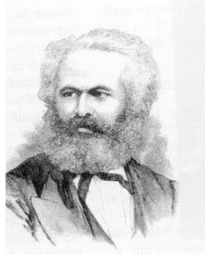


Karl Marx 1818-1883



Marx believed that the most basic determinant of one's behavior was economic—the need to sustain a living.

What are some other basic determinants of one's behavior?

Is there one basic determinant for everyone's behavior?

Marx's Sociology

Marx explained that over time two economic classes would emerge:

- Bourgeoisie
- Proletariat

Marx predicted social revolutions

—those at the bottom fighting those at the top for scarce resources.

Why would those at the bottom be discontented?

- Labor Theory of Value—the amount of labor needed to produce something determines the “value” of the thing produced.
- Profit as Exploitation—The workers don't receive in pay what they have produced.

- The rich were envied for their lush life style
- Work was a chore rather than a fulfilling experience (alienation)
- Workers had no control (alienation)

Marx introduced the idea of
Class consciousness
(p.31)

What is this?

--awareness of one's class
(i.e., bourgeoisie, proletariat)

--having a biased view of the
world based on one's particular
social class

--believing in those ideas that
best fit one's material interests

"false class consciousness"
people from a lower class
accepted the beliefs of those in
a higher class (p.31).

Why accept the beliefs
of the wealthy?

The wealthy encouraged
conformity to their ideas.

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Erik/aschexp2.wmv](mms://video.ua.ac.be/HenderickxErik/aschexp2.wmv)

A famous view expressed
by Marx is that:

"Religion is the opiate of
the people."

What might this mean?

Do you agree?

Marx's Theories of Politics

Capitalism would be replaced
by socialism and then
communism

What is capitalism?

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What are some advantages and disadvantages of capitalism?

Capitalism would be replaced by socialism and then communism

What's the difference between socialism and communism?

Why would one believe the proletariat could and would defeat the bourgeoisie?

1. Their numbers would grow to the point of overwhelming the capitalists.
2. Their time would come as the workers unite.

How might the growth of industry be seen as helping to spur political change/revolution?

The industrial revolution brought the workers together in factory settings with the result that:

- Workers became more conscious of their plight.
- Workers could easily communicate and organize since they were all together (p.34)

Marx's Theories of Economics

1. Labor theory of value: it is labor that produces things of value.

As noted earlier, Marx believed that "the value of anything is the amount of labor it takes to produce it."

Marx's Theories of Economics

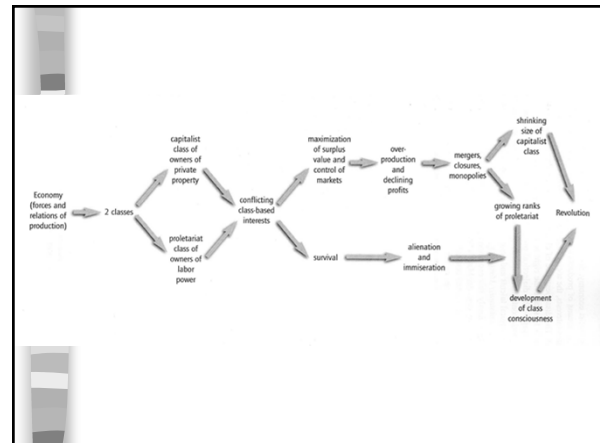
1. Labor theory of value: it is labor that produces things of value.
2. Profit as exploitation: exploitation of labor results in profit.
3. Law of the falling rate of profit: as the use of machines increases, there is less labor to exploit, thus profits fall.

Periodic cycle:

- (a) machines put people out of work,
- (b) fewer workers means fewer people to buy the products,
- (c) more machines means more product,
- (d) subsequently a reduction of buyers and an increase in production of product (b and c above) creates a depression;
- (e) many owners go out of business and sell their products at very low price
- (f) other owners purchase the products at a low price and so can sell them at a low cost, and eventually use up stock and then hire new workers to produce more—recovery begins as there are more workers to purchase products

Marx believed with each cycle of "prosperity and then depression" more and more people would be pushed down into the proletariat.

Final collapse of capitalism: As more and more people were pushed into the lower class the class would gain in power.



The growth of "alienation" is another reason Marx believed Capitalism would fall.

Capitalism creates alienation.

What does the term "alienation" mean to you?

Marx's ideas of alienation come from Kant and Hegel.

"Reality" as we know it is what we perceive it to be.

It is an innate characteristic of humans to create their reality by the act of perceiving it.

Humans eventually objectify what they have created.

They "forget" that their reality is only what they have created or others have created for them.

People are cut off, or alienated, from their innate ability to create or mold the world around them.

So, why hasn't capitalism failed?

Why haven't the workers "taken over" by throwing out the rich?

One explanation: rather than capitalism creating a large lower class, a large middle-class emerged.

The wealthy gave up some of their profit to the middle class to avoid the revolution predicted.

A second explanation:

The higher class controls the information systems and so could influence the thinking of the middle and lower classes (create a false class conscience)

What are some ways that the higher class controls information?

1. Media
2. Education
3. Advertising
4. Research
5. Internet

Other Reasons capitalism hasn't disappeared:

- (3) Belief that one could eventually move into the higher class and reap the benefits
- (4) Belief in the higher classes value system
- (5) Racial and religious strife within the working class

(6) The rich attempted to reduce the discontent of the poor.

(7) There was enough wealth so that the poor became less poor

(8) Government intervention-transferring wealth

(9) As noted earlier Marx stated that: "Religion is the opiate of the people."



Would you categorize Marx as a "pure" sociologist or an "applied" sociologists?

Marx viewed philosophy (and theory) as a distraction from the hard material reality.

"Marx Reloaded"

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