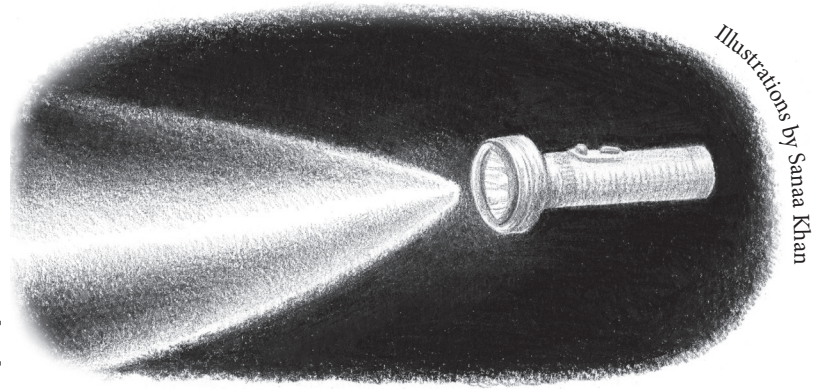


SOCIALISM . . . SERIOUSLY . . . STUDY . . . GUIDE



SESSION 1: CAN WE IMAGINE A DIFFERENT WORLD?

Opening Go-Around Questions

- What made you a socialist or got you interested in socialism?
- What questions are you hoping to have answered in this study group?

2040: A Cold Day in Philadelphia

- What is your favorite part of this imaginary day under socialism?
- What aspects of life under socialism would you have liked to see discussed more?
- Why does Katch choose to write about someone having a bad day?
- Why have socialists generally avoided predictions about life under socialism? Do you agree with this choice?

1: All Is Not Lost

- Why does Katch claim that “brooding over the apocalypse has become . . . Disney”? Do you agree?
- Do you think the history of Roanoke—both the myth and the reality—are relevant today?
- Have you ever felt paralyzed by hopelessness? What helps get you out of that state?

2: Ghost Stories

- What does it mean to say that socialism wouldn’t just replace the people in government buildings but also eliminate the system that centralizes power in those buildings?
- How is the left haunted by fears of the right and our own past failures?
- Why is the right haunted by fears of socialism even when our side is small?

Opening Go-Around Question

- What do you hate most about capitalism?

SESSION 2: WHAT IS CAPITALISM AND WHY DOES IT SUCK SO MUCH?

3: Welcome to the Jungle

- How do conservatives use the theory of evolution as a justification for capitalism? Why is this illogical?
- How is women’s oppression tied to the development of unequal class societies?
- Why does Katch write that “capitalism created a world in which capitalists should now be obsolete”?

4: Freedom and the Fine Print

- What are the strengths and weaknesses of Adam Smith’s ideas about the “free market”?
- How do profits come from exploitation?
- How are exploitation and oppression different? How do they interact?
- Why did Friedrich Engels argue that capitalism combines tyranny and anarchy?

5: The Deep State

- What are the limitations of democracy in the United States? What are the limitations of democracy in any capitalist country?
- How do capitalist governments “manage the affairs of the whole bourgeoisie”? Is this true for all aspects of government?
- Why are “anti-government” conspiracy theories so different from the genuine radicalism of police and prison abolitionism?

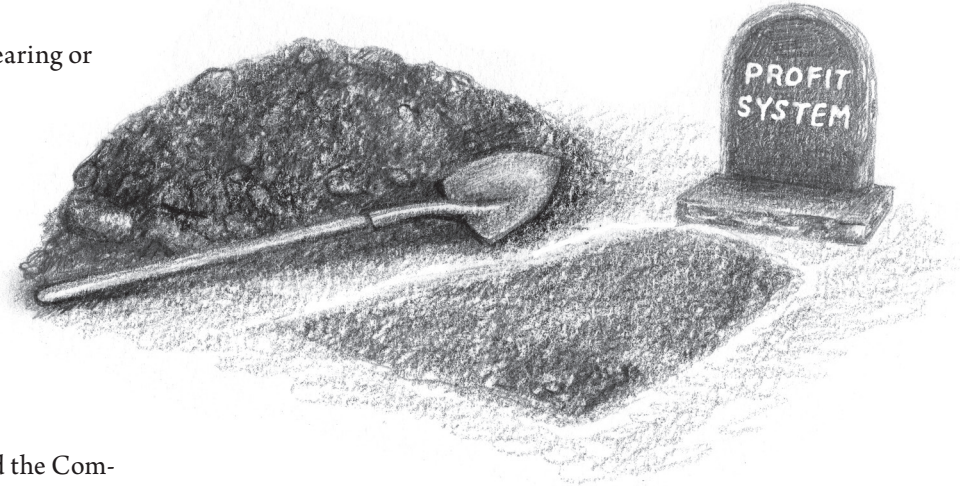
SESSION 3: WHAT IS SOCIALISM, AND HOW IS IT SUPPOSED TO HAPPEN?

Opening Go-Around Question

- What's the first thing you remember hearing or learning about socialism?

6: Workers' Power

- Why is class about more than just how much money you make?
- How is it that middle-class individuals have more power than workers but the working class is potentially more powerful than the middle class?
- What are the different models of solidarity put forward by Karl Marx and the Combahee River Collective? Can they work together?



7: Land Back

- How is the concept of the commons different from being forced to share your toothbrush?
- What are the differences between Indigenous and settler ideas of “land improvement”?
- What was the significance of the Cochabamba conference and the Standing Rock encampment?
- What is the material basis for workers and Indigenous peoples to unite? What is the material basis for them to divide?

8: Reforms and Revolutions

- How is fighting to win reforms different from the political strategy of reformism?
- What did the Russian Revolution achieve? Why did it fail?
- What does it mean to be revolutionary when there's no revolution?

SESSION 4: WHERE HAVE WE BEEN AND WHERE ARE WE GOING?



Opening Go-Around Questions

- Have you gotten answers to the questions you had at the start of this study group?
- What new questions do you now want to pursue?

9: Wait, Is This Communism?

- Is there a difference between socialism and communism?
- What is Hal Draper's concept of “the two souls of socialism?” Do you agree with this dichotomy?

10: Will Socialism Be Boring?

- How is capitalism both exciting and boring?
- How might socialism be both exciting and frightening?

11: The Good News

- How has Marx's “religion is the opium of the people” quote been taken out of context?
- What place does religion and/or spirituality have in radical politics?