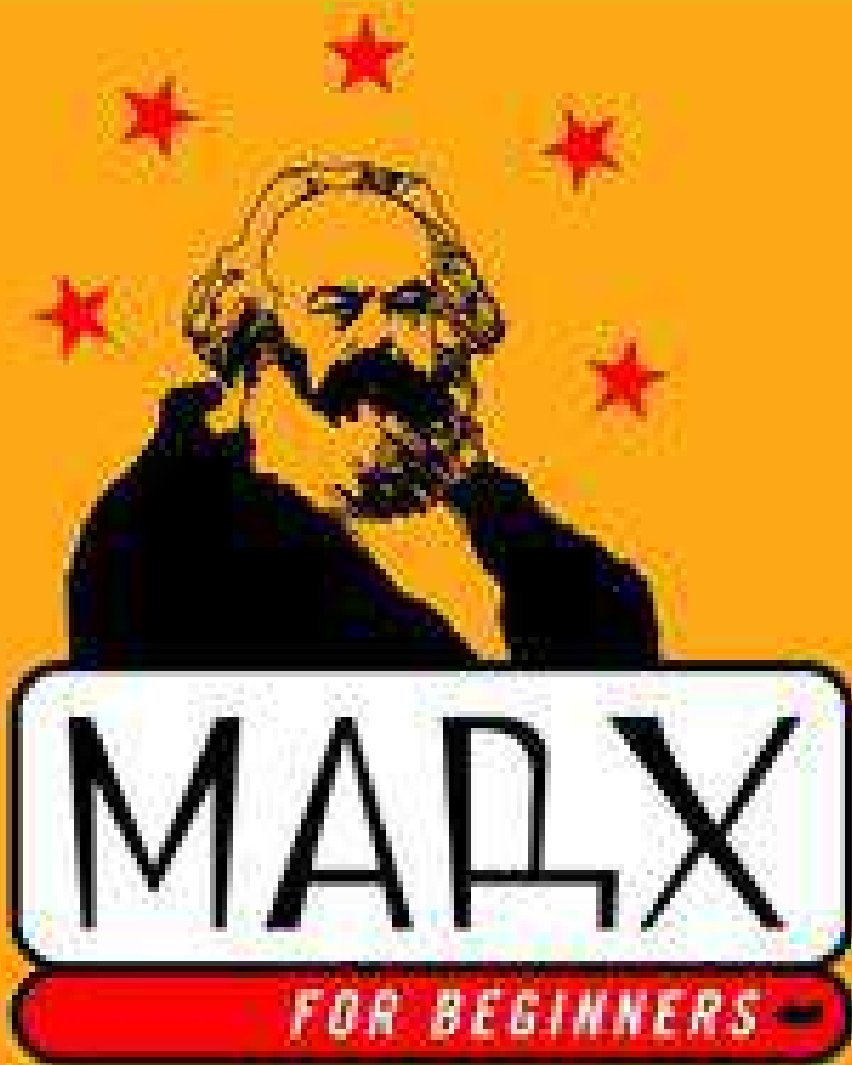


Marxism: The Social Inequity Unit

Sociology 2014

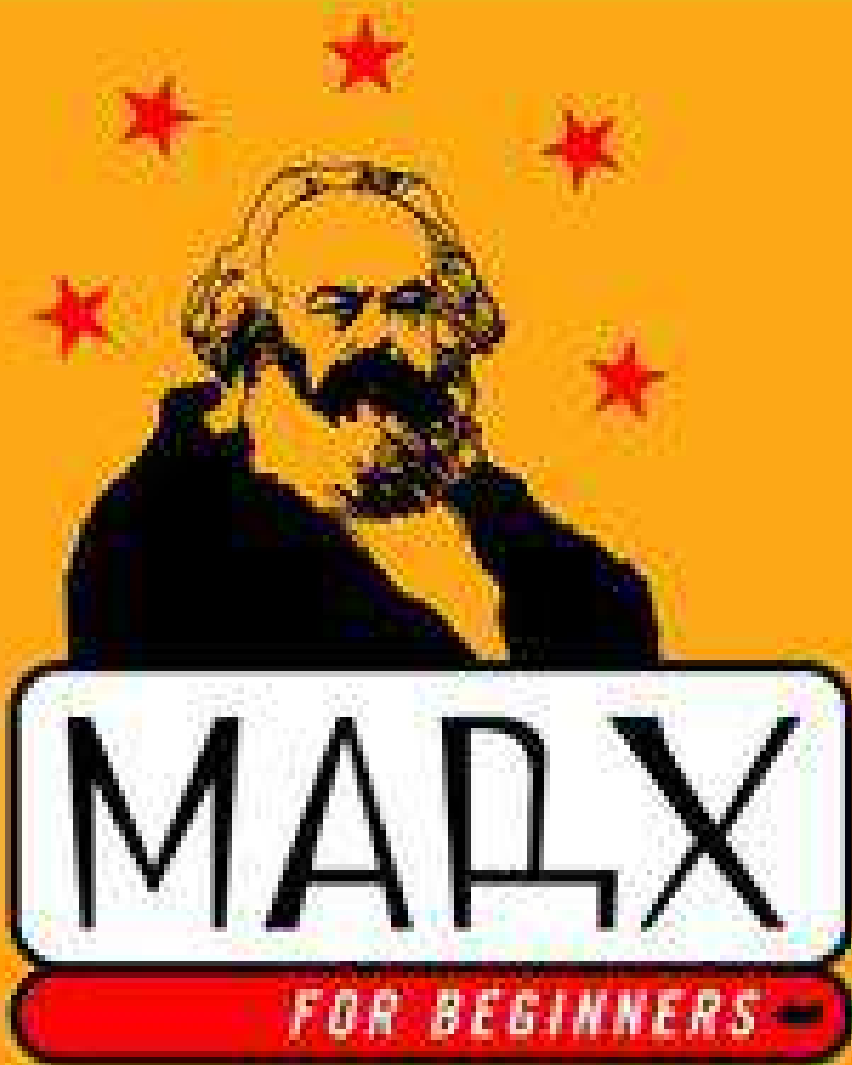
Phillip Smith



Karl Marx (1818 – 1883) was a German economist who was exiled to England.

He wrote **Das Kapital**, which explained how he thought capitalism would fall, and also the **Communist Manifesto**, which told the workers of the world to unite and fight the factory owners.

How do you think his life shaped his work?



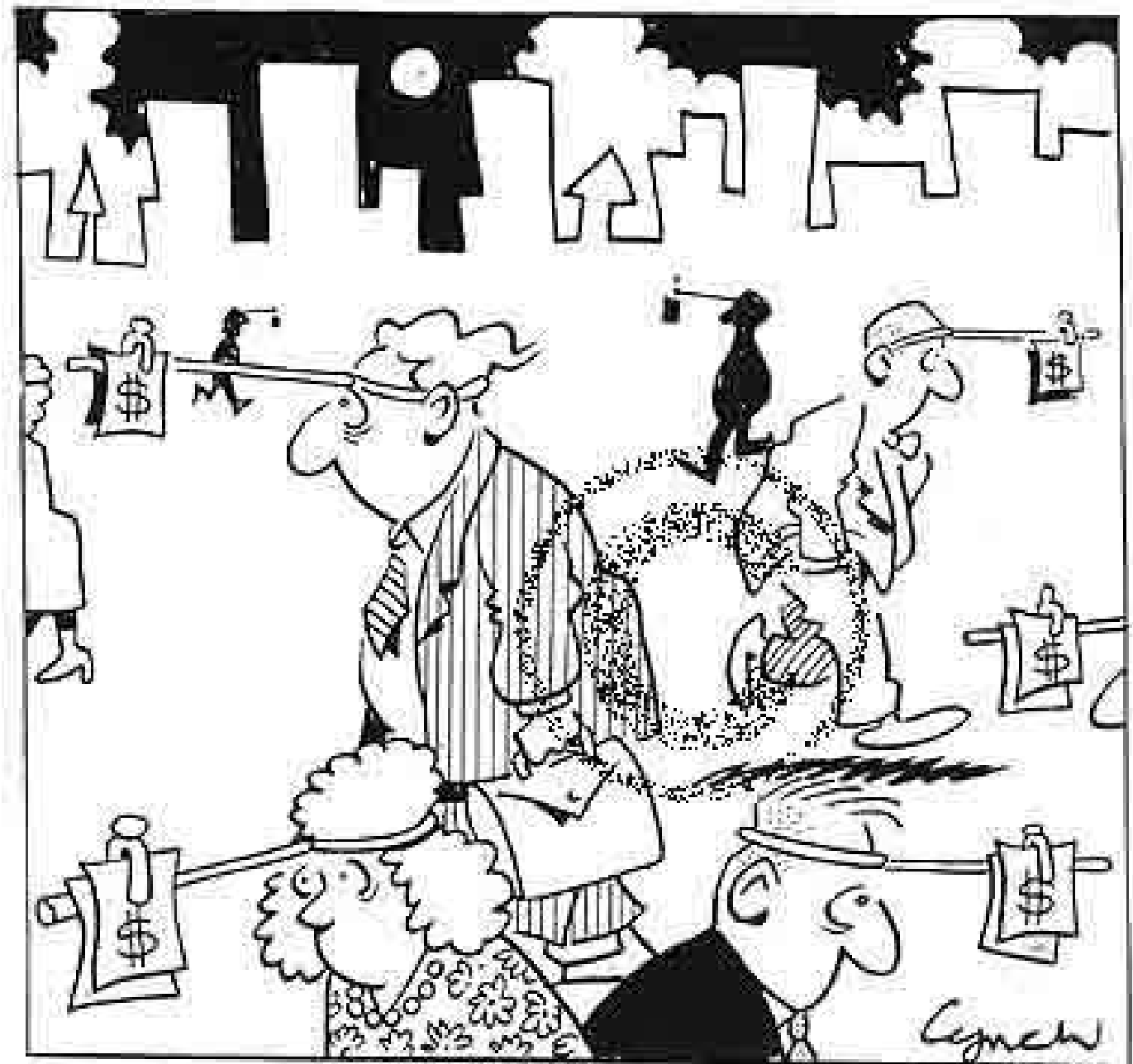
Marx's "Scientific Socialism" had 5 major points:

- *Historical Materialism*
- *Class Struggle*
- *Surplus Value*
- *Inevitability of Socialism*
- *Classless Society*

Historical Materialism

Marx argued that economics is the driving force of history.

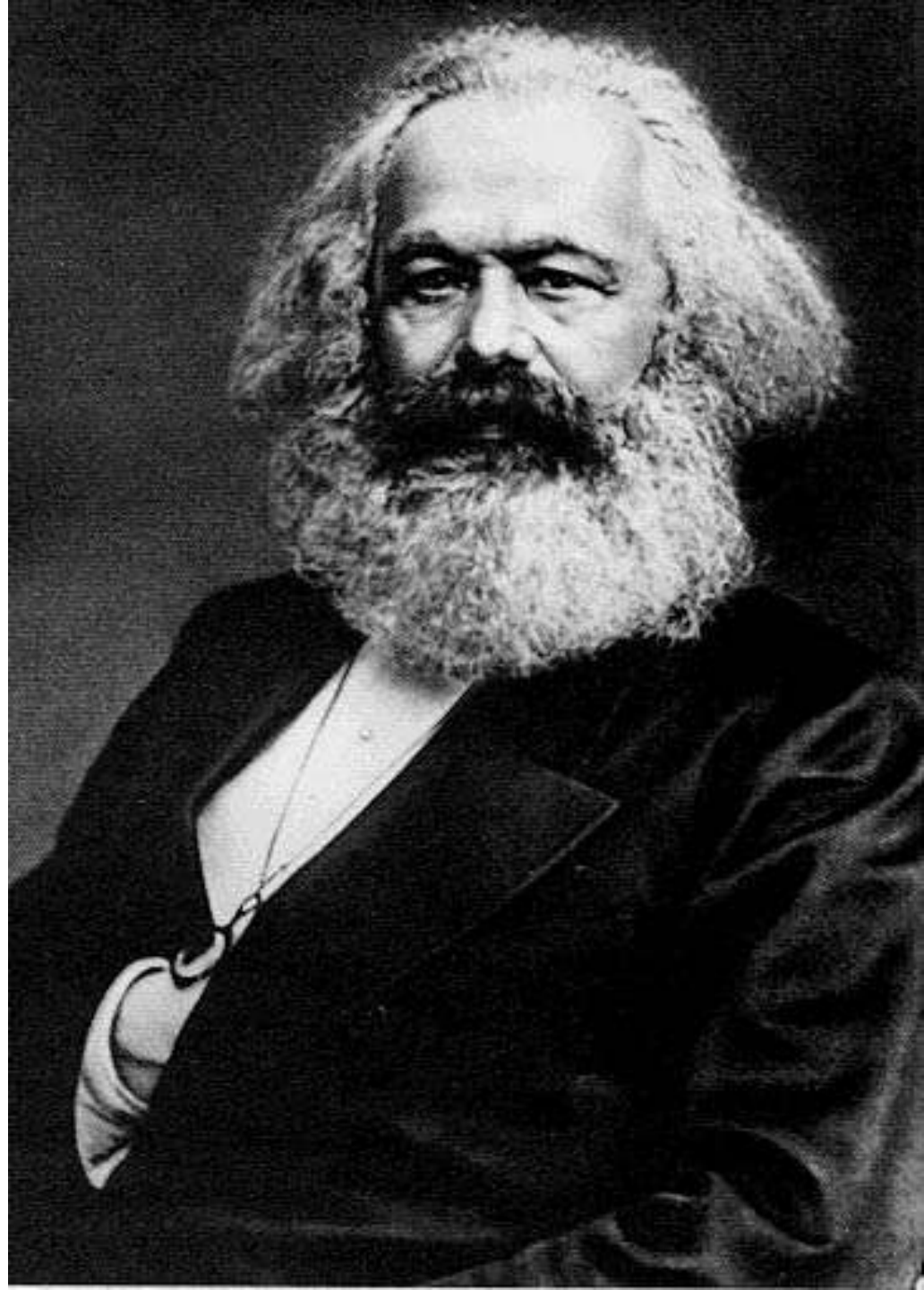
What is materialism?



Karl Marx says...

“The ideas of the ruling class are in every ***epoch*** the ruling ideas...”

“The ruling material force of society, is at the same time its ruling intellectual force.”



According to Marx, whoever owns the means of production has always controlled the government and society.



(Plowing fields)



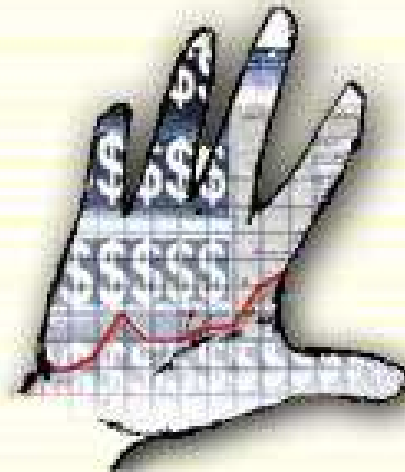
(Making sandwiches)

Labor



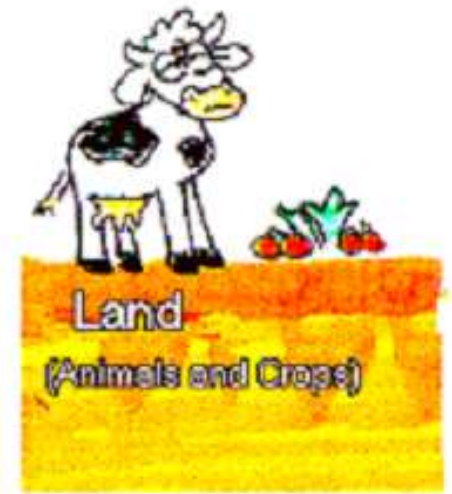
Capital

(Tools and equipment)



POP QUIZ

Q: Before the Industrial Revolution, what was the most important factor of production?



Q: Who owned it (in France)?



(Plowing fields)

(Making sandwiches)

Q: How did they control the government and society?

Labor

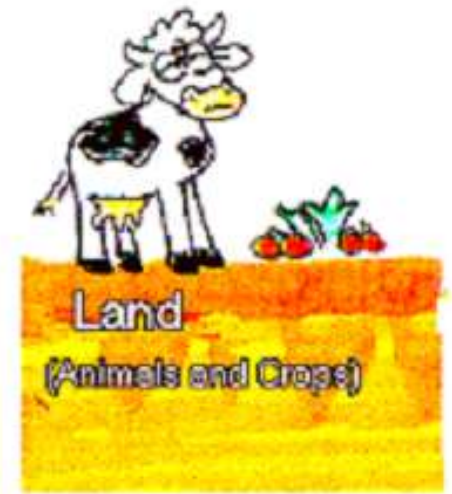


Capital

(Tools and equipment)

POP QUIZ

A: Land (for growing crops)



A: The Second Estate
(Nobles / Landlords)



(Plowing fields)



(Making sandwiches)

A: By teaming up with the First Estate (Priests), they could always outvote the outvote the Third Estate. Also, the Priests had always told the people that their absolute monarchs had Divine Right of Kings.

Labor



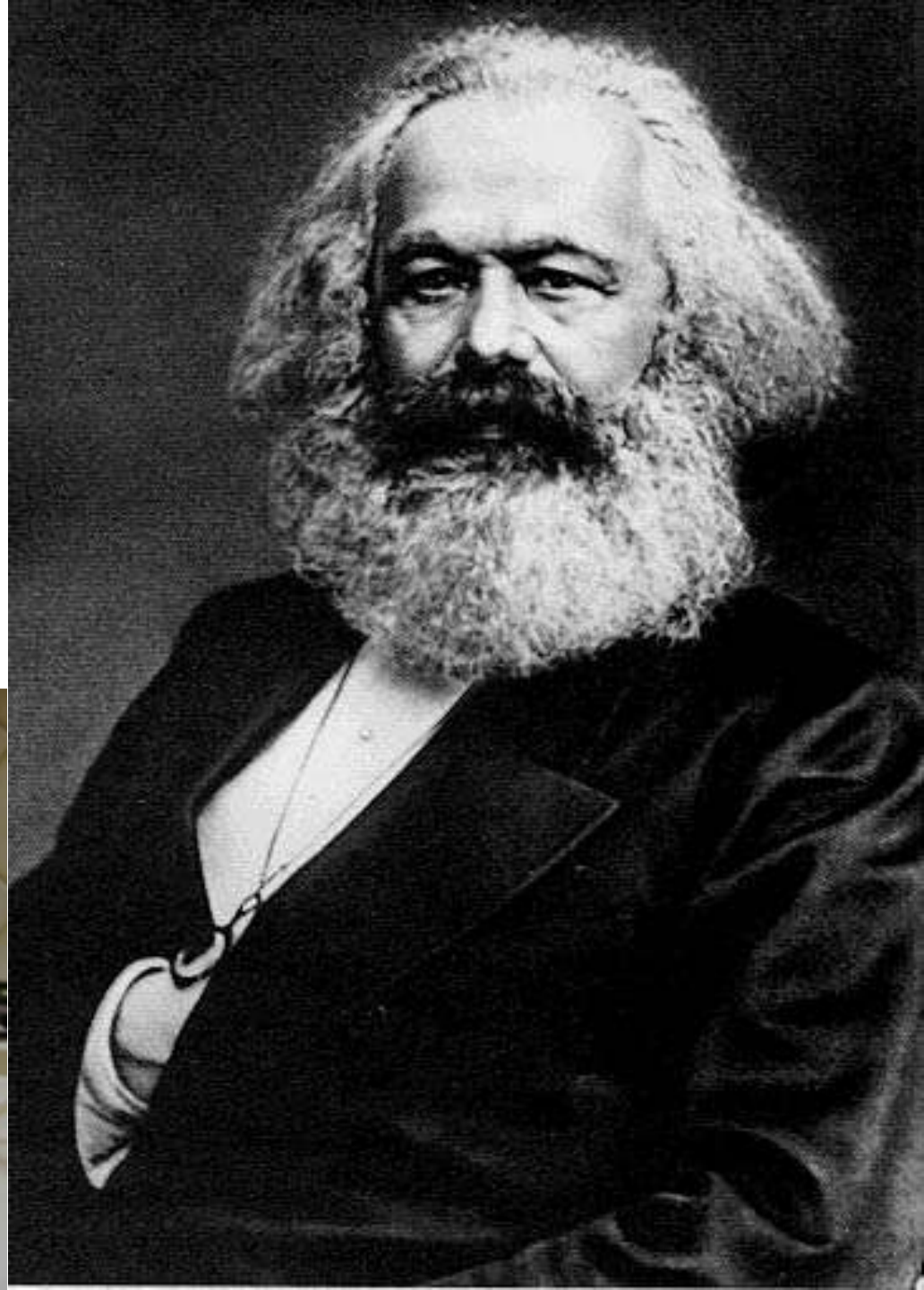
Capital

(Tools and equipment)

Karl Marx says...

“Religion is the opiate of the masses...”

What do you think he meant by this?





“History repeats itself, first as tragedy, second as farce.”

-Karl Marx

What do you think Marx meant by this?

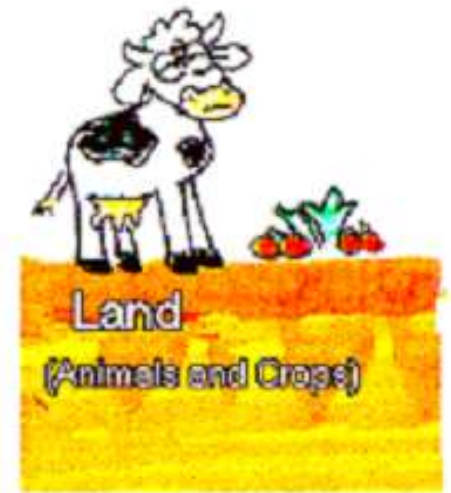
What about history is repeating itself?

POP QUIZ

Q: After the Industrial Revolution, what was the most important factor of production?

Q: Who owned it (in England)?

Q: How did they control the government and society?



(Plowing fields)



(Making sandwiches)

Labor



Capital

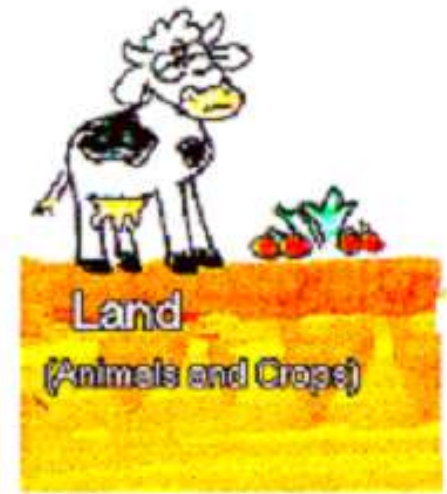
(Tools and equipment)

POP QUIZ

A: Capital (for making products)

A: The Bourgeoisie
(merchants & factory owners)

A: By advocating laissez faire economics, they fought unions, child labor laws, and workplace safety regulations. This kept the supply of labor high and the price of labor low.



(Plowing fields)

(Making sandwiches)

Labor



Capital

(Tools and equipment)

“History repeats itself, first as tragedy, second as farce.”

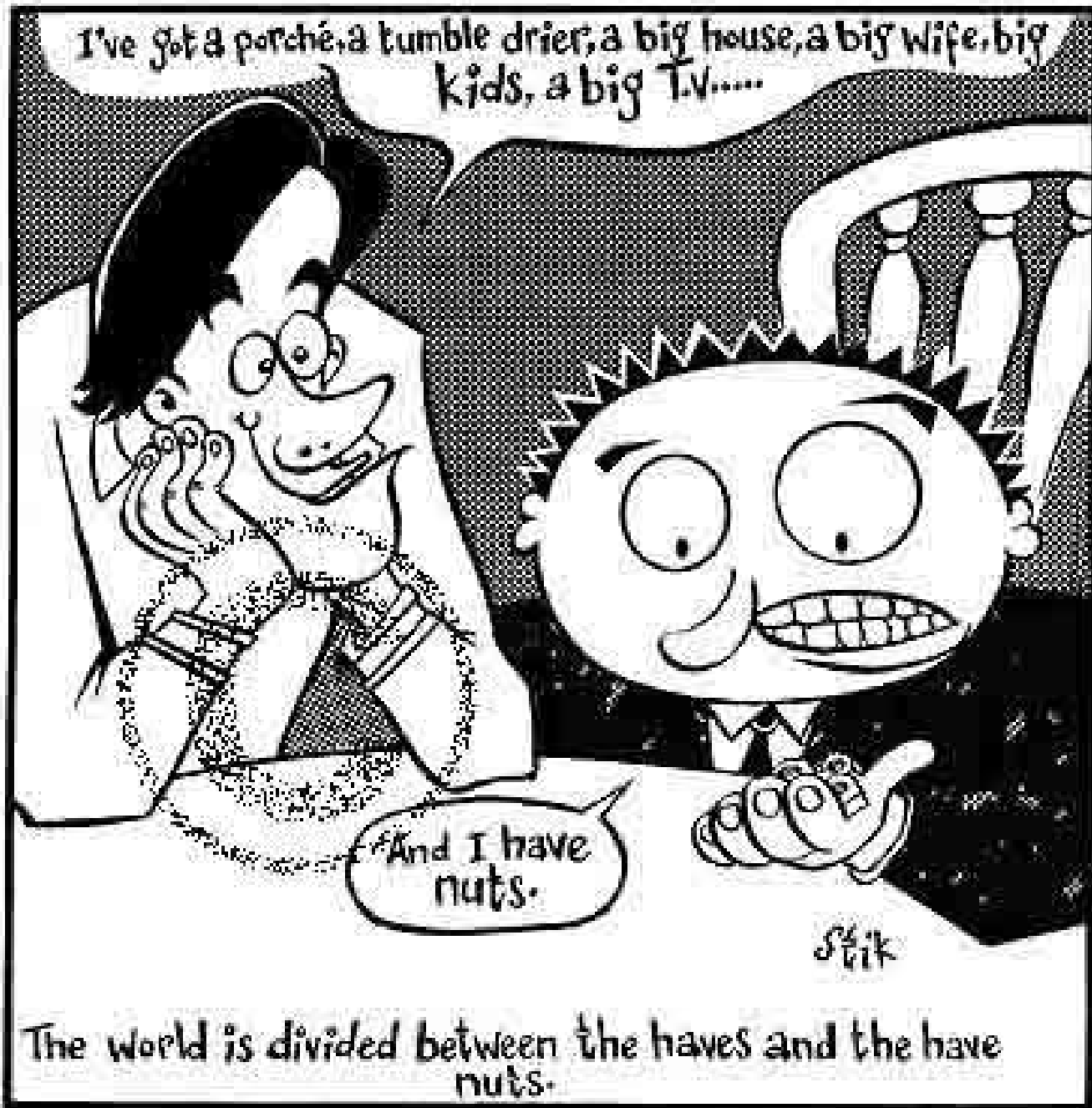
-Karl Marx

What do you think Marx meant by this?

What about history is repeating itself?



Class Struggle



According to Marx, society has always been divided into the “haves” and the “have nots” – and these two classes have always fought each other.

© Original Artist
Reproduction rights obtainable from
www.CartoonStock.com



Examples:

Patricians vs.
Plebeians

Serfs vs. Lords

Bourgeoisie vs.
Proletariat (Urban
Wage Laborers)

What does this cartoon say about the invisible hand?



Worker Productivity
and Profit

Worker Happiness



Capital (Bourgeoisie)



Labor (Proletariat)

Hey! I'm the hunter. You're supposed to be the GATHERER!

He was standing on the stuff I wanted to gather.



BIZARRO.COM Dist. by Universal Press Synd. 4-25-02

In Hunter / Gatherer cultures, people live in close-knit groups and share the fruits of their labors.

Karl Marx says...

“From each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs.”

In Feudal / Agricultural cultures, serfs and peasants lose the fruits of their labor by working for the nobles, but at least they still live in close-knit communities.

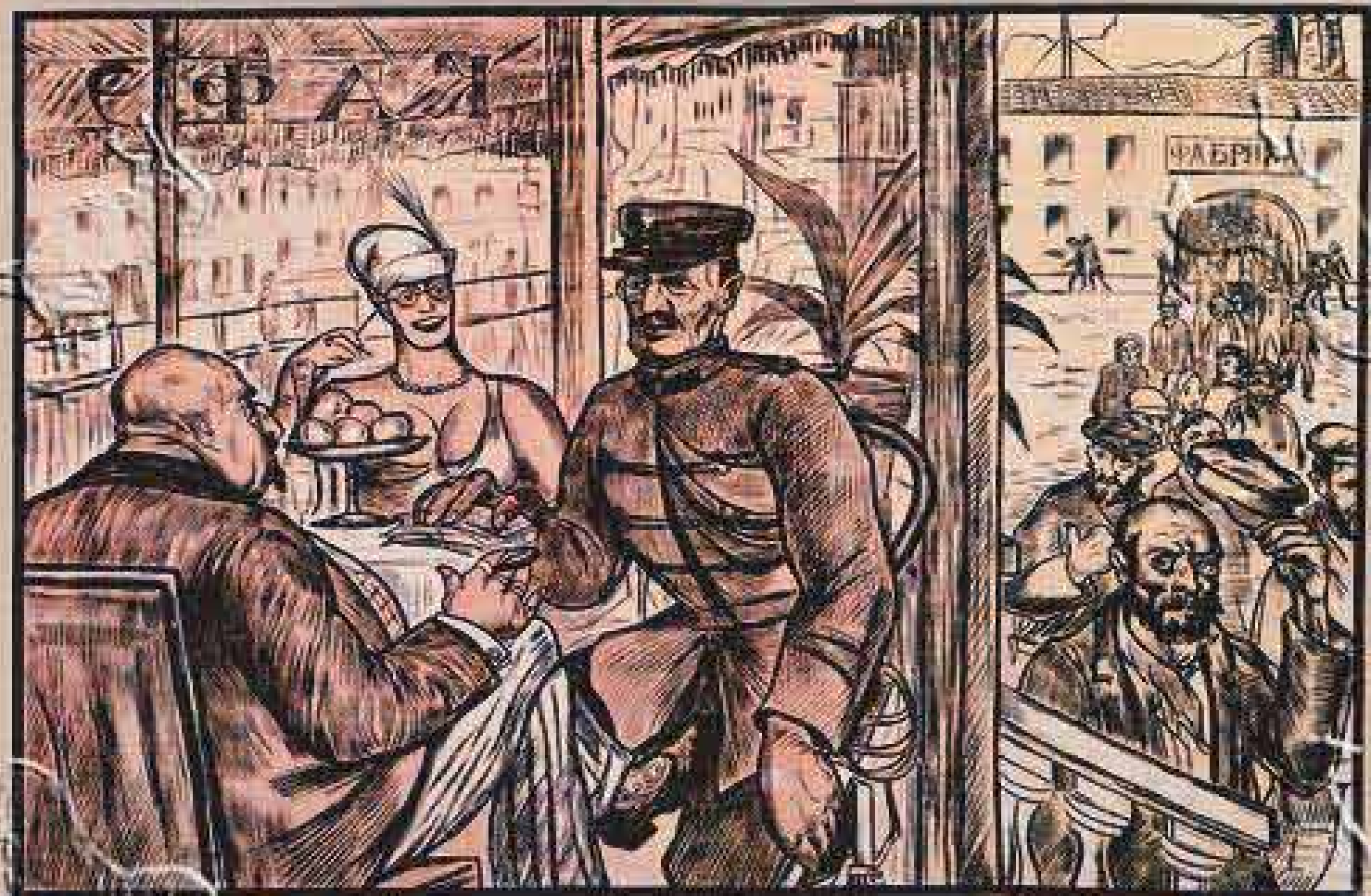


But in Industrial cultures, the proletariat is completely separated from the fruits of his labor, and he lives a restless, miserable detached existence.

This is called ***Alienation of Labor***



Marx believed that the proletariat in every country faced the same problem – Class struggle with the bourgeoisie.



דעם ארבייטער
דעם בארזשואזש
צײַט ווי ס'לעבט זיך בײַ דער הערשאַפֿט
פון דער פּוילישער שלאכטע

So he told the proletariat in every country,
“You have nothing to lose but your chains...”



“...Workers of the World Unite!”



巴黎公社表明，工人阶级只有经过专政，用暴力镇压剥削者，才能进到社会主义。这是巴黎公社革命的经验教训。

1871-1971

无产阶级专政万岁

纪念巴黎公社一百周年

But what do you notice about all of these pictures?



Surplus Value

Marx believed that the bourgeoisie basically bought the products of the laborers at a cheap price, and then sold those same products back to them at a high price, in effect stealing the surplus value as their profit.

© Original Artist
Reproduction rights obtainable from
www.CartoonStock.com



WHAT DID YOU TELL THAT MAN JUST NOW?

I TOLD HIM TO WORK FASTER!

HOW MUCH DO YOU PAY HIM?

FIFTEEN DOLLARS A DAY!

WHERE DO YOU GET THE MONEY TO PAY HIM?

I SELL PRODUCTS!

WHO MAKES THE PRODUCTS?

HE DOES!

HOW MANY PRODUCTS DOES HE MAKE IN ONE DAY?

FIFTY DOLLARS WORTH...

THEN INSTEAD OF YOU PAYING HIM, HE PAYS YOU THIRTY FIVE DOLLARS A DAY TO TELL HIM TO WORK FASTER!

HUH?

WELL... I OWN THE MACHINES!

HOW DID YOU GET THE MACHINES?

I SOLD PRODUCTS AND BOUGHT THEM!

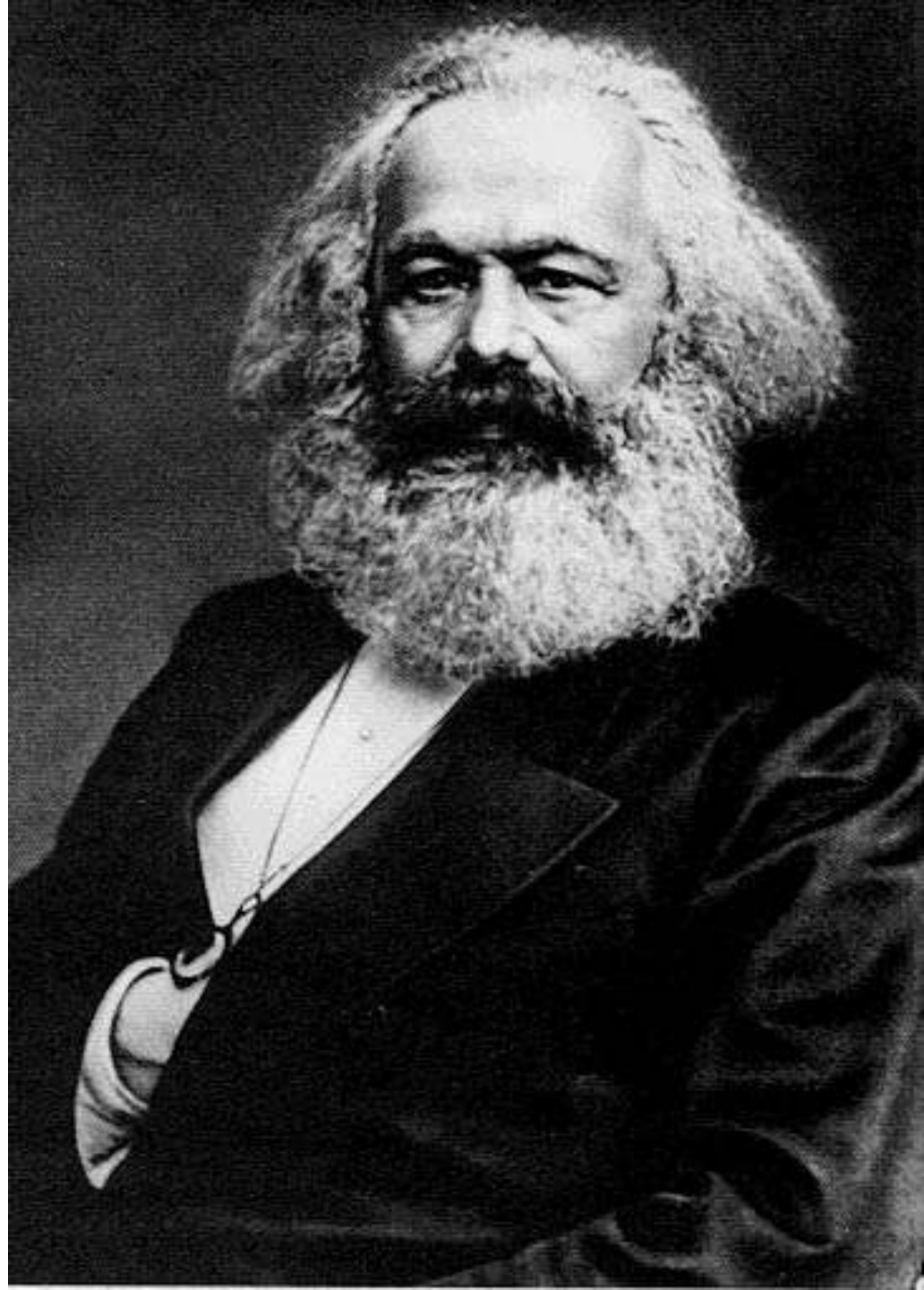
AND WHO MADE THOSE PRODUCTS?

SHUT UP... HE MIGHT HEAR YOU!

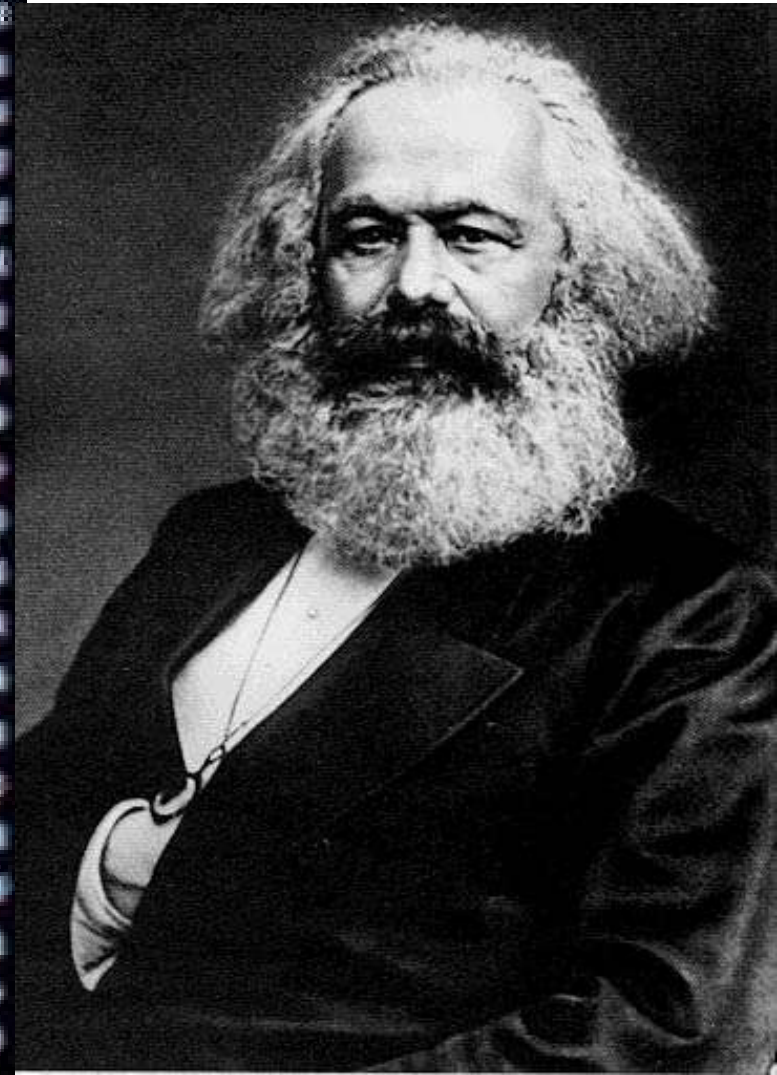
Karl Marx says...

“Capital is dead labor, which, vampire-like, lives only by sucking living labor, and lives the more, the more labor it sucks.”

Remember **A Modest Proposal** by Jonathan Swift?



Compare and Contrast with Marx...



Inevitability of Socialism

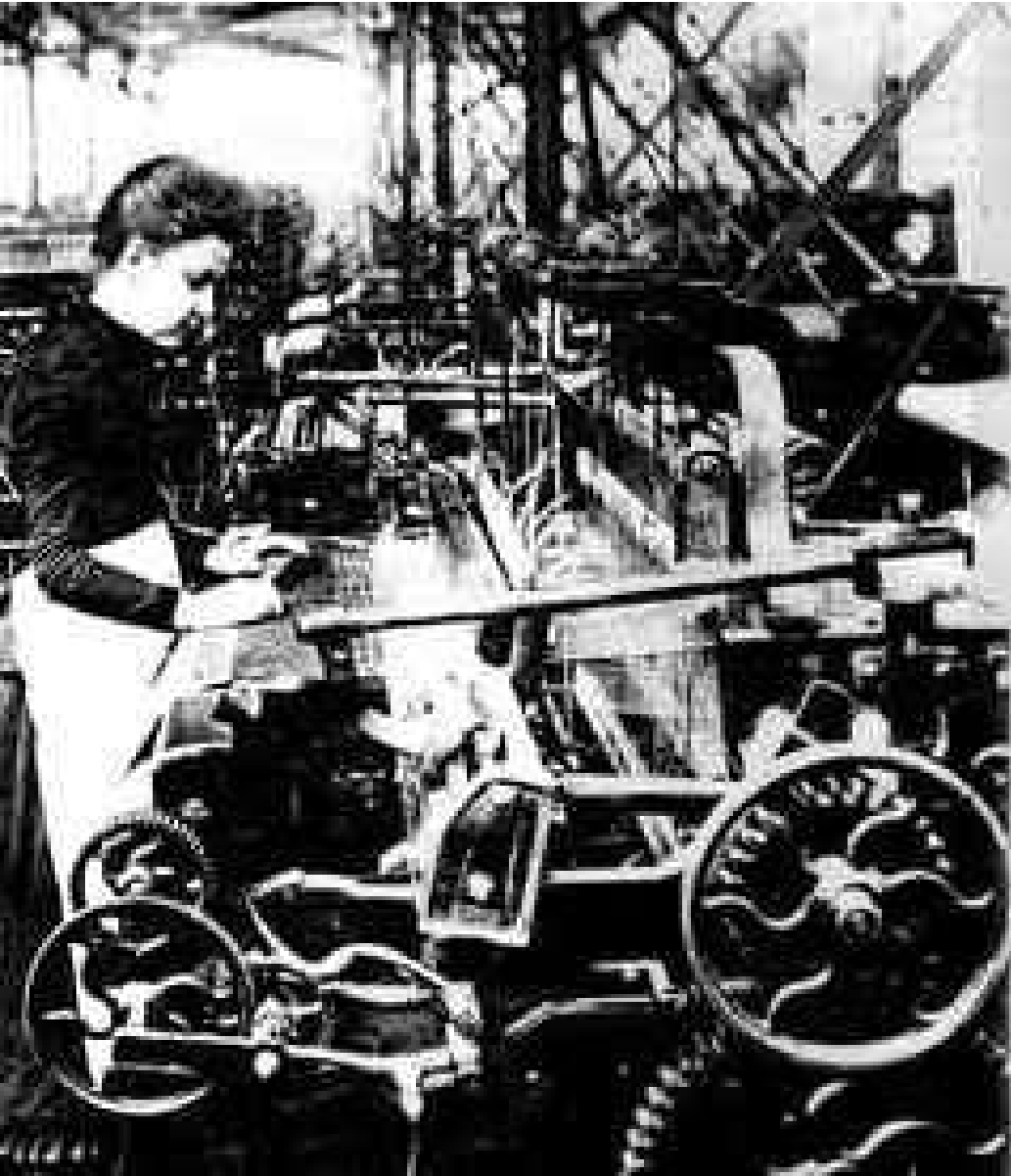
Marx argued that over time, capital (money) would concentrate in the hands of a small number of capitalists.

Finally, the lower class would rise up, overthrow the capitalists, and establish a *Dictatorship of the Proletariat*.

What does this remind you of?



Where do you think Marx believed Socialism would come first – Great Britain or Russia?



At first, the Dictatorship of the Proletariat would need absolute powers to make sure Reactionaries didn't bring back capitalism.

What does this remind you of?

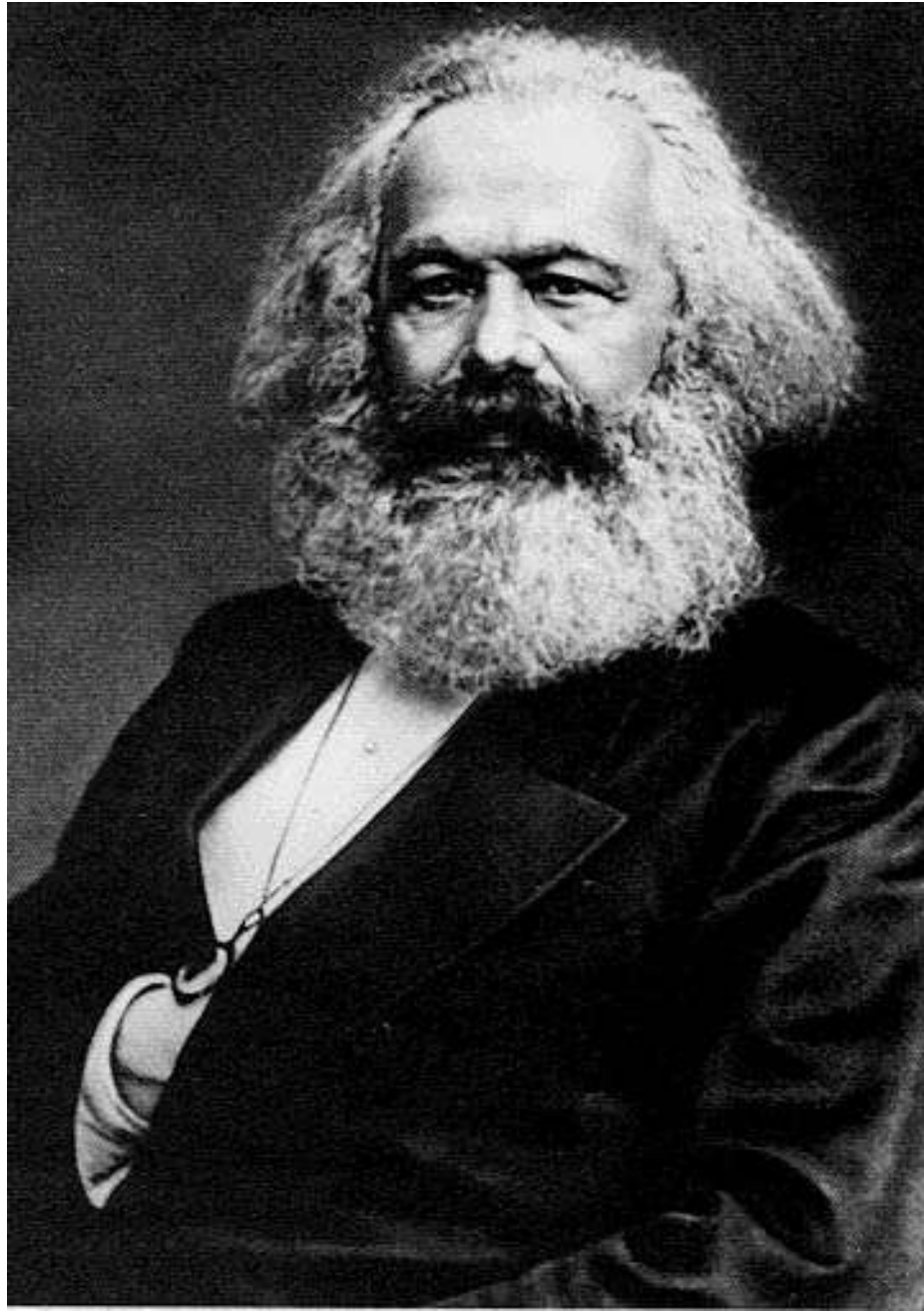


But before long, the workers would learn to share everything equally – “from each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs.” Karl Marx called this **Communism**, or the **Ultimate Classless Society**.





Can't you see the resemblance?

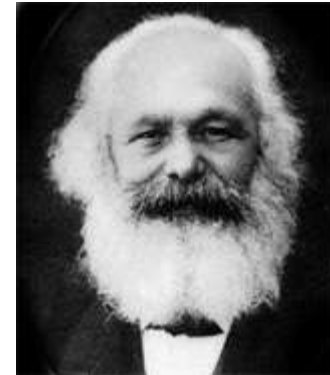


Why Study Marxism Today?

- Most of the Communist world collapsed
- Why bother?
- Incredibly influential work
- Adopted by half of the world at one time
- Had some good ideas
- and some fatal flaws
- The idea is not to convert you but to help you understand and evaluate

Karl Marx (1818-1883)

- Born to a wealthy Jewish family
- Studied at Universities of Bonn and Berlin
- Wrote many works including: Capital, The German Ideology, The Communist Manifesto, etc.
- Influenced many world leaders including Mao Zedong, Leon Trotsky and Vladimir Lenin.



Friedrich Engels (1820-1895)

- Relatively Wealthy
- Studied condition of English working class
- Wrote well
- Combined his empirical view with Marx's philosophical view
- Potent Combination



The Communist Manifesto

- Only 46 pages
- A difficult read?
- Written to inspire and motivate assembly line factory workers



Overall Theory

- History evolves in ways we can understand
- Wanted to isolate the determinate motor forces of history (like Darwin)
- Spent years studying and developed a sophisticated theory of historical development
- Not a revolutionary, but a scholar
- Historical Evolution is Inevitable

Economic Determinism

- Economics drives History
- Forms the base STRUCTURE of society
- SUPERSTRUCTURE - politics, religion, social customs, intellectual work - is built on the economic structure
- Tribal - Feudal - Capitalism - Communism
- History is one of class struggles

The Dialectic

- Theory of How History Evolves
- Exploitation - Contradictions - Change
- No system is without Contradictions
- Contradictions will point out change
- Only a non-exploitive system can ultimately survive
- a.k.a. Historical Materialism
- Where's the contradiction in capitalism?

Worker Alienation

- How are workers alienated in capitalism?
- Work is dehumanizing and repetitive
- Producing value for someone else
- alienated from means of production
- religion teaches them to be obedient
- Cannot develop their own humanity
- Will develop Class Consciousness

Marx Today

- Very prescient in many areas:
- Professionals worried about \$ first
- Reduce family to economic relations
- Revolutionize instruments of production
- Global Economy
- Mass Culture
- Demise of small shopkeeper

Marx Today

- Marx also missed a lot of problems:
- Workers needed to develop Class Consciousness
- Comparative Advantage and Free Trade
- Didn't foresee problems with "Dictatorship of the Proletariat"
- Underestimated resiliency of the State
- Underestimated power of Democracy

For Discussion:

- What do you see about Marxian analysis which is persuasive?
- How would you compare it to Liberalism and Conservatism?
- What is the role of Utopian Theories; are they helpful or harmful?