

Karl Marx and the Cycles of American Capitalism

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The paper:

Karl Marx. America. It is assumed the two do not go together. But in fact, thinking about the two together gives a more intimate portrait of Marx's ideas, and a clearer picture of American history. Andrew Hartman brings these two seemingly irreconcilable ideas—Marx and America—together to better understand the historical cycles of American capitalism. To read and think about Karl Marx is to grapple with the modern world that capitalism has made. This includes modern America—especially modern America. Because the United States is the nation in world history most committed to capitalism, and because Marx is the world's most enduring theorist of capitalism, Marx is a veritable American alter ego. This lecture will explore the meaning of Americans reading and thinking about Marx from 1861, when Marx made waves across the Atlantic with his astute analysis of the U.S. Civil War, to the present, when Marx is on many American horizons yet again.

The author:

Andrew Hartman is Professor of History at Illinois State University. He is the author of "*Education and the Cold War: The Battle for the American School*," "*A War for the Soul of America: A History of the Culture Wars*," and editor of "*American Labyrinth: Intellectual History for Complicated Times*." He is currently at work on his third book, "*Karl Marx in America*," which is contracted to be published by the University of Chicago Press. Hartman is the winner of two Fulbright Awards. He was the Fulbright Distinguished Chair in American Studies at the University of Southern Denmark for the 2013-14 academic year, and he is the Fulbright British Library Eccles Center Research Scholar for the 2018-19 academic year. He co-hosts a podcast about history and ideas titled, "*Trotsky and the Wild Orchids*."