

PHIL 190: CAPITALISM, SOCIALISM AND DEMOCRACY
SUMMER 2018

T Th 6:00-8:00
Prof. Brown

In this seminar we will consider the relation between economic theory and political theory, and we will focus on the way in which economic theory pertains to democracy. There are capitalist theorists who claim that Socialism is incompatible with Democracy and socialist theorists who claim that Capitalism is incompatible with Democracy. Democracy, Capitalism, and Socialism are not monolithic concepts, and we will examine different versions of each of these schools of thought. The tentative reading selection will begin with theories of Democracy by such thinkers as Joseph A. Schumpeter, John Dewey, Robert A. Dahl and Iris Marion Young. Are there any necessary conditions for a theory or a practice to qualify as democratic? What about equal access to political power? Equality in freedoms and equality of civil liberties? Equal opportunity? Does Democracy entail a just representation of voters in the legislative branch in order that there is a correlation between public opinion and policies? We will continue with theories of Capitalism by Adam Smith, Friedrich A Hayek, and Milton Freidman, and we will end with an examination of the socialist philosophies of Karl Marx, Erich Fromm, and Carol Pateman. We will appraise all these theories in terms of their claims concerning wealth, well-being, and their conduciveness to freedom, equality, and representation in political power.

