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CH 202

Response 5

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**Group 1, Question A**

The consideration of humans representing commodities, although pointed out by Marx and Engels, was not new by any means. Any small business owner, even today, can see to a certain point a directly proportional relationship between their amount of employees and their amount of profit. What Marx and Engels pointed out that was specifically new to their time was the indisputable exploitation of workers by factory owners. No longer were employees simply being added into a business to grow production volume, they’re time and well-being were also being abused by the bourgeoisie who sat back and reaped the translated blood, sweat, and tears of the proletariat into cold hard cash. Every ounce of the energy offered by a family was squeezed out by the factory owners who employed them. Marx and Engels argue that this new-found way of exploitation could be fought by refusing “… too much civilisation, too much means of subsistence, too much industry, too much commerce” (Marx and Engels 17).

**Group 2, Question A**

Marx and Engels didn’t focus the Communist manifesto (or at least what we read) on this point but did mention it several times. “The increasing improvement of machinery, ever more rapidly developing, makes their livelihood more and more precarious” (Marx and Engels 19). Since the beginning of the industrial revolution workers have been afraid of machinery taking their jobs, and in many cases it did. Eventually those people who lost their jobs in each newly machine-laden field funnel into other newly in-demand professions. Currently we are imminently headed to a point where new-fangled “machines” (computers) using new technology such as machine learning and artificial intelligence will tear jobs from many thousands of people in highly developed countries such as our own. Why would the government pay for teachers, as it currently reluctantly does, if they could move to serving artificially-intelligent online classes to students? And what if that “teacher” could take test scores and use machine-learning to generate better lesson plans iteratively and continuously? Certainly we are a long time from this sort of thing happening, but how long is hard to say. Think about this key part of the quote: “…ever more rapidly developing…” (Marx and Engels 19).

**Group 3**

In Alexandra Kollontai’s *Communism and the Family* she makes many great points about how capitalism has devalued the role of the house-wife and how housework would be “doomed to extinction with the victory of communism” (Kollontai 255). She goes on in this passage to argue that “Communism liberates woman from her domestic slavery and makes her life richer and happier” (Kollontai 256). Think about the topic of the pay gap today. Because we are still in a society of classes, there is no guarantee of equal-pay for anyone when it comes to certain higher-up positions in companies or conglomerates. This issue of pay-inequality stems from many other issues, but would be solved by flattening the pay of employees in companies, which is ideally what would happen if communism was implemented. Of course this theoretical idea of communism comes with it’s faults too, and that is why it has never been successfully implemented in a country.

**Group 4**

[George B. Luks](https://unr.instructure.com/courses/4512/files/127458/preview)' *Allen Street* is a beautiful representation of the type of exploitation of workers done by the bourgeoisie. Most of those depicted seem like women of different ages, races, and backgrounds all wearing very dull and simple clothing. They work in a rickety old underlit factory building with possibly dirt floors, producing luxuries for the bourgeoisie. Contrasting the dullness of the womens’ clothing are the bright and complex items they have produced. There is a pile of richly-colored fabrics, art, and furniture stacked in the corner. This contrast relates to the contrast Marx and Engels wrote about, that of the bourgeoisie and the proletariat.

Works Cited

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