):130-155. (read pp. 130-137)

Ong, Aihwa. 1987. *Spirits of Resistance and Capitalist Discipline: Factory Women in Malaysia*. Albany: SUNY Press. (pp. 201-213)

Ferguson, James, with Larry Lohmann. 1994. "The Anti-Politics Machine: 'Development' and Bureaucratic Power in Lesotho." *The Ecologist* 24(5):176-181.

Portes, Alejandro. 2000. "Globalization from Below: The Rise of Transnational Communities." Pp. 253-270 in *The Ends of Globalization: Bringing Society Back In*, edited by Don Kalb, Marco van der Land, Richard Staring, Bart van Steenberghe, and Nico Wilterdink. Boulder: Rowman & Littlefield.

WEEK 7 (OCTOBER 14 & 16) – WOMEN WORKERS, PRECARIOUS WORKERS

Fuentes, Annette and Barbara Ehrenreich. 1983. *Women in the Global Factory*. Boston: South End Press. (selection)

- Salzinger, Leslie. 2003. *Genders in Production: Making Workers in Mexico's Global Factories*. Berkeley: University of California Press. (pp. 9-16, 26-29, 51-52, 64-70)
- Ong, Aihwa. 1987. *Spirits of Resistance and Capitalist Discipline: Factory Women in Malaysia*. Albany: SUNY Press. (pp. 195-201)
- Cowie, Jefferson. 1999. *Capital Moves: RCA's Seventy-Year Quest for Cheap Labor*. New York: The New Press. (pp. 155-159)
- Collins, Jane. 2003. *Threads: Gender, Labor, and Power in the Global Apparel Industry*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. (pp. 177-182)

WEEK 8 (OCTOBER 21 & 23) – EDUCATION AND STUDENT MOVEMENTS

- Rootes, Christopher A. 1980. "Student Radicalism: Politics of Moral Protest and Legitimation Problems of the Modern Capitalist State." *Theory and Society* 9(3):473-502. (read pp. 473-479)
- Adhikary, Rino Wiseman. 2012. "The World Bank's Shift Away from Neoliberal Ideology: Real or Rhetoric?" *Policy Futures in Education* 10(2):191-200.
- Bellei, Cristian and Christian Cabalin. 2013. "Chilean Student Movements: Sustained Struggle to Transform a Market-oriented Educational System." *Current Issues in Comparative Education* 15(2):108-123.
- Gill, Jungyun and James DeFronzo. 2009. "A Comparative Framework for the Analysis of International Student Movements." *Social Movement Studies* 8(3):203-224.

UNIT 3: RESISTING GLOBALIZATION

WEEK 9 (OCTOBER 28 & 30) – TRANSNATIONAL SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

****UNIT 2 PAPER DUE: FRIDAY OCTOBER 31ST AT 5:00****

- Munck, Ronaldo. 2007. *Globalization and Contestation: The New Great Counter-Movement*. New York: Routledge. (chapter 4)

Evans, Peter. 2000. "Fighting Marginalization with Transnational Networks: Counter-Hegemonic Globalization." *Contemporary Sociology* 29(1):230-241.

Khasnabish, Alex. 2008. *Zapatismo beyond Borders: New Imaginations of Political Possibility*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. (chapter 4)

WEEK 10 (NOVEMBER 4 & 6) – GLOBAL SOLIDARITY, GLOBAL DEMOCRACY

Khasnabish, Alex. 2008. *Zapatismo beyond Borders: New Imaginations of Political Possibility*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press. (pp. 214-232)

Cowie, Jefferson. 1999. *Capital Moves: RCA's Seventy-Year Quest for Cheap Labor*. New York: The New Press. (chapter 7 & pp. 202-205)

Smith, Jackie. 2008. *Social Movements for Global Democracy*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press. (chapter 10)

WEEK 11 (NOVEMBER 11 & 13) – CONTESTING PRIVATIZATION

Spronk, Susan. 2007. "Roots of Resistance to Urban Water Privatization in Bolivia: The 'New Working Class,' the Crisis of Neoliberalism, and Public Services." *International Labor and Working-Class History* 71:8-28.

Lopez, Steven. 2000. "Contesting the Global City: Pittsburgh's Public Service Unions Confront a Neoliberal Agenda." Pp. 268-298 in *Global Ethnography: Forces, Connections, and Imaginations in a Postmodern World*, edited by Michael Burawoy et al. Berkeley: University of California Press.

WEEK 12 (NOVEMBER 18 & 20) – INTERNET ACTIVISM AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Khondker, Habibul Haque. 2011. "Role of the New Media in the Arab Spring." *Globalizations* 8(5):675-679.

Howard, Philip N. and Muzammil M. Hussain. 2013. *Democracy's Fourth Wave? Digital Media and the Arab Spring*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. (chapter 1)

Johnston, Josee and Gordon Laxer. 2003. "Solidarity in the Age of Globalization: Lessons from the Anti-MAI and Zapatista Struggles." *Theory and Society* 32(1):39-91.

WEEK 13 (NOVEMBER 25) – WRAP UP: GLOBAL FINANCIAL CRISES AND POLICY-MAKING

Volcker, Paul A. 2000. "The Sea of Global Finance." Pp. 75-85 in *Global Capitalism*, edited by Will Hutton and Anthony Giddens. New York: The New Press.

NO CLASS THURSDAY NOVEMBER 27 - THANKSGIVING

WEEK 14 (DECEMBER 2) – CONCLUSIONS AND REVIEW

READING PERIOD

****FINAL PAPER DUE: TUESDAY, DECEMBER 9TH AT 5:00 PM****