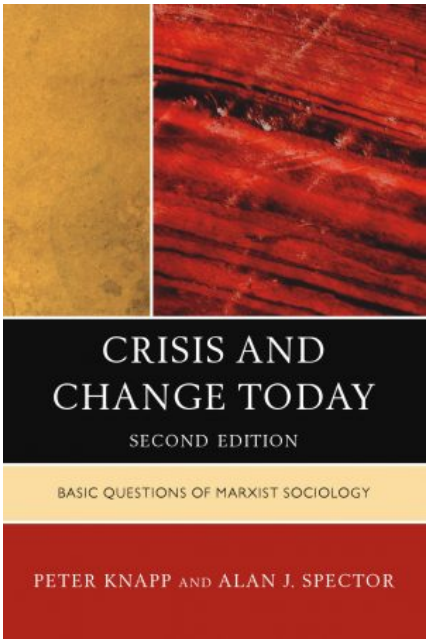
Dev Publishers & Distributors

Crisis and Change Today: Basic Questions of Marxist Sociology, 2nd Edition



Author: Peter Knapp; Alan Spector

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About the Book

Crisis and Change Today provides a solid introduction to Marxist social theory. The work's unique voice is expressed in its Socratic-dialogic approach, structured around forty questions that students have about society and social change. Topics range from theories of history, economics, unemployment, racial oppression, the state, fascism, the collapse of the Soviet bloc, and points of convergence and difference between the dialectical approach and other approaches to social science. The content and tone of the work invites students to evaluate various traditional and current explanations of social institutions and social processes and encourages them to weigh the debates and investigate further. The first edition was very well received (Distinguished Scholarship Award of the Section on Marxist Sociology of the ASA), and the second edition has been thoroughly revised and updated to be relevant for students today. Though the first edition was written during the wake of the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the Soviet Union, the growing gap between the rich and the poor and the economic crisis have generated more interest in using Marxist analysis both as a tool to analyze and understand capitalism and the weaknesses of past Marxist praxis.

About the Author

Peter Knapp is professor of sociology at Villanova University.
Alan Spector is professor of sociology at Purdue University Calumet.

Review

Crisis and Change Today is a textbook. . . as a textbook it plays a potential role in introducing young readers to those concerns. The book covers Marx's thought comprehensively, with some illustrations from more recent Marxist work. As such it is a good introductory text. . . . In sum, Crisis and Change Today is a good, comprehensive, introduction to Marx.
— Marx & Philosophy Review of Books

Crisis and Change Today, second edition provides an accessible overview of the basic concepts and relevant applications of a Marxist sociology. Knapp and Spector clearly show what distinguishes a Marxist sociology from other types of sociological analysis.
— Rhonda F. Levine, Colgate University

A scholarly and insightful overview of Marxist work in sociology that also serves as a useful introduction to all the major schools of Marxist thought! This is not an easy combination to bring off, but one that is very important, especially today, and Knapp and Spector merit an 'A+' for their achievement. When one adds the wealth of excellent examples and the crystal clear writing in which all this is conveyed, we have a book that will charm and instruct students and professors alike. HIGHLY RECOMMENDED!
— Bertell Ollman, author of Alienation: Marx's Conception of Man in Capitalist Society; NYU

An impressive compendium of the fundamental principles of Marxist sociology, Crisis and Change Today makes a major contribution to our understanding of the origins, contradictions, and transformation of contemporary capitalist society. Knapp and Spector have performed a great service in providing us a clear and concise analysis of the foundations of Marxist theory that analyzes the roots of today's epochal crisis of global capitalism. Valuable for readers outside the U.S. as well, this is a must reading for all those concerned with the future of our society, and of our planet. I highly recommend this book as a most important guide to educate a new generation of college students to help effect societal change.
— Berch Berberoglu, University of Nevada, Reno

Ever since the break-up of the Soviet Union pundits and ideologues have declared the end of Marxism and the triumph of capitalism. And yet, year after year we continue to see the ravages of capitalism in the form of relentless poverty in the Third World, destabilized economies in more developed countries outside Europe and North America, and two decades of stagnant working- and middle-class real wages. For the past several years US and Europe has been experiencing rising and persistent unemployment, and in 2008 we witnessed a near-collapse of a still struggling economy as a direct result of the unmitigated greed in financial markets, greed that is central to our capitalist system. What is quickly and conveniently forgotten is that a Marxist analysis is a means of analyzing how capitalism functions with the goal of transforming society to achieve the promise of a just society. Knapp and Spector provide a much needed primer on Marxist Sociology, its chapters guiding the reader through the core concepts (Base and Superstructure: Marx's Theory of History), methods of analysis (Surplus Value: Marx's Economics) and important understandings derived from that form of analysis (Class Struggle: Class, Party and Political Theory). The book ends on a high note (Applying Dialectics: Some Issues in the Philosophy of Science) delving into what we can achieve with this form of social analysis, and providing some insight into how to understand and redress the ills produced by capitalist social relationships and its system of production. This book is an essential addition to the library of anyone interested in a critical understanding of our society, and an important classroom tool for teaching the foundations of

Marxist Sociology.
— David Fasenfest, editor of Critical Sociology; associate professor, Wayne State University

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