

Seattle Public Library Data Research

MAT 259A
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CONCEPT

Over the past year, I've started to see a lot of interest in Karl Marx and his ideas as well as critiques of capitalism on social media. I was curious to see if this same interest would be reflected in the Seattle Public Library and wanted to analyze the checkouts of items relating to Karl Marx, capitalism, and socialism. My objective is to explore interest in these topics over time as well as how titles with these keywords are categorized.

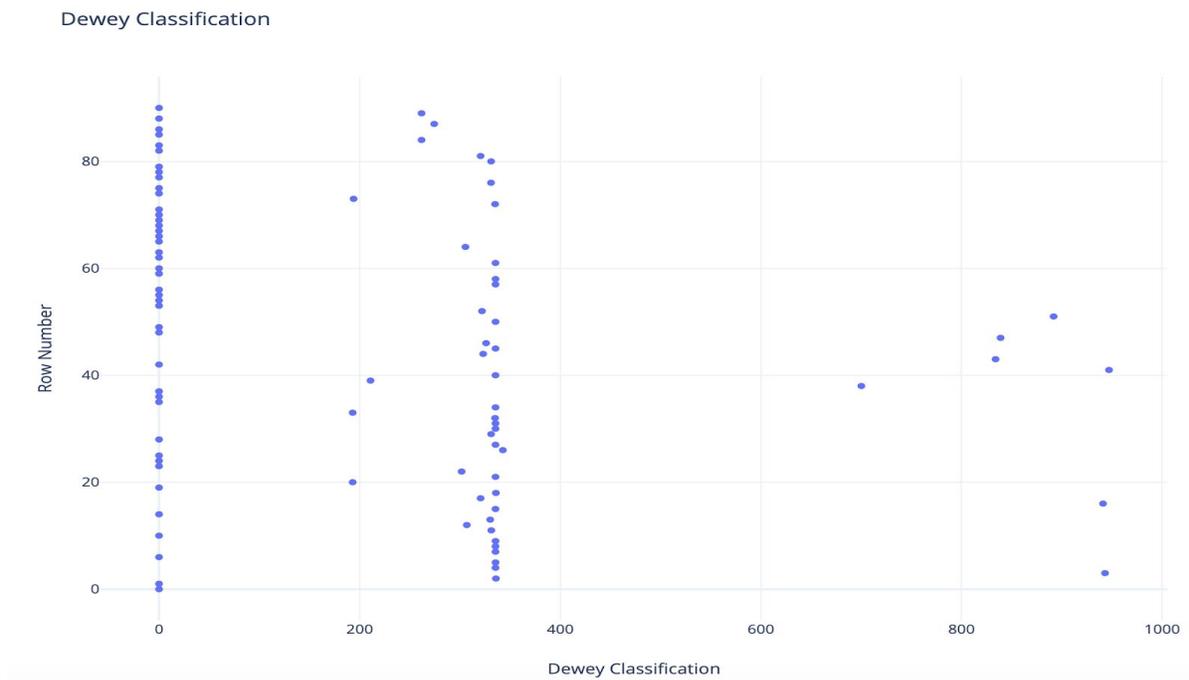
QUERY 1

```
SELECT
  title, bibNumber, COUNT(bibNumber) AS count, itemtype, deweyClass
FROM
  spl_2016.outraw
WHERE
  title LIKE '%karl marx%'
  OR title LIKE '% marxism %'
  OR title LIKE '% marxist %'
  OR title LIKE '% marxian %'
GROUP BY bibNumber , itemtype , title, deweyClass
ORDER BY count DESC
LIMIT 2000;
```

In this query, I extracted items with 'Karl Marx', 'marxism', 'marxist', or 'marxian' in the title, and ordered them by the frequency of checkouts by assigning the variable count to item's bibNumber. A total of 91 items were returned. These are the top 20.

title	bibNumber	count	itemtype	deweyClass
jeune Karl Marx The young Karl Marx	3359336	242	acdvd	
Karl Marx a nineteenth century life	2853427	128	acbkc	
Wobblies Zapatistas conversations on anarchism Marxism and radical history	2566447	114	acbkc	335.83
Karl Marx City	3331030	87	acdvd	943
Main currents of Marxism the founders the golden age the breakdown	2308869	60	acbkc	335.409
Black marxism the making of the Black radical tradition	1937980	50	acbkc	335.43091
Karl Marx a life	1953851	43	acbkc	
portable Karl Marx	346753	33	acbkc	335.4
Late Marxism Adorno or the persistence of the dialectic	597677	31	acbkc	335.4
introduction to the three volumes of Karl Marxs Capital	2840455	30	acbkc	335.41
Karl Marx greatness and illusion	3211576	29	acbkc	
problem with work feminism Marxism antiwork politics and postwork imaginaries	3277530	26	acbkc	331.2
Queer Marxism in two Chinas	3170376	24	acbkc	306.7601
theory of monopoly capitalism an elaboration of Marxian political economy	3004528	23	acbkc	330.122
Karl Marx his life and thought	45363	21	acbkc	
Karl Marxs theory of history a defence	120509	21	acbkc	335.411
Left of Karl Marx the political life of Black Communist Claudia Jones	2551765	18	acbkc	941.08509
Socialism 101 from the Bolsheviks and Karl Marx to universal healthcare and the Democratic S...	3463665	18	acbkc	320.531
In defense of Marxism against the petty bourgeois opposition	333600	17	acbkc	335.8
Allende death of a Marxist dream	201717	17	acbkc	

The most popular item is a DVD of the historical drama film, The Young Karl Marx. There are several biographies such as Karl Marx: A Nineteenth Century Life and Karl Marx: A Life.



42 of the items are non-Dewey (plotted as 0), 35 are in the 300s, which is classified as Social Sciences. 20 of those are 335: Socialism and related systems. 3 titles are classified as 193: Philosophy of Germany and Austria. 4 are in the 200s: Religion, 4 are in the 800s: Literature, and 3 are in the 940s: History of Europe.

QUERY 2

```

SELECT
    title, bibNumber, COUNT(bibNumber) AS count, itemtype, deweyClass
FROM
    spl_2016.outraw
WHERE
    title LIKE '%capitalism%'
    OR title LIKE '%capitalist%'

GROUP BY bibNumber , itemtype , title, deweyClass
ORDER BY count DESC
LIMIT 2000;

```

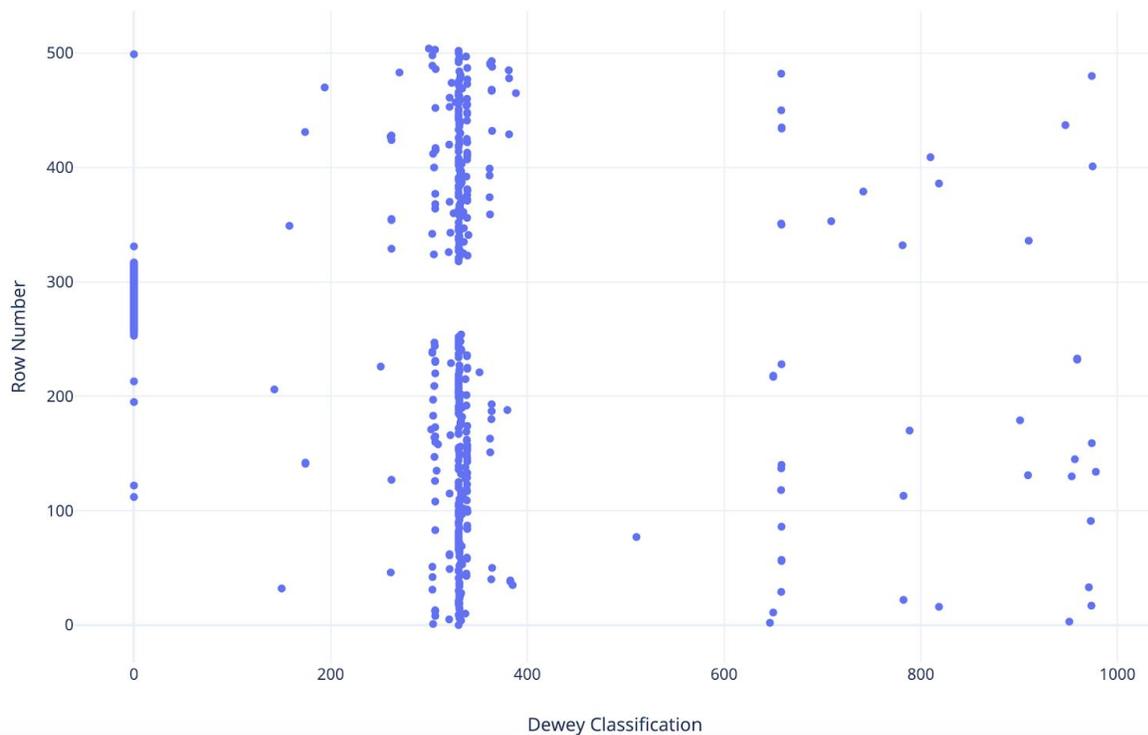
I did the same query with the keywords “capitalism” and “capitalist”. 505 items were returned. These are the top 29 items returned.

title	bibNumber	count	itemtype	deweyClass
Capitalism a love story	2633026	3863	acdvd	330.122
shock doctrine the rise of disaster capitalism	2433290	1938	acbk	330.122
This changes everything capitalism vs the climate	3025194	1305	acbk	363.73874
Bad money reckless finance failed politics and the global crisis of American capitalism	2472742	704	acbk	330.973
half has never been told slavery and the making of American capitalism	3021800	519	acbk	306.36209
Supercapitalism the transformation of business democracy and everyday life	2453203	515	acbk	320.97301
Saving capitalism for the many not the few	3104576	452	acbk	330.973
age of surveillance capitalism the fight for a human future at the new frontier of power	3432108	375	acbk	306.3
23 things they dont tell you about capitalism	2681425	373	acbk	330.122
Creating a world without poverty social business and the future of capitalism	2472818	360	acbk	338.7
Animal spirits how human psychology drives the economy and why it matters for global capitali...	2573711	349	acbk	330.12201
young mans guide to late capitalism	2697225	340	acbk	
Natural capitalism creating the next industrial revolution	2415223	249	acbk	338.973
battle for the soul of capitalism	2321082	249	acbk	330.12209
great deformation the corruption of capitalism in America	2874669	223	acbk	330.973
Conscious capitalism liberating the heroic spirit of business	2861363	216	acbk	174.4
Bad samaritans the myth of free trade and the secret history of capitalism	2462089	213	acbk	382.71
relentless revolution a history of capitalism	2622518	201	acbk	330.12209
Gotcha capitalism how hidden fees rip you off every day and what you can do about it	2476730	198	acbk	351.34
Capitalism hits the fan the global economic meltdown and what to do about it	2617949	197	acbk	330.973
Bad money reckless finance failed politics and the global crisis of American capitalism	2514130	193	accd	330.973
failure of capitalism the crisis of 08 and the descent into depression	2569414	190	acbk	330.973
Buffett the making of an American capitalist	2503235	190	acbk	332.6092
bridge at the edge of the world capitalism the environment and crossing from crisis to sustaina...	2490247	178	acbk	333.7
Democracy at work a cure for capitalism	2850107	175	acbk	330.122
future of capitalism facing the new anxieties	3395089	168	acbk	330.122
thousand plateaus capitalism and schizophrenia	530403	168	acbk	194
Capitalism a ghost story	2988723	167	acbk	330.954

The most popular item is a DVD of the documentary film, Capitalism: A Love Story, centering the late-2000s financial crisis and ends with the filmmaker calling for the elimination of capitalism. Many of the other top items are critiques of capitalism including

Naomi Klein's *The Shock Doctrine: The Rise of Disaster Capitalism and This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs the Climate.*

Dewey Classifications



70 of the items are non-Dewey (plotted as 0). 7 items are classified in the 100s: Philosophy and Psychology. 11 are in the 200s: Religion. 373 items are classified in the 300s: Social Sciences. Of those, 171 are classified as 330: Economics. One item is classified as 510: Mathematics, 17 are in the 600s: Technology, 6 are in the 700s: Arts and Recreation, 3 are in the 800s: Literature, and 16 are in the 900s: History and Geography.

QUERY 3

```

SELECT
    title, bibNumber, COUNT(bibNumber) AS count, itemtype
FROM
    spl_2016.outraw
WHERE
    deweyClass >= 335 and deweyClass < 336
GROUP BY bibNumber , itemtype , title
ORDER BY count DESC
LIMIT 2000;

```

I did a similar query to get all the items Dewey classified as 335: Socialism and Related Systems. 477 items were returned.

Emma Goldman	2303072	370	acdvd
Communist manifesto	2859363	265	acbkc
Utopia	2441616	186	acbkc
communist manifesto	2441421	175	acbkc
Steal this book	2290504	148	acbkc
American anarchist	3266040	129	acdvd
No Gods no masters a history of anarchism	3343594	121	acdvd
Chomsky on anarchism	2409466	118	acbkc
world that never was a true story of dreamers schemers anarchists and secret agents	2644424	114	acbkc
Wobblies Zapatistas conversations on anarchism Marxism and radical history	2566447	114	acbkc
Why Marx was right	2709983	111	acbkc
On anarchism	2963284	102	acbkc
Two cheers for anarchism six easy pieces on autonomy dignity and meaningful work and play	2917256	91	acbkc
To the Finland station a study in the writing and acting of history	2631593	90	acbkc
Vu A, A n si A A tu nghi A A m trong T2 T4 dau d A, A o thuong tang kien tr A, A c A f A ang CSVN	2354391	88	acbkc
American socialist the life times of Eugene Victor Debs	3396869	81	acdvd
Revolution why its necessary why its possible what its all about	2282546	79	acdvd
Utopia	2086359	74	acbkc
companion to Marxs Capital	2702986	72	acbkc
anarchist cookbook	2237852	72	acbkc
Communist manifesto	2019844	72	acbkc
Steal this book	3046083	69	acbkc
Imagine living in a socialist USA	2969237	64	acbkc
red flag a history of communism	2604118	63	acbkc
Communist manifesto a modern edition	1816011	62	acbkc

Like the previous two queries, the top item is a DVD. It is titled 'Emma Goldman' who was an anarchist political activist and writer. The second most checked-out item is Karl Marx's Communist Manifesto, though if versions with different bibNumbers are added together, they would surpass the Emma Goldman DVD.

QUERIES 4, 5 & 6

```
SELECT
  YEAR(i.cout) AS year,
  COUNT(*) AS count
FROM
  (SELECT
    bibNumber, cout, itemType, title
  FROM
    spl_2016.outraw
  WHERE
    title LIKE '%karl marx%'
    OR title LIKE '% marxism %'
    OR title LIKE '% marxist %'
    OR title LIKE '% marxian %') AS i
GROUP BY YEAR(i.cout)
ORDER BY year ;
```

For this query, my objective was to see the popularity of items related to Karl Marx or Marxism over time. I did similar queries to find the number of items checked out per year for the 'capitalism' and 'socialism' items from the previous queries.

Marx

year	count
2006	65
2007	40
2008	67
2009	106
2010	77
2011	59
2012	57
2013	120
2014	61
2015	58
2016	70
2017	75
2018	218
2019	235
2020	58
2021	2

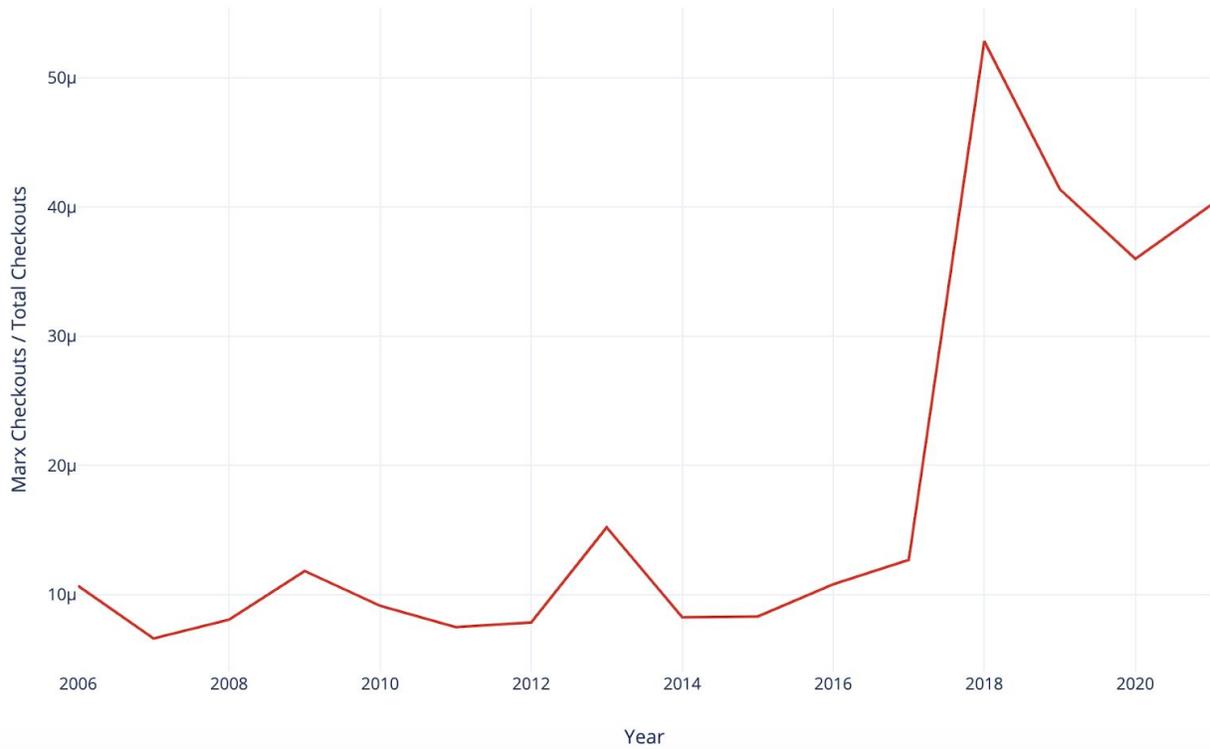
Capitalism

year	count
2006	799
2007	841
2008	2624
2009	2098
2010	2933
2011	2847
2012	1915
2013	1796
2014	1663
2015	2160
2016	1840
2017	1598
2018	1340
2019	2440
2020	699
2021	22

Socialism

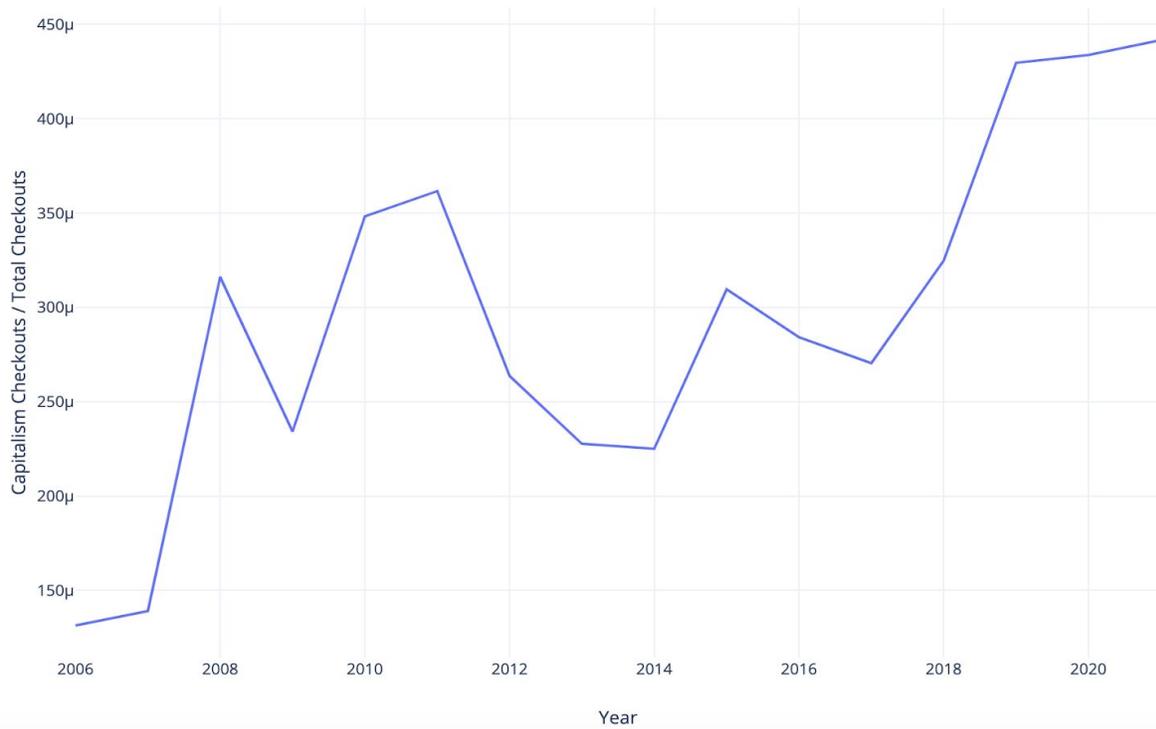
year	count
2006	569
2007	488
2008	699
2009	672
2010	679
2011	544
2012	475
2013	579
2014	571
2015	485
2016	528
2017	633
2018	610
2019	889
2020	269
2021	9

Popularity of Marx Checkouts Per Year



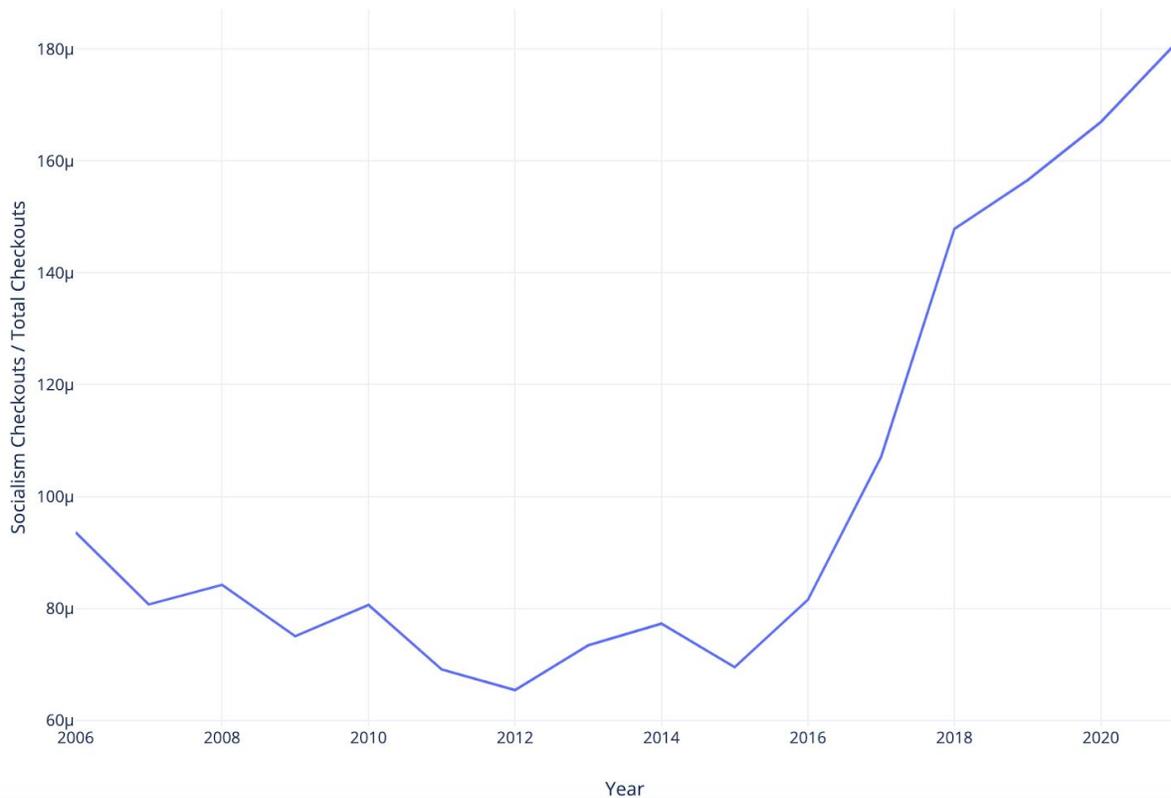
I plotted the number of checkouts for each year divided by the total number of checkouts for each year. There are small spikes in 2009 and 2013, then a huge increase in 2018. The checkouts stay relatively high in the most recent years.

Popularity of Capitalism Checkouts Per Year



The large increase from 2007 to 2008 is likely due to the 2007-2008 financial crisis. After that, popularity of these checkouts fluctuate but never dip back down to the 2006 and 2007 levels. Starting from 2018, popularity keeps increasing, even with the limited data from 2020 and 2021.

Popularity of Socialism Checkouts Per Year



Popularity of items Dewey classified as Socialism increases greatly starting in 2016.

ANALYSIS

It's my understanding that compared to many other countries, politics in the United States are skewed to the right when it comes to economics. The GOP is very far right, the Democratic Party is center-right, and we don't really have any visible far-left ideologies.

The data shows that over the past few years there has been an increased interest in items related to Karl Marx/Marxism, capitalist critique, and socialism. This could possibly be indicative of growing Leftist ideologies. It is my prediction that events of the past year including the U.S. government's poor treatment of the working class during the COVID-19 pandemic and the BLM protests against police brutality will increase popularity of radical Leftist ideology in the upcoming years which will be reflected in similar data trends of increasing interest in Marxist, anti-capitalist, and socialist literature and media.