

TOTAL CTE Word Count for inclusive of quotations and citations (350 STRICT word limit): 349 words

(NOTE: Include the prompts. Do not exceed one page or the word limit. Upload as a 1-page PDF to Gradescope by deadline.)

1. Identify and articulate ONE cross-cutting theme (or debate) from this week's materials. Remember that a theme is not a topic. "This week's theme is competition" is insufficient. What do this week's materials together say *about* competition? A better theme would be "this week's readings discuss the complex and controversial role of the state in the creation and management of markets." Reference and cite at least THREE readings. Use this citation format: (Smith 2019, 4). (~ 225 words)

This week, we discussed the overall inequality both within the United States and globally. Within the US, Saez and Zucman explain that there is a large discrepancy between the tax a wealthy person pays as opposed to middle-class workers, and disproportionately so as "billionaires have paid less than steel workers" in 2018 for the first time in almost a century (Saez & Zucman 2019, xi). As they put it, this "tax injustice" is a threat to "globalization and the future of democracy", highlighting the magnitude of the discrepancy, and the dire need to remedy it. Internationally, this inequality is also seen; one form of particular interest is that of colonialism, as "countries named as 'underdeveloped'... are exploited by other" (Rodney 1973, 24), more wealthy nations. In addition to this, Rodney explains that the difference in wealth between developed and developing countries has been inflated since industrialized countries "produce far more goods than the poor nations" (Rodney 1973, 28-29), causing the goods that developing countries produce to be uncompetitive. This viewpoint is elaborated upon by Wengraf, where she elaborates on how "neoliberalist policy forced its way into Africa...leaving in its wake...a debt crisis" (Wengraf 2018, 43), highlighting how American intervention in Africa has induced these economic crises, thus increasing the inequality in global wealth.

2. Pick ONE reading and carefully critique the author's methodology, evidence, tone, underlying assumptions, and/or biases. Do not praise the author or work. Rather, be critical and be specific. Include ONE citation. (~75 words)

The world inequality report writes that "the richest 10% hold 76% of all wealth", while "half the global population hold barely 2% of the wealth" (Chancel et al. 2022, 7), indicating that global wealth is unequally distributed. However, this argument ignores the fact that wealthy individuals control more money, so naturally they will account for more wealth proportionately. Further, wealthy individuals also enjoy financial security, so naturally they will be capable of earning more money, making this statistic not entirely surprising.

3. Offer ONE clarifying question about one of the readings (e.g., something you didn't understand) OR a thoughtful question for discussion section (e.g., "can market competition be regulated in states?"). Your question could link to ideas from another week or to current affairs. Avoid questions that are too general or rhetorical. Be specific. (~25 words)

Rodney claims that "specialization and division of labor led to...inequality in distribution." (Rodney 1973, 10). If this is the case, does this imply that capitalism can never solve inequality?

4. What reactions – or connections - do you have to this week's materials? Consider: What were you surprised to learn? To what extent are these materials relevant to today? We are looking for thoughtful reflections. (~25 words)

This week's discussion reminded me of previous discussions involving the "shock doctrine" – it seems that a very similar phenomenon is occurring in Africa today with colonialism.