

ARC Digital - Digital Capital Reading Group

The influence of Karl Marx's writing on twentieth century critical thought is plain to see. Defined, in Fredric Jameson's terms, as "the science of the inherent contradictions of capitalism" Marxism provides us with a wide-ranging framework for the analysis of political economy and its cultural manifestations. But today, the story goes, we live in an era when the form of capitalism Marx examines, rooted as it is in an industrial mode of production, is in the process of being supplanted by a new, informatic mode. Whether we define this current stage as post-Fordist, networked, communicative or neoliberal, it is clear that questions around its relative novelty or continuity with 'classical' forms of capitalist political economy have seen several contemporary thinkers return to Marx with fresh eyes.

This reading group will read excerpts from a range of Marx's economic, philosophical and political works alongside examples drawn from contemporary critical writing in order to think through the key terms for a critique of political economy that is rooted in the digital present but which recognises the on-going need to refigure and reformulate a Marx for our times.

Time: The group will meet on alternate **Tuesdays at 5.30 PM - 7.30 PM** from Tue 4 October 2011

Venue: Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge, Room **Helmore 115**

Seminar readings will be as follows and we be made available in digital format in advance.

Week 1: Capital after Capital - Tue 4 October 2011

KM, The 'Fragment on Machines', in the *Grundrisse*.

Paolo Virno, 'Ten Theses on the Multitude and Post-Fordist Capitalism', in *Grammar of the Multitude*.

Week 2: Wages and Labour Time - Tue 18 October 2011

KM, *Capital* volume 1, chapters 19-22

Matteo Pasquinelli, 'Google's PageRank Algorithm: A Diagram of the Cognitive Capitalism and the Rentier of the Common Intellect'

Week 3: Forms of Life and Biocapital - Tue 1 November 2011

KM, *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844* (excerpts – sections on 'estranged labour', 'the relationship of private property', 'private property and labour', 'private property and communism')

Kaushik Sunder Rajan, *Biocapital: The Constitution of Postgenomic Life* Chapter 3, plus coda.

Week 4: Infrastructure - Tue 15 November 2011

KM, *Capital* volume 1, chapters 31-33

Susan Buck-Morss, 'Envisioning Capital: Political Economy on Display', in *Critical Inquiry* 21:2 (Winter 1995).

Week 5: Manifestos - Tue 29 November 2011

KM and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*

McKenzie Wark, *A Hacker Manifesto* (excerpts TBA)

Dmytri Kleiner, *The Telekommunist Manifesto* (excerpts TBA)