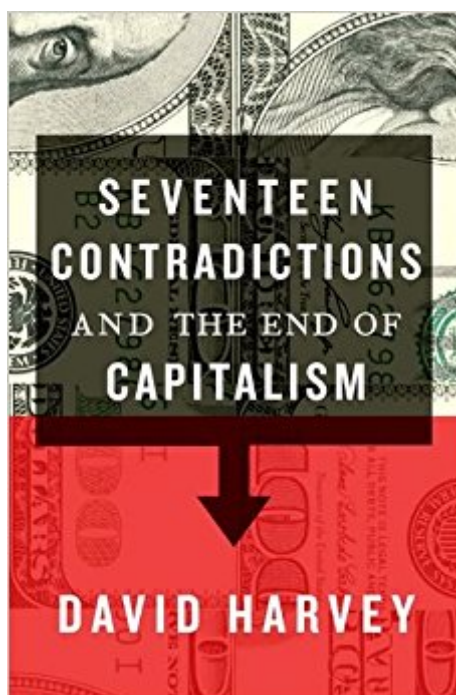


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Seventeen Contradictions And The End Of Capitalism



Synopsis

"What I am seeking here is a better understanding of the contradictions of capital, not of capitalism. I want to know how the economic engine of capitalism works the way it does, and why it might stutter and stall and sometimes appear to be on the verge of collapse. I also want to show why this economic engine should be replaced, and with what." --from the Introduction

To modern Western society, capitalism is the air we breathe, and most people rarely think to question it, for good or for ill. But knowing what makes capitalism work--and what makes it fail--is crucial to understanding its long-term health, and the vast implications for the global economy that go along with it. In *Seventeen Contradictions and the End of Capitalism*, the eminent scholar David Harvey, author of *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, examines the internal contradictions within the flow of capital that have precipitated recent crises. He contends that while the contradictions have made capitalism flexible and resilient, they also contain the seeds of systemic catastrophe. Many of the contradictions are manageable, but some are fatal: the stress on endless compound growth, the necessity to exploit nature to its limits, and tendency toward universal alienation. Capitalism has always managed to extend the outer limits through "spatial fixes," expanding the geography of the system to cover nations and people formerly outside of its range. Whether it can continue to expand is an open question, but Harvey thinks it unlikely in the medium term future: the limits cannot extend much further, and the recent financial crisis is a harbinger of this. David Harvey has long been recognized as one of the world's most acute critical analysts of the global capitalist system and the injustices that flow from it. In this book, he returns to the foundations of all of his work, dissecting and interrogating the fundamental illogic of our economic system, as well as giving us a look at how human societies are likely to evolve in a post-capitalist world.

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Customer Reviews

"The book is a refreshing attempt to innovate Marxist theory, to move beyond the tired dogmatisms and deadend scholasticism that have plagued it for too long and construct a richer, more open theoretical approach...Likewise, it is an important book for activists seeking to craft a politics that, while moving beyond the limitations of spontaneity and structurelessness, can finally transcend the old question of "reform or revolution," and test the possibilities for reform and revolution through the practical reconstitution of a socialist political alternative for the 21st century left." --Stephen Maher, *Science & Society*

David Harvey is Distinguished Professor of Anthropology at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. He is among the top twenty most cited authors in the humanities and is the world's most cited academic geographer. His books include *The Limits to Capital*, *Social Justice and the City*, and *The Condition of Postmodernity*, among many others.

This book is essential reading for anyone who wants to understand that Marxism, Communist revolutionary theory, practice and analysis are still alive in the US and the "modern" world -- contrary to all the celebratory op ed pieces from the Wall Street news services and American pundits. To understand what is going wrong with the US, no matter how much money the government throws away each year on a combination of ill conceived, aggressive, war based foreign policies and failed hand out, paternalistic, even parasitic and costly medical and public "welfare:" programs domestically -- one must understand the inherent contradictions that exist inherently in the capitalist political economic system and the culture it fosters or, rather, festers in a futile attempt to cover up the blemishes, wrinkles and sores like some bad make-up company late night TV advertising campaign. The emperor has no clothes, new or old, and the contradictions are well identified, described, and analyzed by Harvey in this updated critique of monopoly imperialist capitalism, the modern update of Lenin's *Imperialism the Highest Stage of Capitalism*, and a well done and timely update to *Das Kapital* in the 21st Century and new Neoliberal assault against humanity and plans to destroy Marxist practice and organization, and, especially the socialist governments with Communist Party leadership in the world today -- like was true in various ways in

Cuba and the embargos, the new Cold War with Russia, the Obama "Pivot to Asia" which is really the "Return to Asia of the Victim of the Vietnam War Criminal US Government and War Machine", the interference in EU affairs and rebuilding a nuclear NATO,. the invasions in the Middle East and total destruction of Iraq, Libya, Yemen and now Syria all against International Law, etc. All of that arises out of these contradictions, and the American Capitalist led onslaught under the banners of "Free Trade," "Democracy through regime change," "Globalization," "Open Borders," and "One World Economic Order under the US as Super Power" -- focused and drilled down on, one contradiction at a time, by Harvey, as the banner carrier of Marxism in the US today, and the foster child of Lenin and the contemporary embodiment of Mao and his On Contradiction, all the revolutionary prodigies of Marx and Engels. Right on, Comrade David.

It took me a long time to get through this book. Between the time I started reading and when I finished it, i was able to read two other books!This book is very academic; for me it was hard to assimilate and comprehend all that's in it. I knew from what I was able to gather from my limited understanding that the information was terribly significant, hugely important and urgent. My problem was that most of it was over my head.The main points I took away from the book were that there are fatal contradictions in capitalism and these contradictions, more than likely, will result in disaster for humanity. Until then, the world should get ready for oppression, authoritarianism gone insane, rebellion, ecological catastrophe and the unexpected. And that's the GOOD news!For me, the book reads like a college-level post-graduate thesis, an analysis of Karl Marx, the future of dystopian global economies, and a gloomy prediction for civilization as a whole. Well, I already knew that, so, in those terms, this book didn't tell me anything I didn't already know.

It is a very informative and interesting book. If you wish to know the problems facing the world today, it is an excellent choice. However, it is a little lacking in recommendations and the title suggesting the end of capitalism in general may be exaggerated. It does, however, point out a relatively recent development in economics and politics called "the claiming of the commons". Other books such as "The end of money and the future of civilization" by Thomas H. Greco, Jr. can provide further enlightenment on the latter.

David Harvey is one of thr informed academic critics working in The United States today. The analysis is more than the ideologies originated with Karl Marx and the Twentieth Century "neo-Marxism" schools of thought. Dr. Harvey is a member of the anthropology and geography

fields both as an academic teacher and researcher spanning the last half of the Twentieth and beginning years of the Twentieth-First Centuries. It can be said That Dr. Harvey is a "secular humanist--for what ever pupose this might mean in Contemporary society. "Capital", the system, is the subject explored in the book or rather the underlying question is whether is it necessary for Americans to "live" the capitalist's localized free enterprise view.Dr. Harvey views the reproduction of capitalism in the requirment that crises and contradictions are essential. Capitalism in History is not static; it displays instabilities. The instabilities are the responses or the "antithesises" borrowed from the Hegalian, Marx-Engels, and Neo-Marxists model world views to the crises described in the book. Dr. Harvey's view on cultural contradictions that are found to be essential are from the philosophical humanist vent and not of the Hegalian mechanical algorithm model of cyclical revolving pattern:"Thesis > Antithesis > Thesis [reccurance historical change/transition (the Dialectic)]". The "Layman's" view is that David Harvey in the book is leaning toward the supremacy of citizens' consumers' rights over the power of the Capitalism social controls' methodologies. The final question is whether Capitalism with its crises and contradictions will end in a "civilized" matter is dependent on the "secular humanist" global community's response. Dr. Harvey in this sense is a reformer as oppose to being from the "neo-Marxist" schools known for beliefs in mechanical historical progress.This review annotation is written by an interested informed "arm chair" sitting student of modern economic-historical-cultural history at the age of sixty-five years. The reviewer acknowledges that his views lack the credentials that limits his authority to make value judgement on the subjects addressed by Dr.Harvey in his book, SEVENTEEN CONTRADICTIONS AND THE END OF CAPITALISM. Dr. Harvey is a "must read" by informed adults who have doubts of Capital's survival in American, British, and English speaking Canadian societies. It is important that America readers have some prior social science historical preconceptions nested in their minds before reading Dr. Harvey's arguments found in SEVENTEEN CONTRADICTIONS AND THE END OF CAPITALISM.

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