

**EUTOPIA Learning Community: Social Power & Social Change**

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**Learning Activities for the Spring Semester 2023**

The EUTOPIA University Learning Community (“LC”) **Social Power and Social Change** is excited to announce two Learning Activities for the Spring Semester 2023.

The lectures will be delivered at CY Cergy Paris Université and also be available via Zoom. They are open to students, faculty, and staff from all ten members of the EUTOPIA University.

The goal of the LC **Social Power and Social Change** is to engage students in a debate about what is social change and how it takes place. These lectures will provide an overview of two of the most significant agents of social change – complex organizations and corporations. As both lectures are intended for a general audience, no previous knowledge of the topics is necessary.

**Lecture 1. An Introduction to Complex Organizations**

*Who:* Brian T. SCHMITT, Associate professor, CY Cergy Paris Université and Agora Laboratoire

*Summary:* One of the most distinguishing characteristics of modern life is the ubiquity of large, formal organizations. From governmental entities to universities, from hospitals to arms manufacturers, complex organizations are everywhere. Yet the basics of how organizations function – their purposes, their capacities, and their tensions – are rarely included in the typical university curricula. This lecture aims to fill that gap. After a brief review of how simple organizations are structured, the lecture will present a framework that identifies the key actors in complex organizations: leaders, sub-leaders, rank-and-file, boards, and members. Knowing the capacities and responsibilities of each of these actors can help us understand how they can be changed for the better.

*When:* Thursday, March 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023 from 16h15 to 17h45 (Central European Time)

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**Lecture 2. Are corporations evil or good? The neglected question of corporate purpose**

*Who:* Andrej RUS, Professor at the University of Ljubljana Faculty of Social Sciences and the Research Center for Strategy and Governance

*Summary:* What are corporations? Where did they come from? From their beginnings in the 17<sup>th</sup> century as joint stock companies, the purpose of the corporation has been contested. We will examine different conceptions of the purposes of corporation. One prevalent view is that corporations have one and only one purpose and that is to make profits for shareholders. We will look at other perspectives. To promote in class debate, the lecture will present two short case studies exploring the sudden departure of two CEOs in spite of their sustainability credentials.

*When:* Thursday, April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023 from 16h15 to 17h45 (Central European Time)

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**If you would like to participate by Zoom send an email to**

**Prof. Brian SCHMITT [brian.schmitt@cyu.fr](mailto:brian.schmitt@cyu.fr)**