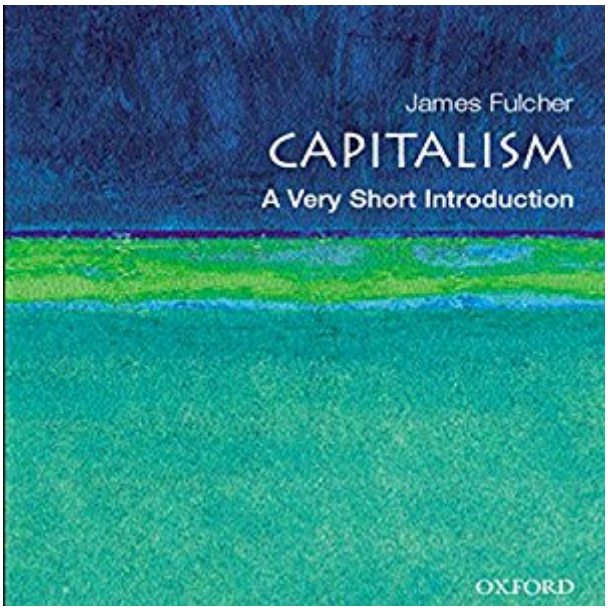
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Capitalism: A Very Short Introduction



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Synopsis

This Introduction explores the origins of capitalism and questions whether it did indeed originate in Europe. It examines a distinctive stage in the development of capitalism that began in the 1980s, in order to understand where we are now and how capitalism has evolved since. The book discusses the crisis tendencies of capitalism--including the S.E. Asian banking crisis, the collapse of the Russian economy, and the 1997-1998 global financial crisis--asking whether capitalism is doomed to fail. In the end, the author ruminates on a possible alternative to capitalism, discussing socialism, communal and cooperative experiments, and alternatives proposed by environmentalists.About the Series: Combining authority with wit, accessibility, and style, Very Short Introductions offer an introduction to some of life's most interesting topics. Written by experts for the newcomer, they demonstrate the finest contemporary thinking about the central problems and issues in hundreds of key topics, from philosophy to Freud, quantum theory to Islam. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

For a book of this length, it does a fair job of describing the history of capitalism. This book would be suitable not only for a college 101 class but also for the casual reader who just wants a bit of knowledge under his belt. I feel it is important to read up on the history of capitalism is only to realize that there are indeed alternatives, some of which are halfway reasonable.

Great product

If you want to have a better idea of capitalism, read this book.You will learn definitions of:1. Capital2. Capitalist3. CapitalismYou will learn that Capitalism can be any hustle to get money. You will go through a brief history of some of the activities capitalists have ventured in and how it affected society. You will learn that Capitalism exists in many countries but is NOT managed the same anywhere by government.It will give you a different perspective, if you're willing to look past your own ideas. Read the good and the bad of capitalism, and don't stop until you're finished.

Teaching capitalism in today's world is like describing water to a fish; we are surrounded by it, can't live without it and are unaware of the alternatives. Most have never experienced the depression, many have forgotten the days when communism was actually a threat. We are blind to the absolutely crucial nature of how our world works. Although we watched the stock market plummet in 1987 and have all learned valuable lessons from the internet boom & bust, I picked up this book because I wanted to know a bit more about how the scholars view capitalism.The book takes the reader through a history of capitalism while briefly summarizing everything you forgot from college economics. While the discussion of the development of capitalism focused on some interesting questions of historical interpretation, the strength of this work is the description and analysis of how the capitalistic system works differently in different countries.The power of capitalism is set forth as its ability to adapt. Where other systems--feudalism, communism, socialism, etc--failed was that they could not adapt to change. The book was an excellent overview; it was current, easy to read, and contains a fine list of resources for further study.

Vert weak introduction, highly biased, more interested in the shortcomings of capitalism which doesn't really help to understand why the world is progressively moving towards it

This was the first book I read in the "Very Short Introduction" series. I was surprised by how substantial it is. It also seems quite balanced. References, suggestions for further reading and a 5 page index are included.My overall impression is how strong capitalism is world-wide. That supports Fulcher's conclusion that reform must take place within capitalism rather than seeking a replacement for capitalism. However, when Fulcher writes that a "search for an alternative to capitalism is fruitless ... and no final crisis is in sight, or, short of some ecological catastrope, even

really conceivable", how improbable is that ecological catastrophe?As the globe warms and the oceans die, will the rich hold out expecting to be able to use their wealth to make their lives bearable as the rest of us suffer? Just how will capitalism respond to a growing pressure for sustainability? By not exploring the ecological challenges to capitalism, Fulcher has indeed introduced capitalism but not addressed its fate and ours later in this century. Although this is a "very short introduction", Michael Newman's "Socialism: A Very Short Introduction" and Colin Ward's "Anarchism: A Very Short Introduction" do address the ecological issue. Even if socialism and anarchism seem improbable and reform is possible within capitalism, it would have been useful to hear Fulcher's impression of whether and how capitalism might address the challenge of ecological sustainability.

This "Guide" (back cover) is a pamphlet sized tour guide that presents CAPITALISM as if you were a sightseer on a museum tour bus through London or Wall Street viewing the modus operandi of Western Civilization and its historic foundation. The junk history and summary review that this squeeky clean version presents includes condescending material such as; It's an advantage to speak English because it has, for example, given India and the Caribbean a "head start" which, with some "training" they can work "telephone-answering services" using "Western pronunciation and conversation (p89)." The insults described as competition between underdeveloped countries to provide ever cheaper labor continues on that page as well. And in case you thought I was exaggerating the "tourist" perspective, the next section is GLOBAL TOURISM which the author concedes is not typically included in accounts of "capitalism" but goes on to note that between 1950 and 2001 it has become one of the top earners for "...many of the World's poorest countries (pp89-90). In Chapter 6 the Heading is "Crisis? What Crisis?" and then has the audacity to brush off "Those living in the midst of an economic crisis..." by turnin it around and calling it "...rather a normal part of the functioning of a capitalist society (p104)" (No joke!) Well maybe that is not quite accurate...this is a very bad joke...unearned capital going to "Oxford University" press for name brand Bu....it>!!!

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