Karl Marx

I. Marx and the Englightenment

A. Marx reacting against the Industrial Revolution

1. Cottage Industry to Forced factory Labor -England

- acts of enclosure, enforced violently

- loss of means of independent subsistence

-large filthy disease-ridden cities, and factories

-poverty and hunger

-child labor

-long hours at weaving machines

- wage dependent labor

2. Transformation of all of societies institutions

-education

-strong central nation state

-colonialism, raw materials, labor, and markets

exploitation of third world provided wealth for capitalism

exploitation of third world necessary for

capitalism

-public welfare

3. Industrialization U.S. - last half, esp, quarter of 19th

Century

-closing of frontier and transformation from

subsistence to dependent labor

-huge cities, disease, filth, poverty

-largest demographic transition in world

history, immigration

B. Marx as Enlightenment thinker

1. Marx believed in reason and progress

2. man is potentially wise, creative, and free

3. a rational utopian society is historically inevitable

C. Marx contra Enlightenment

1. History - philosophy of history

- is not linear, continuous, or cyclical

- history is conflict, more specifically,

-history is a history of stages and conflict

within those stages -- class conflict

-dialectical conception of history

- human history begins with the act of transforming nature to fulfill human needs

- with the accumulation of private property class conflict begins, stages

asiatic, or primitive communism,

antique or ancient, Rome, and Greece

feudal

capitalism

-each stage embodies contradictions within the

economic substructure

- contradictions are manifested in class struggle

-capitalism is last stage, before communism

-technology has freed man from dependence on

nature, because of its productive capacity

- however, man is still slave to productive relations, artificial scarcity created by monopolization of

resources and wealth

-this hinders history from realizing its goal which

is a social organization where man realizes his

spiecies being

- capitalism will explode

2. Species Being or philosophical anthropology

- man creates his world through labor, the end of

which is satisfying his needs

- man transforms the natural world (means)

into his world, a social world

- in doing so though he creates new needs

- not Cartesian, or Sartre, not subjectivity

as starting point

- material relations determine consciousness

- man creates and recreates himself in his

activity, his productive relationship with

nature

- man is alienated from self because in capitalism

he doesn't experience his creativity, but a social

world owned and controlled by others - reified

II. Society as Class Conflict

A. Characteristics of Capitalism

1. Ownership of private property

2. Pursuit of profit within rationalized framework of

market capitalism

3. laissez faire

B. Enlightenment rationality of capitalism (why not selfishness?")

1. Best economic system for the new individual and

his pursuit of "enlightened self-interest"

2. the "invisible hand of the market place"

3. Supply and demand and competition would make

C. Marx - class structure and a conflict

1. Two classes - the owners (exploiters) and the workers or proletariat (exploited)

2. differences are irreconciliable

2. economic relations determine the other institutions

of society, i.e., democracy, law, education

D. Definition of Class -- one's position in relation to the

means of production - organization of productive forces

1. position determines it is objective, determines

- interests, needs, and ideas

- despite one's own subjective understanding, one

acts in terms of class

2. capitalist owns the means of production

- owns factories, machinery, wharehouses, stores

raw materials

-controls production and distribution

3. worker, proletariat

- owns labor power which he is "free" to sell

- wage dependent labor, somewhere in process

- dependent on owner for job and wages, dependent on wages to buy what he made

E. Conflicting class interests - owner

1. maximum profit, continued growth, maximum

market share

2. needs a strong, centralized government

- infrastructure, tariffs, expansion for

natural resources and commodities

- laws to guarantee private property

rights, Article I Sec A, Article 4 Sec 2

3. needs to limit wages of worker, to Marx profit

is surplus labor

4. also health care, safety regulaitions, pollution laws

vacation, sick pay, disability are all constraints on

profit

5. needs to limit worker power

- force

-deskilling and automation

-make friends with the union

F. Class Interest the worker

1. Not just higher wages

2. Take over the means of production

3. Organize society according to the needs of the

people and not the capitalist

G. Power and Class - the owner

1. makes investment and disinvestment decisions

- influences workers, communities, policies,

decisions, regulations

2. decisions over new technologies of production,

distribution, and organization - US auto industry

3. decision over new products and services

4. power in political realm -- Jefferson

5. power in ideological realm - schools, mass media

- the power of the capitalist to control

the substance and dissemination of ideas

- creates a false consciousness in the worker,

-sees the world from the capitalist point of view

- I'm not wage dependent labor, I'm free to work

- false consciousness keeps the worker from realizing that he is alienated

III. Alienation

A. not a subjective experience, but an objective fact

B. workers are alienated in several interrelated ways

C. Remember: according to Marx human beings are beings

who create their own world has a social activity of their

species being -- free, spontaneous, creative activity

D. to be alienated is to be alienated from your species being and the world it creates

E. Capitalism is alienation through and through

1. Alienated from the product of your work, which is

not yours, but the capitalists, reified world of commodity exchange

2. Alienated from production process because it is

coercive, beyond one's control

3. Alienated from species being, work becomes means to

individual ends, not shared social world

4. Alienated from oneself

5. Alienated from one's fellow man, competition and not

cooperation

IV. What did Marx's analysis miss?

A. underestimated the power of the state to keep economy

going U.S. and permanent war economy

B. the capacity of capitalism to bring workers into fold during

post-WWII economic boom

C. power of new technologies to disseminate ideology

D. emergence of shared monopolies

E. the power of bureacratic structures to resist change

V. The Second Industrial Revolution

A. digital technological revolution will be more fare reaching than the first

B.Transformation of US economy into sales and service

1. two-tiered economy

2. McJobs, part-time, temporary, no benefits, no hope,

anonymous

C. Are we no longer an industrial society? An industrial world?

Are we an information society?

D. Alienation

1. surveys of US workers, evn high level jobs, boring,

dull, repetitive

2. workers complain about being functions of the workplace

computers standardize office work, enhance

owner control and monitor

little autonomy, routine, exhausting, mechanized

3. more stress, anxiety, and dissatisfaction

4. worker illnesses up

5. an new form of alienation -- managed heart

6. Temps - alienation, frustration