

SOSC 4041: Alternative Economic Firms and Organizations

Lecture, Reading, and Assignment Schedule for Winter 2008

Course director: Marcelo Vieta

Seminar: Thursday 11:30-2:30, Vari Hall (VH) 1018

Seminar blog (for course info, course-related links, etc.): <http://alternativeorganizations.blogspot.com>

Marcelo's contact information and related matters:

- ❖ Cell: 416.940.0340. Please only call after 8:00 pm and before 10:00 pm during the week and between 12:00 pm and 5:00 pm on Saturdays if it's not an emergency.
- ❖ Email: vieta@yorku.ca. Please limit the use of email communication with me and only use it if you have a question that I can answer briefly (two sentences or less). For more substantive help, please come and see me during office hours or bring up your question(s) in class if it is appropriate.
- ❖ Office hours: Thursdays 2:30-4:30 (immediately after class).
- ❖ Office: South Ross, room 710

Course Texts (Winter 2008)

Winter Course Kit.

Briscoe, Robert and Michael Ward (eds.). **Helping Ourselves: Success Stories in Co-operative Business and Social Enterprise**, Cork, Ireland: Oak Tree Press, 2005.

Cavanagh, John and Jerry Mander (eds.). **Alternatives to Economic Globalization: A Better World Is Possible**, San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2004. [From Fall semester.]

Craig, John. **The Nature of Co-operation**, Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1993.

Ellwood, Wayne. **The No-Nonsense Guide to Globalization**, Toronto: Between the Lines Press, 2006. (Text.) [From Fall semester.]

Melnyk, George. **The Search for Community: From Utopia to a Co-operative Society**, Montreal: Black Rose Books, 1985. [From Fall semester.]

Seminar/Lecture Schedule, Readings, and Assignments (Winter 2008)

Part 4: Theory, Debates, and Practices (continued from Fall 2007)

Week 14 - January 3 – Class Reviews of Fall 2007 Semester: Theory and History of Alternatives and Alternative Organizations and Firms

Melnyk. "Chapter 1: An Introduction" and "Chapter 6: The General Theory," from **The Search for Community: From Utopia to a Co-operative Society**. (Text, pp. 3-12. 109-121.)

Class presentations: You are all to give a five to seven minute presentation of preliminary ideas of the theoretical grounding for your Alternative Firm Analysis and Contemporary Research Paper. You are to also hand in to me a ONE page bullet point synopsis of your presentation at the beginning of the class. (See: www.vieta.ca/Course_Documents/Jan3_Presentations.pdf for details.)

Week 15 - January 10 – Reviewing the Need for Alternatives: Post-Fordist Worker Subjectivities; Gender, Class, and New Employment Models; the Social Economy; and the Context of Globalization

McDowell, Linda. “Father and Ford Revisited: Gender, Class, and Employment Change in the New Millennium,” **Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers**, v. 26, n. 4. (Winter course kit, pp. 448-464.)

Favreau, Louis. “Globalization and Social Economy: A North-South Perspective” in Shragge and Fontan, eds., **Social Economy: International Debates and Perspectives**, 2000. (Fall course kit, pp. 273-279.)

Cavanagh and Mander. “Subsidiarity: Recalling Power from the Global.” (Text, pp. 147-163.)

Optional Readings:

Review Shragge and Fontan article from Week 3 on the Social Economy.

Harvey, David. “Fordism” and “From Fordism to Flexible Accumulation” in **The Condition of Postmodernity**, 1990. (Winter course kit, pp. 125-172.)

Ellwood. “Chapter 6: Poverty, the Environment and the Market” (pp. 104 – 126), and “Chapter 7: Redesigning the Global Economy” (pp. 127-138). (Text.)

[Discuss specific requirements for Alternative Firm Analysis mini-paper, due January 31.]

Part 5: Co-operatives as Alternative Organizational Models

Week 16 - January 17 – Co-operatives and Other Alternative Organizational Structures

❖ Brief overview of co-operativism in Canada

Quarter, Jack. “Chapter 1: An Overview of the Social Economy [in Canada],” in **Canada’s Social Economy: Co-operatives, Non-Profits, and Other Community Enterprises**, 1992. (Handouts, pp. ix-xii, 1-12).

Briscoe, Robert and Ward, Michael. “Chapter 1: From Cradle to Retirement & Beyond,” and “Chapter 2: What Co-ops Have in Common,” from **Helping Ourselves: Success Stories in Co-operative Business and Social Enterprise**. (Text, pp. 7-46.)

[Guest presenter: Sean Smith, Canadian Auto Workers organizer: On Canadian union history and workers’ co-ops.]

Week 17 - January 24 – Co-operatives and Co-operativism: Roots, Evolution, Definitions

Craig. “Chapter 2: Roots and Evolution,” from **The Nature of Co-operation**. (Text, pp. 11-75.)

Watch film in class: Café Femenino: Worth Celebrating, 2007.

Week 18 - January 31 – Forms of Co-operation

Quarter, Jack. “Chapter 2: An Overview to Co-operatives [in Canada],” in **Canada’s Social Economy: Co-operatives, Non-Profits, and Other Community Enterprises**, 1992. (PDFs on class blog, pp. 15-40).

Craig. “Chapter 3: Co-operatives in the World Today” and “Chapter 4: Comprehensive Co-operatives.” (Text, pp. 76-131.)

Optional Reading:

Craig. “Chapter 5: Co-operatives in Developing Countries.” (Text, pp. 132-156.)

[Guest presenter: Julie Daniluk from The Big Carrot]

Week 19 - February 7 – Financial, Services, Food, Farmers, and Consumer Co-operatives

ALTERNATIVE FIRM ANALYSIS DUE (at beginning of class)

Briscoe and Ward, “Chapter 3: Feeding Ourselves I: Consumer Co-ops & Food,” “Chapter 4: Feeding Ourselves II: Farmer’s Co-ops & Food,” “Chapter 6: Financing Ourselves,” “Chapter 7: Serving Ourselves,” and “Chapter 8: Developing Ourselves.” (Text, pp. 47-91, 108-177.)

Watch part of film in class: *Cuba: The Accidental Revolution* (2003), from CBC’s *The Nature of Things* (David Suzuki)

Optional readings:

Towards Sustainable Alternatives: The Socialist Response (Part 2): Cuba’s Organic Farm Movement (Case Study 1)

NOTE: You’ll want to read these articles if you are especially doing work on any organization that is involved in food cooperativism or food security.

Gott, Richard, “Chapter 8: Cuba Stands Alone, 1985-2003” from **Cuba: A New History**, 2005. (Fall course kit, pp. 185 – 212.)

McKibben, Bill. “The Cuba Diet: What Will You Be Eating When the Revolution Comes?” in **Harper’s Magazine**, April 2005. (Fall course kit, pp. 213 – 226.)

[Discuss requirements for Contemporary Alternative Organization Research Paper, due April 3.]

Week 20 - February 14 – Reading Break (no class)

Week 21 - February 21 – Problems of Co-operation

Luxembourg, Rosa. “Chapter VII: Co-operatives, Unions, Democracy,” from **Reform or Revolution**, 1900/1999. (Winter course kit, pp. TBD.) (Also see: <http://www.marxists.org/archive/luxemburg/1900/reform-revolution/ch07.htm>)

Craig, “Chapter 6: The Problem: Co-operatives with Little Cooperation.” (Text, pp. 157-186.)

Briscoe and Ward, “Chapter 10: The Way Forward.” (Text, pp. 199-213).

[Field trip to Ontario Natural Food Co-operative in Mississauga, Friday, February 22 in the late morning or early afternoon. Leave from York campus by carpool – TBD.]

Week 22 - February 29 – The Worker-Recovered Enterprises in Argentina: Workers Owning the Means of Production (Case Study 2)

- ❖ Marcelo to discuss his research into the case of workers taking over, occupying, and restarting production and services again as workers’ cooperatives in former capitalist firms gone bankrupt in Argentina.
- ❖ Comparing the Argentine experience with worker-recovered workers’ co-ops to other experiences around the world: Experiences in other conjunctures, other Latin American worker-recovered firms, Finland, UK, India, US ESOPs, etc.
- ❖ Theories of self-management (*autogestión*), co-management, workers’ control, etc.

Vieta, Marcelo and Ruggeri, Andrés, “The Worker-Recovered Enterprises as Workers’ Cooperatives: The Conjunctures, Challenges, and Innovations of Self-Management in Argentina and Latin America,” in **International Co-operation in the Global Economy**, McMurtry, JJ and Reed, Darryl (eds.) (forthcoming). (Winter course kit, pp. TBD.)

Briscoe and Ward, “Chapter 5: Feeding Ourselves III: Worker-owned Co-ops & Food” and “Chapter 9: Working for Ourselves.” (Text, pp. 92-107, 178-198.)

Watch part of films in class: *The Take* (Naomi Klein and Avi Lewis) and either *Chilavert: A Case for Social Innovation* or *19 de Diciembre: A Case for Social Innovation* (both University of Buenos Aires).

Optional Reading:

Vieta, Marcelo, “The Worker-Recovered Enterprises in Argentina, 1997-2007: Socio-Economic Conjunctures, New Forms of Worker Co-operativism, and the Innovations and Challenges of Self-Management,” Unpublished research paper (2007). (Available online on blog, TBD.)

Week 23 - March 6 – Presentations

Week 24 - March 13 – Presentations

Week 25 - March 20 – Presentations

Week 26 – March 27 – Presentations

FINAL PAPERS DUE ONE WEEK AFTER LAST CLASS, April 3, 2008, in my office (South Ross, room 710) between 12:00 pm and 2:00 pm. No late papers will be accepted after this time.

FINAL MARKS FOR COURSE will be ready two weeks after this date.