

CONTESTING ECONOMIC INEQUALITY (LPOL 3007)

Spring 2016

Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays: 1.50–3.30 p.m.

Location: 63 Fifth Avenue, Room 312

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Introduction

This course examines the politics of inequality, particularly its socioeconomic dimension, in comparative interdisciplinary perspective. It addresses several fundamental questions: What is the significance of inequality? What are its causes and consequences? Why do disparities of power, wealth and status, and the relationship between these sources of stratification, vary across countries, regions and eras? What explains the varying relative tolerance of inequality in different societies? Finally, how have different societies sought to mitigate its ramifications historically and in recent years? In the first part of the course, we examine several intellectual approaches to the study of inequality. Part two surveys the rise, origins and variety of social welfare regimes in the advanced industrialized west and across the global South from the 1930s to the 1970s. In part three, we examine the causes, patterns and consequences of rising socioeconomic inequality from the 1980s to the present. Finally, part four analyses a range of contemporary political responses to these trends from state and society, ranging from Occupy Wall Street and Podemos in Spain to diverse rights campaigns and tribal Maoist insurgency in India, labour militancy and the campaign for a Basic Income Grant in South Africa, and participatory budgeting, Bolsa Familia and the Landless Workers Movement in Brazil.

Expectations, Requirements & Assessment

Classes on Tuesdays will primarily consist of a lecture. Classes on Thursdays will be devoted to discussion. The success of the course requires your active and informed participation. Being active means contributing your insights to and asking questions in class; being informed entails careful reading of the required material for each week before we meet.

Accordingly, attendance is worth 15% of your final grade. To promote discussion, you are required to circulate a post on the readings for each week (approximately 100-200 words), excluding Weeks 1 and 15. Your responses can include a question or set of questions and/or comments and reflections the readings might provoke. They should be posted on Canvas no later than 6.00 p.m. every Wednesday so that everyone can read the posts before we meet on each Thursday. Your weekly posts are worth 15% of the final grade.

In addition, you are required to complete the following two assignments:

1. A short mid-term paper (5 pages, double-spaced, 12-point font) on a topic from the first half of the course. I will distribute questions and guidelines for the paper on February 25. Your short paper, which is due on March 3, is worth 20% of your final grade.

2. A final take-home exam (10 pages, double-spaced, 12-point font), distributed on May 5, which seeks to evaluate your understanding of the entire course. The exam, worth 50% of your final grade, will be due on May 12.

Both assignments will be assessed for your comprehension of the material, clarity of writing and presentation of argument.

Course Materials:

There is a single required text for the course: David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007). You can purchase a good paperback copy through Amazon.com. The other readings will be available through Canvas: click on Modules.

University Policies and Resources

Please note the following policies, resources and procedures of the university:

Disabilities

In keeping with the University's policy of providing equal access for students with disabilities, any student with a disability who may need academic accommodations should contact the Office of Student Disability Services. Students requesting any accommodations should contact the Office directly: 79 5th Avenue, 5th floor. You may also access more information at <http://www.newschool.edu/student-services/disability/>.

Incompletes

A grade of Incomplete ("I") indicates that your instructor has granted you an extension to complete outstanding work for a course. The grade of Incomplete will not be assigned automatically. It will only be assigned at the request of the student by the last day of class. Incomplete grades cannot be granted for students who are graduating seniors.

If circumstances require you to request a grade of Incomplete—and the instructor approves your request—the terms of the Incomplete should be agreed upon in writing, using the "Request for a Grade of Incomplete" form (http://www.newschool.edu/forms/registrar_incomplete_grade.pdf). This ensures that both the student and the instructor understand the exact nature of the required work, the manner in which it is to be submitted, and the date by which it must be submitted.

Your instructor will determine the deadline for submission of outstanding work. Students with a grade of Incomplete who do not complete their work by the agreed-upon deadline will receive a grade of Withdrawal/Failure ("WF"). Students who complete outstanding work according to the terms of the Incomplete will receive a letter grade. (The "I" will be converted to a letter grade after your instructor submits a Change of Grade form on your behalf.)

Libraries

The New School Library offers frequent research workshops for students, the day, time, and location of which are posted to the Library webpage (<http://library.newschool.edu/events/>) each semester. The library also provides one-on-one support for students who in conducting research for a paper or project require additional assistance. Students can contact the library about scheduling a one-on-one appointment with a reference librarian at the following link: <http://library.newschool.edu/reference/request.php>.

Academic Honesty and Integrity

The New School views "academic honesty and integrity" as the duty of every member of an academic community to claim authorship for his or her own work and only for that work, and to

recognize the contributions of others accurately and completely. This obligation is fundamental to the integrity of intellectual debate, and creative and academic pursuits.

Academic honesty and integrity includes accurate use of quotations, as well as appropriate and explicit citation of sources in instances of paraphrasing and describing ideas, or reporting on research findings or any aspect of the work of others (including that of faculty members and other students). Academic dishonesty results from infractions of this “accurate use”. The standards of academic honesty and integrity, and citation of sources, apply to all forms of academic work, including submissions of drafts of final papers or projects.

All members of the University community are expected to conduct themselves in accord with the standards of academic honesty and integrity. Students are responsible for understanding the University’s policy on academic honesty and integrity and must make use of proper citations of sources for writing papers, creating, presenting, and performing their work, taking examinations, and doing research. Through syllabi, or in assignments, faculty members are responsible for informing students of policies with respect to the limits within which they may collaborate with, or seek help from, others. Individual divisions/programs may require their students to sign an Academic Integrity Statement declaring that they understand and agree to comply with this policy. The New School recognizes that the different nature of work across the schools of the University may require different procedures for citing sources and referring to the work of others. Particular academic procedures, however, are based in universal principles valid in all schools of The New School and institutions of higher education in general. This policy is not intended to interfere with the exercise of academic freedom and artistic expression.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

- cheating on examinations, either by copying another student’s work or by utilizing unauthorized materials
- using work of others as one’s own original work and submitting such work to the university or to scholarly journals, magazines, or similar publications
- submission of another students’ work obtained by theft or purchase as one’s own original work
- submission of work downloaded from paid or unpaid sources on the internet as one’s own original work, or including the information in a submitted work without proper citation
- submitting the same work for more than one course without the knowledge and explicit approval of all of the faculty members involved
- destruction or defacement of the work of others
- aiding or abetting any act of academic dishonesty
- any attempt to gain academic advantage by presenting misleading information, making deceptive statements or falsifying documents, including documents related to internships.

Further information on what constitutes plagiarism and the appeals process can be found at www.newschool.edu/WorkArea/DownloadAsset.aspx?id=81698.

Writing Center

Students are highly encouraged to take advantage of the university Writing Center, located at 65 5th Avenue, room 105. To make an appointment, send an e-mail to writingcenter@newschool.edu or call (212) 229-5121. For further information, visit: www.newschool.edu/admin/writingcenter/.

Schedule & Readings

Conceptions & Patterns

Week 1 (January 26 & 28): Conceptual issues and normative debates

- Erik Olin Wright, "Inequality," in idem, *Interrogating Inequality: essays on class analysis, socialism and Marxism* (London: Verso, 1994), pp. 21-31.
- Amartya Sen, "Development as capability expansion," in Sakiko Fukada-Parr and A.K. Shiva Kumar (eds), *Readings in Human Development* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 3-16.
- Naila Kabeer, "Connecting, extending, reversing: development from a gender perspective," in her *Reversed Realities: gender hierarchies in development thought* (New Delhi: Kali for Women, 1994), pp. 69-95.
- Paul Streeten, "Shifting fashions in development dialogue," in Sakiko Fukada-Parr and A.K. Shiva Kumar (eds), *Readings in Human Development* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 68-81.
- Albert O. Hirschman, "The changing tolerance of income inequality in the course of economic development," *World Development*, 1, 12 (December 1973): 29-36.

Week 2 (February 2 & 4): Macro historical trends

- Summary of *The Rise of the South: human progress in a diverse world—Human Development Report 2013* (United Nations Development Programme, 2013); available at <http://hdr.undp.org/en/2013-report>
- Deepak Nayyar, "The South in the world economy: past, present and future," *Human Development Report Office Occasional Paper 2013/01*, United Nations Development Programme, 16 pp.; available at http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdro_1301_nayyar.pdf
- Arjun Jayadev, Rahul Lahoti and Sanjay Reddy, "Who got what, then and now? A fifty year overview from the global consumption and income project," 8 May 2015, 39 pp.; available at http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2602268

The Emergence of Modern Welfare Regimes across the World

Week 3 (February 9 & 11): The emergence of the modern welfare state in Europe

- Gosta Esping-Andersen, *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), pp. 9-35.
- John D. Stephens, "Democratization and social policy development in the advanced capitalist societies," in Yusuf Bangura (ed.), *Democracy and Social Policy* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), pp. 33-61.
- Ann Shola Orloff, "Gender and the social rights of citizenship: the comparative analysis of gender relations and welfare states," *American Sociological Review*, 58, 3 (June 1993): 303-328.

Week 4 (February 16 & 18): America in comparative historical perspective

- Victoria C. Hattam, "Institutions and political change: working class formation in England and the United States, 1820-1896," *Politics & Society*, 20, 2 (June 1992): 133-166.
- Theda Skocpol, *Social Policy in the United States: future possibilities in historical perspective* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995), pp. 1-36.
- Jacob S. Hacker, *The Divided Welfare State: the battle over public and private benefits in the United States* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 5-27.

Week 5 (February 23 & 25): Social welfare regimes in the postcolonial South

- Geof Wood and Ian Gough, "A comparative welfare regime approach to global social policy," *World Development*, 34, 10 (2006): 1696-1712.
- Chris Pierson, "'Late industrializers' and the development of the welfare state," in Thandika Mkandawire (ed.), *Social Policy in a Development Context* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), pp. 215-245.
- Yusuf Bangura and Carl-Johan Hedberg, "Democracy and social policy development: introduction and overview," in Yusuf Bangura (ed.), *Democracy and Social Policy* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), pp. 1-32.

Note: Mid-term paper distributed February 25

The Neoliberal Challenge

Week 6 (March 1 & 3): The rise of neoliberalism

- David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 1-86.

Note: Mid-term paper due March 3

Week 7 (March 8 & 10): The neoliberal turn in Europe

- Paul Pierson, "The new politics of the welfare state," *World Politics*, 48, 2 (January 1996): 143-179.
- Herbert Kitschelt, "European social democracy between political economy and electoral competition," in Herbert Kitschelt, Peter Lange, Gary Marks and John D. Stephens (eds), *Continuity and Change in Contemporary Capitalism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), pp. 317-345.
- Gosta Esping-Andersen, *Social Foundations of Postindustrial Economies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 145-184.

Week 8 (March 15 & 17): The neoliberal turn in America

- Theda Skocpol, *Social Policy in the United States: future possibilities in historical perspective* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), pp. 209-227.

- Jacob S. Hacker, "Privatizing risk without privatizing the welfare state: the hidden politics of social policy retrenchment in the United States," *American Political Science Review*, 98, 2 (May 2004): 243-260.
- Jeffrey A. Winters and Benjamin I. Page, "Oligarchy in the United States?" *Perspectives on Politics*, 7, 4 (December 2009): 731-751.

*****Spring Break: March 21-25*****

Week 9 (March 29 & 31): The neoliberal turn in the global South

- David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 87-151.
- Richard Sandbrook, Marc Edelman, Patrick Heller and Judith Teichman, *Social Democracy in the Global Periphery: origins, challenges, prospects* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), pp. 3-34.
- Stephan Haggard and Robert Kaufman, *Development, Democracy and Welfare States: Latin America, East Asia and Eastern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp. 181-220.

Emerging Counter-Movements in the Twenty-First Century

Week 10 (April 5 & 7): Spain: Indignados to Podemos

- Stéphane Hessel, *Indignez-Vous!* English translation available at: <http://indignez-vous-indignacion.blogspot.com/p/english.html>
- Slavoj Žižek, "Shoplifters of the world unite," *London Review of Books*, 19 August 2011; available at: <http://www.lrb.co.uk/2011/08/19/slavoj-zizek/shoplifters-of-the-world-unite>
- Pablo Inglesias, "Understanding Podemos" and "Spain on edge," *New Left Review*, II, 93, (May-June 2015): 7-22 and 23-42.
- Dan Hancox, "Can they?" *London Review of Books*, 17 December 2015.

Indignados, a film by Tony Gatlif (2012)

Week 11 (April 12 & 14): America: Occupy Wall Street and the Obama presidency

- David Graeber, *The Democracy Project: a history, a crisis, a movement* (New York: Spiegel & Grau, 2013), pp. 3-149.
- Theda Skocpol and Lawrence R. Jacobs, "Reaching for a New Deal: ambitious governance, economic meltdown and polarized politics," in idem (eds), *Reaching for a New Deal: ambitious governance, economic meltdown and polarized politics in Obama's first two years* (New York: Russell Sage, 2011), pp. 1-49.
- Philip Mirowski, *Never Let a Serious Crisis Go to Waste: how neoliberalism survived the financial meltdown* (New York: Verso, 2014), pp. 325-358.

Inequality for All, a film by Robert Reich and Jacob Kornbluth (2014)

Week 12 (April 19 & 21): Brazil: Porto Alegre, Landless Workers and Bolsa Familia

- João Pedro Stedile, “Landless battalions,” *New Left Review*, II, 15 (May-June 2002): 77-104.
- Gianpaolo Baiocchi, Patrick Heller and Marcelo Kunrath Silva, “Making space for civil society: institutional reforms and local democracy in Brazil,” *Social Forces*, 86, 3 (March 2008): 1-26.
- Wendy Hunter and Natasha Borges Sugiyama, “Democracy and social policy in Brazil: advancing basic needs, preserving privileged interests,” *Latin American Politics & Society*, 51, 2 (Summer 2009): 29-58.

History did not end: landless workers movement, a documentary (director/year unknown), available at <http://www.visualab.org/index.php/history>

Week 13 (April 26 & 28): India: Maoism and the Right to Information, Work, Education, Food and Land

- “Maoist: Azad talks to Siddharth Varadarajan,” in Robin Jeffrey, Ronojoy Sen and Pratima Singh (eds), *More than Maoism: politics, policies and insurgencies in South Asia* (New Delhi: Manohar, 2012), pp. 361-394.
- Rob Jenkins, “Civil society versus corruption,” in Sumit Ganguly, Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner (eds), *The State of India’s Democracy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007), pp. 161-175.
- John Harriss, “How far have India’s economic reforms been guided by ‘compassion and justice’?” in Sanjay Ruparelia, Sanjay Reddy, John Harriss and Stuart Corbridge (eds), *Understanding India’s New Political Economy: a great transformation?* (London: Routledge, 2011), pp. 127-140.

Red Ant Dream, a documentary by Sanjay Kak (2013), available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cVvThDX4bbQ>

Week 14 (May 3 & 5): South Africa: COSATU and demands for a Basic Income Grant

- Jeremy Seekings, “Trade unions, social policy & class compromise in post-apartheid South Africa,” *Review of African Political Economy*, 31, 100 (June 2004): 299-312.
- Marius Pieterse, “Eating socioeconomic rights: the usefulness of rights talk in alleviating social hardship revisited,” *Human Rights Quarterly*, 29, 3 (August 2007): 796-822.
- James Ferguson, “The uses of neoliberalism,” *Antipode*, 41, S1 (2009): 166-184.

Week 15 (May 10 & 12): Reviewing the Course

*****Final take-home exam distributed on May 12—due on May 17*****