This quarter is “society.” Note the subtitle: “the social organization of capitalist production.” How, in the ongoing industrial revolution, has the social world been transformed by capitalism? How has capitalism reconfigured the experience of work, of time, of consumption? How do we make sense of this dizzyingly complex system of economic and social relations? The goal of the course is to understand, appreciate, and evaluate the canonical works of Adam Smith, Karl Marx, and Max Weber (and, consequently, the scholarly traditions they shaped) on these questions, rather than to adopt a particular perspective. The readings will often be difficult. Allot plenty of time to read and re-read them with care. While focused on primary texts, this course will also consider historical context and application—that is, relating these paradigmatic theoretical perspectives to other readings and to contemporary social and economic life.

**Grading:** 25% attendance and engagement 20% midterm essay 30% weekly Discussions postings (10@3%) 25% final essay

**Attendance and Engagement:** I expect you to attend and participate in all class meetings. An absence can be excused only if it is brought to my attention by email before class. Discussion, or at least active engagement, is central to learning. Take risks, be involved, join the fray! It’s safe, and good practice for life.

**Weekly Discussions:** At least three short (about 75-200 words) postings a week, and at least one for each set of readings. Either before or after class, but discussion ends on Friday at 5 p.m. I hope it’s not busy work but a way to engage the texts, pose and answer questions, admit confusion, explore ideas, make connections, and offer authentic (and civil) responses to readings and other posts. The goal is to create a space for reflection, exchange, and community. Also, it lets us know where you’re at. Revise your comments for clarity and quality, but postings, unlike essays, need not be formal and utterly free of typos. Weekly grading on quality and quantity (3=exceptional; 2.75=excellent; 2.5=good; etc.) with a one-point deduction for each missed post. Jump in and engage, and don’t worry about the grade. We’ll look at the full body of your work over the quarter. This is new, so it will evolve; help us make it work.

**Essays:** Two essays. First, a Smith-Marx comparative analysis and some open topics for the final essay. We will evaluate based on argumentation, evidence, and writing. Prompts and guidelines come later.

**Required Texts**
COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK 1

9/29 (Tu): Caught up in Schumpeter’s Gale
Broughton, “Just Another Factory Closing,” The Atlantic
Rec’d: Listen: NPR’s Planet Money T-Shirt Stories (Episodes 496-503, 20 min. each)

10/1 (Th): Adam Smith, Efficiency’s Revolution, and the Emerging Market Society
Canvas: Heilbroner, “Worldly Philosophers, Economic Revolution” (23 pages)
Adam Smith, Wealth of Nations
  Book I, Introduction/Plan of the Work (pp. xxiii-xxvi)
  Book I, Chapters I-III (pp. 3-23)
Canvas: Frederick W. Taylor, “Scientific Management” (11 pages)

WEEK 2

10/6 (Tu): Smith: Foundations of Economic Thinking
Canvas: Heilbroner, “Worldly Philosophers, Adam Smith” (32 pages)
Adam Smith, Wealth of Nations
  Book I, Chapters IV-V (pp. 24-43 bottom)
  Book I, Chapters VI-VII (pp. 53-72)
In-class film excerpts: “City of the Century,” slaughterhouse (15 min.)

10/8 (Th): Smith and the Origins of Classical Political Economy
Adam Smith, Wealth of Nations
  Book I, Chapters VIII (pp. 73-93; 94-99 rec’d)
  Book I, Conclusion (pp. 284-288)
  Book IV, Chapter IX (pp. 745-746)
  Book V, Chapter I (pp. 839-846)
  Conclusion (pp. 876-878)
In-class: Midterm paper assignment distributed

WEEK 3

10/13 (Tu): Marx the Radical Humanist: Early Writings
The Marx-Engels Reader
  “ Estranged Labor “ (pp. 70-81)
  “The Meaning of Human Requirements” (pp. 93-98)
Canvas: Terkel, “Working” (20 pages)
In-class film excerpt: “Modern Times” (15 min.)

10/15 (Th): Marx the Historian: A Dialectical Theory of Economic History
Canvas: Heilbroner, “Worldly Philosophers, Karl Marx” (pp. 136-154)
The Marx-Engels Reader
  “The German Ideology” (pp. 146-163, 172-174)
Canvas: Engels, “The Principles of Communism”
WEEK 4

10/20 (Tu): Marx the Political Revolutionary
The Marx-Engels Reader
“The Communist Manifesto” (pp. 469, 473-491, 499-500)
Canvas: Robert Michels, “Oligarchy” (17 pages)

10/22 (Th): Foundations of Capital: Value, Commodities, and Circuits
The Marx-Engels Reader
Capital, Volume I
Two-fold nature of commodities and labor (pp. 302-312)
Fetish of Commodities (pp. 319-329)
The General Formula for Capital (pp. 329-336)
Broughton, Boom, Bust, Exodus, Prologue
Canvas (rec’d): Heilbroner, “Worldly Philosophers, Karl Marx” (pp. 154-169)

WEEK 5

10/27 (Tu): Capital’s Contradictions: Large-scale Production, Machines, and Accumulation
The Marx-Engels Reader
Capital, Volume I (pp. 384-411; 411-417 rec’d)
In-class excerpt: “Inside the Chinese Apple Factory” (consider the parallels)

10/29 (Th): Overproduction, Overpopulation, Overconsumption
The Marx-Engels Reader
Capital, Volume I (pp. 422-438)
Grundrisse (pp. 291-292; 278-290 rec’d)
Canvas: Howard Becker, “Writing for Social Scientists”

10/30 (Fri): Due: Midterm essay by Midnight at Canvas

WEEK 6

11/3 (Tu): Max Weber: Considering the Relationship between Culture and Economy
Max Weber, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism
Introductions (pp. vii-xviii, xxviii-xxxix), Part I, Chapter 1-3 (pp. 3-50)
In-class: Final paper assignment distributed

11/5 (Th): Weber and Thompson: Internal Clocks and Spiritual Discipline
Max Weber, The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism
Part II, Chapter 4A, Calvinism (pp. 53-80)
Canvas: E.P. Thompson, “Time, Work-Discipline, and Industrial Capitalism” (long article)

11/6 (Fri): Midterms returned; perhaps watch “Dr. Strangelove” over the weekend for Thursday
WEEK 7

11/10 (Tu): Modernity, Bureaucracy, and a Culture of Rationality  
Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*  
Part II, Chapter 5 (pp. 102-125)  
**Canvas:** Max Weber, “Bureaucracy”

11/12 (Th): Modernity’s Cage: The Ethic of Obedience  
**Canvas:** *Modernity and the Holocaust*, Chps. 1 (30 pages) & 6 (17 pages)  
Watch at home: “Dr. Strangelove... Learned To Stop Worrying And Love The Bomb” (at Amazon)  
**In-class film excerpt:** “Obedience” (25 min.)

WEEK 8

11/17 (Tu): Rust Belt Layoffs and a Decade of Transitions  
Broughton, *Boom, Bust, Exodus*, Chps. 11, 14, 16  
NAFTA NOW, “Success Stories: Caterpillar”  
Watch at home: PBS, “Made in the USA”

11/19 (Th): The Industrial Border: The Rise of the *Maquila* and a New Urban Life  
Broughton, *Boom, Bust, Exodus*, Chps. 9, 12, 17 (Chps. 2, 5 rec’d)  
Watch at home: “Inside the Chinese Apple Factory” (consider the parallels)

WEEK 9

11/24 (Tu): ¡Tierra y Libertad! Land, Power, and the New North American Food System  
Broughton, *Boom, Bust, Exodus*, Chps. 7, 10, 15  
“Super Bowl success story: Mexico’s avocados,” *Christian Science Monitor*  
Watch at home: Vice, Season 3, “Crossing Mexico’s Other Border” (about 20 min.)  
**In-class film:** Vice, “The Zapatista Uprising (20 Years Later)” (about 20 min.)

11/26 (Th): Happy Thanksgiving!  
Rec’d before dinner! Los Angeles Times, “Product of Mexico” (four article, multimedia)  
Watch at home: Kenner, “Food Inc.” (at Netflix, Amazon Prime, iTunes)  
Or Sanjay Rawal, “Food Chains” (Netflix, available to rent elsewhere)

WEEK 10 and EXAM WEEK

12/1 (Tu): Open Discussion: Reflecting on Contemporary Possibilities, and the Quarter  
Tim Bajarin, “Why the Maker Movement Is Important to America’s Future,” *Time*  
**Due:** 2-3 min. pres. on a recent innovation related to producing or consuming

12/3 (Th): Extended Office Hours (TBA)

12/8 (Tu): **Due:** Midterm essay by Midnight at Canvas