

## The History of American Capitalism

Can capitalism continue to coexist with American democracy?

<b>Course #</b>	19FHA
<b>Format:</b>	Seminar
<b>Moderator(s):</b>	Lawrence Ambs
<b>Co-Moderator:</b>	Kathy Campbell
<b>Date and Time:</b>	Tuesday, 9:30-11:30 10 weeks, starting September 24
<b>Location:</b>	UMass Transit Facility, Amherst
<b>Maximum number of participants:</b>	18
<b>Auditors accepted:</b>	Yes, up to 2

**Purpose:** America has always been associated with capitalism. We will examine the history of capitalism since the American Revolution, and how it has shaped, and been shaped by, the American democracy.

**Description:** Capitalism has had both promoters and critics in America. In this seminar we intend to examine the history of America from the perspective of capitalism and democracy. How is capitalism represented in the Constitution? How did Hamilton, Jefferson and Jackson influence capitalism in early America? How was capitalism transformed by the robber barons and the populist movement? By the New Deal and World War II? How has our democracy been affected by the neo-liberalism and financialization of recent decades?

American capitalism is not just an economic issue. It has impacted politics, labor unions, finance, women's and minority rights, slavery, and the governing institutions of our country. Can America reinvent capitalism yet again to be compatible with the new political realities of the 21<sup>st</sup> century?

**Role of participants:** Each seminar participant will investigate and report on some historical aspect of Capitalism in America. A list of potential topics will be available at the Spring Preview. The format will be individual seminar presentations followed by discussion.

**Resources:** Many library sources are available as well as internet resources. Three specific texts are

- 1) *Capitalism in America*; Alan Greenspan and Adrian Wooldridge; 2018
- 2) *American Capitalism – New Histories*; Edited by Sven Beckert and Christine Desan; 2018
- 3) *A Short History of American Capitalism*; Meyer Weinberg; 2003

**About the Moderators:** Larry has moderated many seminars on history and science. Kathy has been a member of LIR for 6 years and has moderated or co-moderated three seminars, including one on commons and another on Picketty's work.