

Carleton University
Summer 2010
Department of Political Science

PECO 5501/PSCI 5501/SOCI 5504
Issues in Political Economy
Contesting Neoliberal Globalization: From the Local to the Global
9:35 – 12:25 p.m. Mondays and Wednesdays
Southam Hall 315

Instructor: Jeffrey Ayres
Office: A816 Loeb
Office Hours: Tuesdays 9 a.m. -Noon
Phone: 520-2600 x7566
Email: jayres@connect.carleton.ca or jayres@smcvt.edu

Course Description:

This course focuses on the emergence and globalization of neoliberalism as a set of recently dominant market-driven economic policies, and the upsurge in contentious politics against it occurring at a plurality of political and spatial scales. We will study the origins, evolution and current trajectory of neoliberalism as the global capitalist economy staggers through the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. At the same time, we will consider a number of examples of resistance to neoliberalism, from the national to the grassroots and from the local to the global, from national campaigns by labour unions, grassroots organizing by peasants, localvore activism around food to transnational social movements for fair trade and against neoliberal global governance. We will consider in turn whether the current crisis marks the end of neoliberalism and what policies and paradigms might emerge to replace it.

This seminar will embrace a political economy framework that links contemporary political, economic and social trends through a critical focus on conflicts and struggles against the neoliberal status quo. This approach interrogates neoliberalism as it has impacted global institutions, transnational and local social movements, democratic practice and state sovereignty. We are especially interested in considering how neoliberalism has upended patterns of collective resistance and how the contradictory processes exacerbated by it present opportunities and challenges to those trying to discern if not shape a post-neoliberal future. The course goals include: 1) improving critical reading, research, writing and presentation skills; 2) deepening student interest and knowledge of the many challenges presented to policy-makers and activists in the neoliberal era, and; 3) developing the ability to work with political economy concepts to apply them to case studies of resistance.

Texts:

David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).
Jackie Smith, *Social Movements for Global Democracy* (Baltimore, MD: John's Hopkins University Press, 2008).

The remaining readings are available through the Carleton University library electronic index or a few will be supplied through email.

Course Format

This course is designed as a seminar, which encourages creative dialogue and the exchange of ideas with one another, all with the guidance of a professor. I do not intend to lecture at all, but instead I will strive to provide background material to frame the major themes set up for discussion and analysis for that class session. We are meeting normally twice a week for approximately three hours in each session, and I expect all of you to attend all sessions and to participate actively in the class. The course is framed around the readings and contemporary events, so it is essential that all of you read the material assigned before each class session. Following the first class session, students will lead discussions, present critical analyses of the readings (not boring summaries), and pose questions for the entire class from the readings for that day. Ordinarily, following a general discussion and introduction of the material for that class session, I will break up the class into small groups to discuss readings that we assign to those groups during the previous class session. During those small group sessions, those of you assigned to a particular article or chapter(s) will discuss the material and identify one person to serve as the presenter for your group of the material to the entire class.

Course Requirements:

Participation: 40%. Your participation grade will be broken down into three categories, including attendance, overall contribution to class discussion, and individual presentations.

Proposal/Bibliography: 10%. An outline of your research paper (three to five typed, double-spaced typed pages) including a preliminary bibliography is due on Wednesday, July 28th.

Please discuss your research topic with me early in the course. Please expect to present briefly your proposal to the rest of the class for discussion.

Research Paper: 50%. A research paper of approximately 20 typed, double-spaced typed pages (not including bibliography) will be due on Monday, August 16th. This assignment allows you to research a topic germane to evaluating responses to neoliberalism at different scales in depth. I will evaluate the research paper as to whether you a) demonstrate a command of material/ideas covered in the seminar; b) present a well-organized and critical analysis and c) organize your paper in a clear, concise and stylistically appealing manner, including proving proper referencing with an acceptable style. No extensions beyond the stated deadline will be granted, except in the case of a medically documented illness.

Course Outline

Part I: Origins, Evolution and Crisis in Neoliberalism

Week 1 (M/July 5): Course Introduction

(W/July 7): Neoliberalism: Origins

Readings: David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*,
Introduction-Chapter 4

Week 2 (M/July 12): Neoliberalism: Evolution

Readings: David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*,
Chapters 5-7

(W/July 14): Neoliberalism: Crisis?

Readings: Leo Panitch and Sam Gindin, "The Current Crisis: A
Socialist Perspective," *Studies in Political Economy*
(Spring 2009) 83, pp. 7-31.
Heikki Patomaki, "Neoliberalism and the Global Financial
Crisis," *New Political Science* (December 2009)
31/4, pp. 431-442.
Marcellus Andrews, "Burying Neoliberalism," *Dissent*
(Summer 2009) 56/3, pp. 57-62.
Jamie Peck, Nik Theodore and Neil Brenner,
"Postneoliberalism and its Malcontents," *Antipode*
(January 2010) Supplement 1/41, pp. 94-116.

Part II: Contesting Neoliberalism: Conceptually and from Different Scales

Week 3 (M/July 19): Conceptualizing a Plurality of Contestations

Frances Fox Piven and Richard Cloward, "Power
Repertoires and Globalization," *Politics and
Society* (September 2000) 28/3, pp. 413-430.
James Mittelman, "Globalization Debates: Bringing in
Microencounters," *Globalizations* (September
2004) 1/1, pp. 24-37.

Ronaldo Munck, "Globalization and Contestation: A Polanyian Problematic," *Globalizations* (June 2006) 3/2, pp. 175-186.

André Drainville, "Resistance to Globalisation: the View from the Periphery of the World Economy," *International Social Science Journal* (June 2008) 59/192, pp. 235-246.

(W/July 21): Neoliberalism's Varied North American Impacts

- Readings: Jeffrey Ayres, "Power Relations Under NAFTA: Reassessing the Efficacy of Contentious Transnationalism," *Studies in Political Economy* (Autumn 2004) 74, pp. 101-123.
- Stephen McBride and Kathleen McNutt, "Devolution and Neoliberalism in the Canadian Welfare State," *Global Social Policy* (August 2007) 7/2, pp. 177-201.
- Kendra Coulter, "Deep Neoliberal Integration: The Production of Third Way Politics in Ontario," *Studies in Political Economy* (Spring 2009) 83, pp. 191-208.
- Donna Baines, "Neoliberal Restructuring, Activism/Participation, and Social Unionism in the Nonprofit Social Services," *Nonprofit & Voluntary Sector Quarterly* (February 2010) 39/1, pp. 10-28.

Week 4

(M/July 26): Local Resistance Against Neoliberalism

- Readings: Amory Starr and Jason Adams, "Anti-Globalization: The Global Fight for Local Autonomy," *New Political Science* (2003) 25/1, pp. 19-42.
- Nadine Changfoot, "Local Activism and Neoliberalism: Performing Neoliberal Citizenship as Resistance," *Studies in Political Economy* (Autumn 2007) 80, pp. 129-149.
- Robin Hahnel, "Eco-localism: A Constructive Critique," *Capitalism, Nature, Socialism* (June 2007) 18/2, pp. 62-78.

Mike Geddes, "Building and Contesting Neoliberalism at the Local Level: Reflections on the Symposium and on Recent Experience in Bolivia," *International Journal of Urban & Regional Research* (March 2010) 34/1, pp. 163-173.

(W/July 28): Practicing Local Resistance through Food Sovereignty

- Readings: Eric Holt-Giménez, "From Food Crisis to Food Sovereignty," *Monthly Review* (July/August 2009) 61/3, pp. 142-156.
- Marie-Josée Massicotte, "La Via Campesina, Brazilian Peasants, and the Agribusiness Model of Agriculture: Towards an Alternative Model of Agrarian Democratic Governance," *Studies in Political Economy* (2010) 85, pp. 69-98.
- Josée Johnston, Andrew Biro, Norah MacKendrick, "Lost in the Supermarket: The Corporate-Organic Foodscape and the Struggle for Food Democracy," *Antipode* (June 2009) 41/3, pp. 509-532.
- Jeffrey Ayres and Michael Bosia, "Beyond Global Summitry: Food Sovereignty as Localized Resistance to Globalization," forthcoming in *Globalizations* (March 2011) 8/1.

***Research Paper Bibliography Due In Class**

Week 5 (W/August 4): Contesting Neoliberalism through Fair Trade?

- Readings: Gavin Fridell, "Fair-Trade Coffee and Commodity Fetishism: The Limits of Market-Driven Social Justice," *Historical Materialism* (2007) 15/4, pp. 79-104.
- Mara Fridell, "With Friends Like These: The Corporate Response to Fair Trade Coffee," *Review of Radical Political Economics* (2008) 40/1, pp. 8-34.

Noah Zerbe, "Exploring the Limits of Fair Trade: The Local Food Movement in the Context of Late Capitalism," Presented at the Western Political Science Association, San Francisco, April 2010.
Catherine Dolan, "In the Mists of Development: Fairtrade in Kenyan Tea Fields," *Globalizations* (June 2008) 5/2, pp. 305-318.

***No Class Monday, August 2: Civic Holiday**

Week 6 (M/August 9): Contesting Neoliberalism: From the Global I

Readings: Jackie Smith, *Social Movements for Global Democracy*, Chapters 1-6

(T/August 10): Contesting Neoliberalism: From the Global II

Readings: Jackie Smith, *Social Movements for Global Democracy*, Chapters 7-Conclusion

Part III: After Neoliberalism?

(W/August 11): Towards a Post-Neoliberal Future?

Readings: Peter Evans, "Is an Alternative Globalization Possible?" *Politics and Society* (June 2008) 36/2, pp. 271-305.
Neil Smith, "The Revolutionary Imperative," *Antipode* (January 2010) 41/Supplement 1, pp. 50-65.
Noel Castree, "Crisis, Continuity and Change: Neoliberalism, the Left and the Future of Capitalism," *Antipode* (March 2010) 41/Supplement 1, pp. 185-213.
Pascale Dufour and Janet Conway, "Emerging Visions of Another World? Tensions and Collaboration at the Quebec Social Forum," *Journal of World Systems Research* (2010) 16/1, pp. 29-47. Available at: http://jwsr.ucr.edu/archive/vol16/Dufour_Conway-vol16n1.pdf.

***Research Paper due on Monday, August 16 by 9 a.m. via Email**