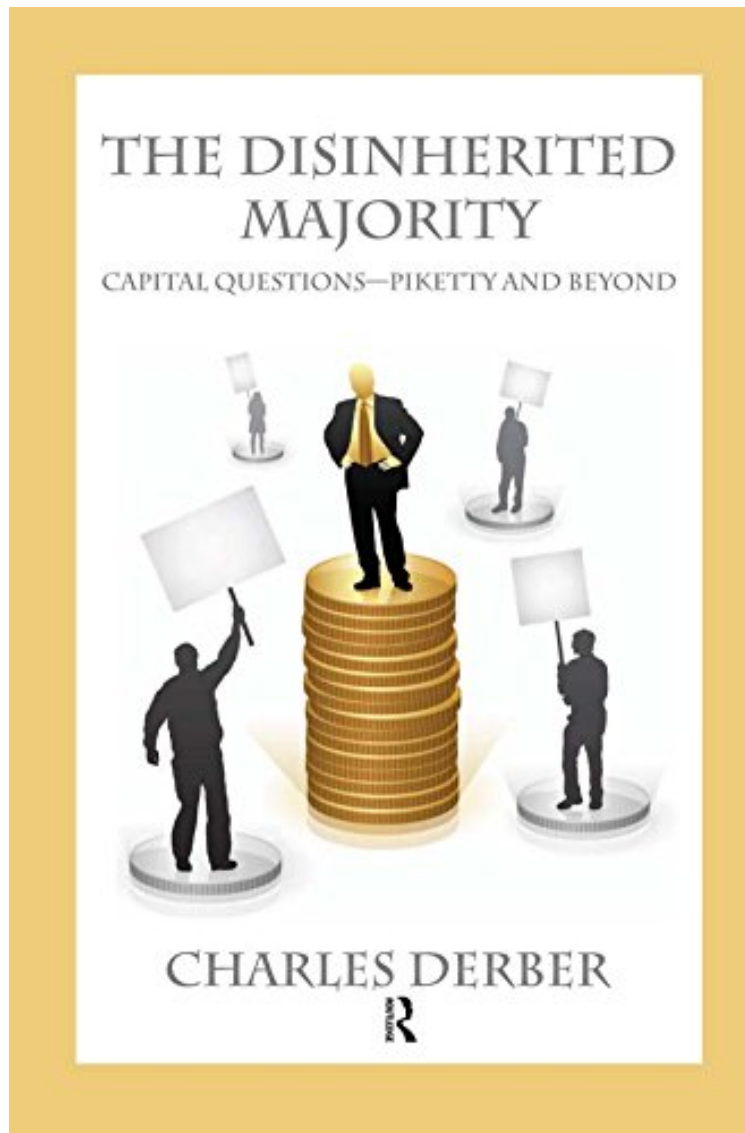


(Download) Disinherited Majority: Capital Questions-Piketty and Beyond

## Disinherited Majority: Capital Questions-Piketty and Beyond

Charles Derber

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**Charles Derber : Disinherited Majority: Capital Questions-Piketty and Beyond** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Disinherited Majority: Capital Questions-Piketty and Beyond:

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful. Piketty, Inequality, and ClassBy Dick\_BurkhartCharles Derber captures the essence of Thomas Piketty's Capital in the 21st Century from the point of view of a progressive sociologist / political economist. He describes the tension between Piketty 1 (the mainstream economist) and Piketty 2 (the progressive activist) and points the way to a new politics of 'class'. Designed for a study group, the book has excellent discussion questions at the end of each short chapter. By focusing on inequality, Piketty has opened

up the conversation on class as well. By this Derber means economic class, in contrast to "class", by which he means social class or identity. Refocusing politics on economic class, as in the 99% versus the 1%, promises to generate more united actions to challenge the new plutocracy of corporate executives and billionaires, today's version of the aristocracy of Old Europe according to Piketty. While sometimes critical of Piketty for his lack of attention to socialist or neo-Marxist critiques of capitalism, Derber nevertheless celebrates Piketty's data-driven demolition of the neo-classical myth that free market capitalism will naturally lead to freedom, democracy, and prosperity for all. Quite the contrary: "Extreme inequality is a sign of capitalist markets operating precisely as they are intended to function." Derber also applauds Piketty's devotion to European style "social democracy" and to strongly progressive taxation of income and wealth. He quotes Piketty: "Taxation is not a technical matter. It is pre-eminently a political and philosophical issue. Perhaps the most important of all political issues. . . . At the heart of every major political upheaval lies a fiscal revolution." Despite the fundamental importance of economic growth to Piketty's theory, Derber notes that he gives little attention to limits-to-growth. The end of growth implies an insurmountable barrier to a more egalitarian economy unless there is radical change. As Derber notes, "At a minimum, Piketty should have taken up shifts toward consumption of more sustainable public goods rather than carbon-intensive private goods." Or "Can capitalism survive in an era of zero growth?" In short this is a great introduction both to Piketty's work and to the opportunities and dilemmas it raises.

Thomas Piketty's blockbuster 2014 book, *Capital in the 21st Century*, may prove to be a game-changer, one of those rare books such as Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique*, which helped spark a new feminist movement. The world-wide flood of commentary suggests Piketty's book has already opened a new conversation not only about inequality, but about class, capitalism and social justice. Inherited wealth is at the heart of *Capital in the 21st Century*, and Derber shows how the 'disinherited majority' is likely to affect the future. In his new book, Derber shows that there are actually 'two Pikettys' - different voices of the author on the 1%, inheritance, and capitalism itself - that create a fascinating and unacknowledged hidden debate and conversation within the book. Drawing on Piketty's discussion, Derber raises fourteen 'capital questions' - with new perspectives on caste and class warfare, the Great Recession, the decline of the American Dream and the Occupy movement - that can guide a new conversation about the past and future of capitalism. The *Disinherited Majority* will catalyse a conversation beyond Piketty already emerging in colleges and universities, town halls, coffee shops, workplaces and political parties and social movements; an essential class for all Americans.

"In *The Disinherited Majority*, Charles Derber insightfully picks up where Thomas Piketty leaves off, making clear that the stubborn inequality of capitalism is not just a mechanical process but one that must be understood socially and politically." - Robert Kuttner, Co-Editor, *The American Prospect* "This book carries forward in an accessible and highly informative way "the new global conversation about money and morality in a troubled capitalist world" provoked by Thomas Piketty's important and influential study. Issues of prime importance are addressed. The book succeeds admirably in its aim of drawing anyone who is concerned with the deep and often painful problems of contemporary society into this conversation as an active participant, a necessary precondition for any hope for a more democratic and just future." - Noam Chomsky "A brilliant, provocative, and illuminating engagement. Derber shows where and how Piketty's flawed masterpiece can help spark and shape an urgently required new popular movement for social justice and democracy in the United States." - Paul Street, Author of *They Rule: The 1% vs. Democracy* "This book is stunning in the scope of ideas it covers in a concise but deep and rich manner. Readers, including students studying economics, political science, sociology, history, business, public policy, public health and social justice, will dig into this book with great intrigue and excitement. My students will find this book an exciting platform from which to intensely debate the vast inequalities of wealth and power in today's world, and to equally intensely seek solutions." - Jonathan White, Author of *The Engaged Sociologist: Connecting the Classroom to the Community* About the Author Charles Derber, Professor of Sociology at Boston College, has written twenty books, including bestsellers with multiple translations and editions. He has also written opinion pieces for the *New York Times*, the *Boston Globe*, the *Christian Science Monitor*, *Newsday*, and other newspapers and magazines. His most recent book is *Capitalism: Should You Buy It? An Invitation to Political Economy* (Paradigm 2014).