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The Impact of Power Elites and Their Implications on Society as a Whole

G. William Domhoff and Karl Marx share similar, yet very different opinions on the conditions presented by capitalist society and the effects of their exploitation on society. Both social theorists provide unique insights that contribute to broadening the scope of understanding of its complexities and how the lives of the laborers and the elites differ. These sociologists both use their research and understanding to approach the main issue of power within the capitalist society, but approach it from significantly different angles. For example, Domhoff believes that the power elite controls and maintains power within the capitalist society, while Marx focuses his research on the negative effects that estranged labor has on laborers and believes that this is the direct consequence of the overwhelming power of the capitalist society. Overall, both socialists' research and findings can be used to better understand the overwhelming power of the capitalist society and how its effects varied on laborers and members of the power elite.

G. William Domhoff, a professor of psychology and sociology, "Power in America," a book that delves into the strength and power of the upper class, commonly referred to as the power elite. Domhoff describes the power elite as a small collection of individuals who own or run popular and dominating institutions. He also includes how these individuals are connected with each other, a factor that Domhoff credits their ability to control and shape politics and the economy to. Additionally, he believes that the power within society is not equally distributed, but is instead granted to the small group of individuals within the power elite. The power elite, discussed by Domhoff, are individuals who come from privileged and elite backgrounds that

power elite is an unstoppable and uncontrollable force that controls and shapes society, and he even goes further to include how the power elite continues to grow and remains powerful by passing on their wealth and influence down through their families throughout generations. He uses “Power in America” to shed light on how powerless the rest of society is compared to the power elite and highlights aspects of life that are controlled by them.

Karl Marx, a social theorist and economist, used his research and findings to convey the effects that the capitalist society has on laborers. He writes the book “Estranged Labour,” as a way to collect and present his findings. In it, he argues that laborers are alienated and robbed of the products that they worked so hard to create by the owners of the institution. Essentially, Marx argues that the laborers have no control over any aspects of what they do while working for the industry. This severely affects the laborers, as one would imagine. The laborers are seen as less than human, as the work that they are doing is identical throughout the industry to the work that other laborers are doing. They are also seen as unimportant and deplorable to the head of the institution. The creativity and specialness that each laborer has is also suppressed, as their main task is to recreate exact copies of items. The treatment of these laborers leads Marx to believe and argue that the capitalist society is dehumanizing these individuals for their own benefit and highly contributes to the lack of emotion and life within these institutions. Overall, the conditions of the workplaces of these institutions coupled with the dehumanization of its workers, further contribute to the disparity between the lives of the laborers and the owners of the institutions.

While Domhoff discusses the overwhelming power of the power elite and Marx discusses the mistreatment of individuals who are working for these institutions controlled by the power elite, they both essentially attack the same issue: the complete domination of the power elite and

group of individuals and because of this, they are granted uncontested power. The findings of these two go hand in hand, as the mistreatment of workers is a direct result of the power of the owners of the institutions. These factors further contribute to the inequality between workers and bosses and even the exploitation of labor by the capitalist theory.

In conclusion, both G. William Domhoff and Karl Marx provided different perspectives that helped to describe a major issue as a whole. The power elites were given enough power to control their institutions, however, when interconnected with other power elites, can shape and alter society. This, in turn, results in the mistreatment and dehumanization of the works of these institutions. Both perspectives work interchangeably in defining the complexity and issues of the power elites domination within the capitalist society. Ultimately, by understanding these perspectives and researching the findings of these socialists, a lot can be learned and possible solutions can be accrued for a situation that can still be observed even today.