

BOSTON COLLEGE
Department of Economics

EC 234 – Fall 1999
Economics and Catholic Social Teaching
MWF 11 in Carney 104

Catherine G. Schneider

The purpose of this course is to explore questions of economic justice in terms of Catholic social teaching. We will begin with a discussion of how the concept of economic justice developed in economic thought. Then we will read and reflect on some of the major Church documents to identify the major themes in the teaching that apply to the development of economic policy.

The prerequisites for the course are EC131-132. An introductory knowledge of the role of prices in a market economy and familiarity with the concepts of utility and profit maximization will be assumed. For those students who are linguistically inclined, a passing acquaintance with Latin may be helpful.

Catholic Social Thought - The Documentary Heritage, edited by David O'Brien and Thomas Shannon, contains all the Church documents that we will be reading. A number of the commentaries that we will use are collected in *Building the Free Society*, edited by George Weigel and Robert Royal. Most of the other readings are included in a coursepack prepared by BC Press. All of these can be purchased at the bookstore; one copy of each text is also on reserve at O'Neill Library. Readings that are not in the texts or the course pack are on reserve at O'Neill Library.

Course requirements and their weights in the course grade are:

- three short papers (2-3 pages) on assigned topics (10% each)
- journals on the assigned readings (15%)
- a term paper (12-15 pages) on a topic of your choice (25%)
- participation in class discussions/attendance (20%)
- a final exam on Wednesday, Dec. 15 (10%)

All the policies of the College of Arts and Sciences with regard to grading, attendance, make-up exams, and academic integrity apply. (Statements of these are printed in *The Boston College Catalog, 1999 - 2000*, pages 28 - 29 and 35 - 36.) If you are unable to attend class for a prolonged period of time, please notify me as soon as possible.

My office is Carney 144; the telephone number is 552-3786. My e-mail address is catherine.schneider@bc.edu. Office hours will be Monday, 1:00 – 2:30; Tuesday, 9:30 - 11:30; Thursday, 1:00 - 2:30; and by appointment.

READING LIST

I. Introduction

- Wogaman, *Economics and Ethics*, Ch.1

II. Discussion of Economic Justice

- Atkinson, "Economic Transformation and Economic Justice" in *Social and Ethical Aspects of Economics*
- Heyne, "The Concept of Economic Justice in Religious Discussion," in Block, Brennan, and Elzinga, ed., *The Morality of the Market*
- Thurow, "Toward a Definition of Economic Justice," *Public Interest*, Spring 1973

III. Economic Justice in the History of Economic Thought

Aristotle and Aquinas

- Ekelund and Hebert, *A History of Economic Thought and Method*, Ch. 2 (pp. 12-18)
- Worland, *Scholasticism and Welfare Economics*, Ch. 2

Adam Smith

- Billet, "Justice, Liberty, and Economy," in Glahe, ed., *Adam Smith and The Wealth of Nations*
- Worland, "Adam Smith: Economic Justice and the Founding Father," in Skurski, ed., *New Directions in Economic Justice*

John Stuart Mill

- Ekelund and Tollison, "The New Political Economy of J.S. Mill: the Means to Social Justice," *Canadian Journal of Economics*, vol. 9(2), May 1976
- *** - Stabile, *Work and Welfare: The Social Costs of Labor in the History of Economic Thought*, Ch. 3 (HD4904.S73 196)

Karl Marx

- Heilbroner, *The Worldly Philosophers*, Ch. 6 (pp. 163-170)
- Peterson, "Karl Marx and His Vision of Salvation," *Review of Social Economy*, vol. 52(3), Fall 1994

IV. Background on Catholic Social Teaching

- Coleman, "Neither Liberal Nor Socialist," in Coleman, ed., *One Hundred Years of Catholic Social Thought*
- Curran, "Relating Religious-Ethical Inquiry to Economic Policy," in Gannon, ed., *The Catholic Challenge to the American Economy*

V. The Early Encyclicals

- Leo XIII, "Rerum Novarum," in O'Brien and Shannon, ed., *Catholic Social Thought*
- McCarthy and Rhodes, *Eclipse of Justice*, Ch. 5 (pp. 151-162)

- Murphy, "In the Beginning," in Weigel and Royal, ed., *A Century of Catholic Social Thought*
 - Pius XI, "Quadragesimo Anno," in O'Brien and Shannon
 - McCarthy and Rhodes, Ch. 5 (pp. 162-166)
 - Kohler, "In Praise of Little Platoons," in Weigel and Royal
 - John XXIII, "Mater et Magistra," in O'Brien and Shannon
 - McCarthy and Rhodes, Ch. 5 (pp.167 - 171)
 - Sirico, "A Teacher Who Learns," in Weigel and Royal
 - Paul VI, "Populorum Progressio," in O'Brien and Shannon
 - McCarthy and Rhodes, Ch. 5 (pp. 171 - 174)
 - Royal, "Reforming International Development" in Weigel and Royal
- VI. John Paul II
- John Paul II, "Laborem Exercens," in O'Brien and Shannon
 - McCarthy and Rhodes, Ch. 5 (pp. 174-181)
 - Destro, "Laborem Exercens," in Weigel and Royal
 - John Paul II, "Centesimus Annus," in O'Brien and Shannon
 - Hollenbach, "Christian Social Ethics After the Cold War," *Theological Studies*, March 1992
 - Weigel, "The Virtues of Freedom," in Weigel and Royal
- VII. Summary of Papal Documents
- Canavan, "The Popes and the Economy," *First Things*, October 1991
- VIII. The U.S. Bishops' Pastoral Letter
- U.S. Catholic Bishops, "Economic Justice for All," in O'Brien and Shannon
 - Douglass, "First Things First: The Letter and the Common Good Tradition," in Douglass, ed., *The Deeper Meaning of Economic Life*
 - Simon and Novak, "Liberty and Justice for All," in Finn, ed., *Private Virtue and Public Policy*
 - Benne, "Two Cheers for the Bishops," in Lutz, ed., *God, Goods, and the Common Good*
 - *** - U.S. Catholic Bishops, "A Decade After 'Economic Justice for All': Continuing Principles, Changing Context, New Challenges," in *Tenth Anniversary Edition of Economic Justice for All* (BX1795.E27 C37 1997)
 - Weakland, " 'Economic Justice for All' 10 Years Later," *America*, March 22, 1997

*** Not included in coursepack; on reserve at O'Neill