This course will introduce students to the rapidly-developing scholarship on capitalism as a historically-specific and contingent system of economic organization. In “denaturalizing” capitalism, this scholarship has sought to embed markets in a wider range of social relations, cultural practices, and institutional arrangements. Historians of capitalism have fruitfully drawn on such methodologies as cultural and intellectual history to consider the process by which capitalism came to be understood as inevitable and timeless. Moreover, they have interwoven several discrete subfields—business history, labor history, economic history, political economy, and history of economic thought—into a new field of study. This course will explore both the foundational and new scholarship in the field. To cover five hundred years in the space of a semester will be ambitious, but will expose students to the central debates in the field and serve as a launching pad for the independent research projects that are the culminating assignment in the course.

Assessment

- One 6-8 page essay reviewing a book drawn from the course syllabus. Due by February 24. (10%)
- 8 weeks of contributions to the class bibliography, providing annotated citations for scholarship in a student’s particular national focus. (10%)
- A final 20-25 page review essay on a synthetic work on capitalism to be assessed in light of the semester’s readings OR a prospectus for a summer/fall research project in accordance with the current graduate writing requirement. Due no later than May 14. (60%)
- Active participation in weekly seminar meetings, with particular attention to contributions that advance conversation and encourage participation by others. (20%)

January 25: Towards a Critical Methodology


Andreas Langenohl, “In the Long Run We are all Dead: Imaginary Time in Financial Market Narratives,” *Cultural Critique* 70 (Fall 2008): 3-31

**February 1: Macrohistories**


**EARLY MODERN ORIGINS**

**February 8: The Early Modern Economy**


**February 15: Atlantic Slave Trade**


**February 22: Enlightenment Political Economy**


**THE INDUSTRIAL AGE**

**February 29: The Industrial Revolution**


**March 7: Institutional Regimes**


**March 14: The Imperial Reach**


March 21: The Corporation


Capitalism Triumphant

April 4: Consolidation and Crisis


April 11: The Liberal Global Order


April 18: Deindustrialization and Consumer Society

Spring 2012


**April 25: Finance and Shareholder Value**

