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HUM 3306: History of Ideas--The Age of Enlightenment to the Age of Anxiety Summer 2012

LEARNING ENHANCEMENT SITES:

Here, at the top of some of the unit lectures, will be a variety of outside videos (some serious; some satiric). You are not responsible for them, but please click on the links, pictures, or icons for the perspectives the videos offer. This is an experimental feature of the course, to be integrated more thoroughly in future versions.

The first series below (serious) come from Part One of a PBS documentary: Heaven on Earth—The Rise and Fall of Socialism

The second series below (satiric) come from Mark Steele's lecture series (he's a British journalist)

[Heaven on Earth The Rise and Fall of Socialism—Part One/1](#)

9 min - Jun 25, 2009

[Heaven on Earth The Rise and Fall of Socialism—Part One/2](#)

10 min - Jun 25, 2009

[Heaven on Earth The Rise and Fall of Socialism—Part One/3](#)

10 min - Jun 25, 2009

[Heaven on Earth The Rise and Fall of Socialism—Part One/4](#)

9 min - Jun 25, 2009

[Heaven on Earth The Rise and Fall of Socialism—Part One/5](#)

9 min - Jun 25, 2009



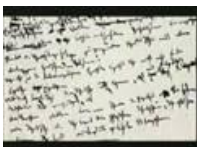
9:53

[The Mark Steel Lectures-Karl Marx 1/3](#)



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[The Mark Steel Lectures-Karl Marx 2/3](#)



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[The Mark Steel Lectures-Karl Marx 3/3](#)

MARX

DATE SHEET: FROM LOCKE & ENLIGHTENMENT TO ROMANTICISM AND ON THROUGH MARX

(You do not need to memorize, but do absorb the basic drift of the historical information.)

1687 Newton's Principia Mathematica. Newton's theories of matter & motion seem to explain the workings of the universe--an optimistic sense of being able to control nature ensues. God no longer perceived as routinely intervening in nature. Instead, the Deity has created a perfectly rational, harmonious cosmos (like a super-complex watch), and he is best known by understanding his creation, the natural world.

1690 John Locke's Essay Concerning Human Understanding published. Main theory is that, although we have the capacity to reason, our minds are basically "blank slates" when we are born. There are no inborn ideas (traditional Christian notion of innate depravity, the inheritance of Adam and Eve's sin, loses validity for many intellectuals of the period). We gain knowledge only through experience and our environment. Consequently, education becomes very important--humankind and society can perhaps be perfected over time. Combined with Newtonian optimism, the "Age of Enlightenment" begins.

1690 Two Treatises on Civil Government published.

1692 Puritan Witchcraft trials in Salem, Mass. (rationality eventually wins out over mass hysteria; U.S. becomes more and more secular).

1717 Daniel Defoe publishes Robinson Crusoe (essentially, a story of Lockean man cultivating property).

1735 Swedish naturalist Linnaeus publishes The System of Nature--descriptive system designed to classify all the plants on the earth, known and unknown, according to the characteristics of their reproductive parts.

1762 J.J. Rousseau publishes Emile, in which he sketches a method of education that would preserve the natural goodness of children by allowing relatively free expression of their inclinations. Rousseau's ideas support later "Romantic Rebellion."

1769 Watt patents the steam-engine.

1773 Captain Cook ("discoverer" of Hawaii) brings Omai, a native of the Polynesian island of Huahine, back to England, where he is entertained by the aristocracy and causes a sensation. Signals fascination with "noble savage"--a main theme of "Romanticism." By the

end of the 18th-century, a very complicated and competitive international network of commerce and colonialism has emerged.

1776 Adam Smith publishes The Wealth of Nations: establishes "laissez faire" principle: capitalism is like a self-regulating clock, so no need to regulate working conditions.

1787 U.S. Constitution signed.

1789 Parisians storm the Bastille: English government clamps down on dissent. Fear of "mob rule" makes it difficult for workers to articulate grievances. Wordsworth, Blake, and other Romantic poets greatly enthusiastic about the democratical energy unleashed by the revolution.

1790 Edmund Burke publishes conservative-reactionary Reflections on the Revolution in France.

1793 Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette of France executed.

1794 Thomas Paine publishes scandalous Age of Reason (debunks Old Testament as superstitious myth).

1798 William Wordsworth composes "Tintern Abbey."

1804 Immanuel Kant, German "Idealist" philosopher, dies. Basic philosophical premise is that we cannot absolutely know "reality" because it is always shaped, a priori, by the mind's faculties. Will influence Romantic celebration of the shaping power of imagination.

1804 Beethoven composes his Third Symphony, "Eroica."

1807 Robert Fulton's steamboat.

1821 Napoleon (defeated in 1815) dies: the British Romantic Period more or less ends. "Captains of Industry" become the heroes of the Victorian Age.

1828 Andrew Jackson becomes U.S. President. "Orphan, frontiersman, horseracing man, Indian fighter, war hero, and land speculator, Andrew Jackson embodied the new American spirit and became the idol of the ambitious, jingoistic younger men who now called themselves Democrats. At its best, Jacksonian democracy meant an opening of the political process to more people (although blacks, women, and Indians still remained political nonentities). The flip side was that it represented a new level of militant, land-frenzied, slavery-condoning, Indian-killing greed" (qtd. from Kenneth Davis).

1830 Opening of Liverpool-Manchester railroad: allows for rapid transport of coal, etc. between industrial areas of England.

1832 First Reform Bill in England: extends vote to middle-class owners of property (but

working classes must wait until 1867, when the Second Reform Bill passes).

1833 All slaves emancipated in the British Empire.

1837 Queen Victoria begins reign (the "Victorian Age" begins, and last to around 1890).

1838 First transatlantic steamship crossing.

1839 Opium War begins (ends 1842): England forces free trade upon China.

1843 Karl Marx meets Engels; during the 1840's widespread unemployment, depression, and famine leads to rioting throughout Europe; massive immigration from Ireland to U.S.

1844 Frederick Douglass publishes Narrative of the Life of FD.

1848 Marx and Engels publish The Communist Manifesto.

1851 The Great Exhibition in London--a celebration of the wonders of technological progress (the world is perceived--by the middle-class, that is--as dynamically changing, for the better).

1852 Otis invents the first elevator with a safety break (you'll see "Otis" on the threshold plate of many campus elevators).

1853 Charles Dickens publishes Hard Times, a novel about exploited English factory workers.

1856 Bessemer announces new process for making high-quality, low-cost steel. When combined with the Otis elevator, this makes possible the modern skyscraper.

1859 Darwin publishes Origin of Species.

1861 U.S. Civil War begins.

1865 Lister introduces antiseptic practices in hospitals.

1876 Bell patents the telephone.

1879 Edison invents the incandescent bulb.

1880's Britain and European nations colonize Africa.

1901 Queen Victoria dies.

1917 Lenin leads the Bolshevik Revolution, which will turn Russian into a Communist

state.

BACKGROUND FOR READING MARX

The 19th century inherits the 18th-century Enlightenment ideal of progress.

Nature, rationally understood, may be technologically manipulated.

Ideological consensus established about the superiority of the capitalist system: Adam Smith in Wealth of Nations (1776) articulates *laissez faire* principle that capitalism is like a self-regulating clock (the cogs in the clock may be self-interested, but the entire mechanism promotes the collective good; government protects property rights but otherwise does not interfere with the mechanism).

Read these excerpts from Smith's immensely influential economics treatise: E-text: Adam Smith

Yet the Industrial Revolution results in grim toil for the working masses.

There is massive, destabilizing migration of rural population into industrial cities: overcrowding, unsanitary housing, unsafe work, and 12-14 hour workdays.

In 1840s there is widespread European economic depression, famine (Irish potato blight), and working-class protest.

Try to imagine the early days of industrial society--around 1848, the early-to-middle part of what is called the Victorian Age. Remember, for instance, the sort of world Charles Dickens describes in The Christmas Carol ("Scrooge"). Much of what we take for granted wasn't around then: welfare programs, control of the quality and purity of food and drugs, social security, medicare, unemployment compensation, minimum wage, and, especially, unions and other methods of promoting fair employment practices. Imagine yourself raising a family under those circumstances.

Read the city descriptions in the previous "Realism" lecture: Prof: Realism

According to Adam Smith and his followers, the system is good. If you suffer it is because you lack thrifty habits, ability, or intelligence (you're a poorly functioning cog); according to Marx, the mechanism itself causes suffering. Herbert Spencer, a popular British philosopher and economist of the Victorian Age, expressed the *laissez faire* ideology in 1850 as follows:

"The poverty of the incapable, the distresses that come upon the imprudent, the starvation of the idle, and those shoulderings aside of the weak by the strong, which leave so many [in misery], are the decrees of a large, far-seeing benevolence. It seems hard that an unskillfulness, which with all his efforts he cannot overcome, should entail hunger upon the artisan. It seems hard that a laborer incapacitated by sickness from competing with his stronger fellows, should have to bear the resulting privations. It seems hard that widows and orphans should be left to struggle for life or death. Nevertheless, when regarded not separately, but in connection with the interests of universal humanity, these harsh fatalities are seen to be full of the highest beneficence--the same beneficence which brings to early graves the children of diseased parents, and singles out the low-spirited, the intemperate, and the debilitated as the victims of an epidemic. There are many very amiable people . . . who have not the nerve to look this matter fairly in the face. . . . [They are] blind to

the fact that, under the natural order of things, society is constantly excreting its unhealthy, imbecile, slow, vacillating, faithless members. . . .”

Read the above again.

Previous to Marx, various socialist theorists (some of whom he speaks of in Section III of CM) critiqued bourgeois society. Basically, they argued:

1) That the capitalist economic system was responsible for the misery of the working masses (again, keep in mind the conditions of working-class life in the first half of the 19th century).

2) That supporters of capitalism mistakenly assumed society is comprised of individuals who are essentially egoistic and acquisitive (the pursuit of one's own gain in a free-market system supposedly is ok because you will provide the best goods or services that you can in order to maximize profit: i.e., the law of supply and demand).

3) That the bourgeoisie and proletariat would eventually cooperate and find a way to transform capitalism into a more just social system. Before Marx, socialists theorized that socialism could only come about by persuading capitalists of its merits or by establishing socialist enclaves or colonies. They did not argue for violent revolution.

MARX'S IDEAS

Marx agreed with 1) and 2) above, but not with 3). Instead, he argued that capitalism's very success produces a constantly growing proletariat, which is forced by its dependent position to destroy capitalism and create socialism in its place. Marx's conception of communism was the first to welcome the advance of capitalism as necessary, because capitalism leads to the formation of the proletariat, the class that will in turn overthrow capitalism and reorganize society in the interest of humanity as a whole. According to Marx, only a community of persons who hold the means of production (i.e. factories) in common will be willing to produce for the greater social good rather than individual profit. Of course, the supporter of capitalism would argue that communism requires a strong state that coercively regulates what each individual worker does for the greater good (otherwise, wouldn't everyone tend to get lazy?). Marx agreed that as a transition from capitalism a strong administration might be needed, but he thought it would not be coercive, and that eventually the state itself would "wither away." A communist society could only function without a coercive state apparatus if all (or nearly all) its members internalized the priority of the common good, in contrast to the acquisitive egoistic ethos fostered by bourgeoisie society. [Above summary taken nearly verbatim from F. Bender in Norton edition of CM.]

It is key to understand that, although of course individual revolutionary leaders further the revolutionary aim of overturning capitalism, it is capitalism itself that creates the conditions of its own demise! Marx got the structure of this idea (the way history moves forward or evolves)--thesis/antithesis/synthesis (the sequence is called a "dialectic")--from Hegel, a German philosopher writing a generation before Marx. Marx's historical theory is known as "dialectical materialism": bourgeois production expands (thesis)--alienates proletariat (antithesis)--proletariat revolts (synthesis).

Marx wrote several scholarly economic/political books, and his ideas naturally evolved and matured as he pondered economic, political, and historical issues. The concepts below, however, remain

fairly constant.

1) Work/labor: Human beings, in effect, become human by shaping their natural environment through work. This work, ideally, is pleasurable, creative, and fulfilling--an extension or expression of self (imagine an artisan crafting a piece of furniture).

2) Alienation: We lose control over the world we produce. On the large scale, economic systems develop--i.e. capitalism--over which we can assert little control (think of the boom/depression cycle of the U.S. economy; think of the deficit; think of our health-care system). On the individual level:

- worker becomes alienated from product: unlike the artisan, the worker under capitalism has little to say about the materials he/she works with, what is made, and where it goes.

- worker's job is alienating: what you do does not reflect your will, but your boss's will. Marx elsewhere writes that work under capitalism "is not the satisfaction of a need, but only a means for satisfying other needs [e.g., for food, clothing, etc.]".

- worker becomes a commodity: from the perspective of the capitalist, the worker is just another commodity like raw goods; the worker sells his or her wage-labor, and is subject to the same law of supply and demand as other commodities.

- worker becomes alienated from humanity: competitive marketplace leads to antagonistic interpersonal relations; you succeed at someone else's expense.

- labor alienation, in brief, opens a vacuum of non-meaning/"servitude" being, which we desperately try to fill in with possessions (purchased via our wages!) and conspicuous consumption.

3) Class Struggle: For Marx, the bourgeoisie struggles against the old feudal order; the proletariat, in turn, struggles against the bourgeoisie.

4) Commodities: These are goods and services produced for exchange. Wage-labor is labor treated as a commodity. Profit comes from the surplus-value of labor, the discrepancy between what it costs to produce a product (wage-labor) and what it is sold for. Capital is the accumulation of profit.

5) Capitalism's accomplishments: Capitalism leads to massive industrial advances; for the first time in human history, the industrial base and technological sophistication are sufficient (potentially) to eliminate poverty and grueling labor.

6) Historical Stages: Before recorded history and the formation of classes, humankind lived in a state of primitive communism. After the formation of classes the major stages are: ancient slavery (Marx doesn't talk much about this stage); medieval feudalism; bourgeoisie capitalism; a future transitional stage (brought about by changes at end of Section II); and a final communist society (Marx only sketchily speculates upon what this society would look like--in a sense we're all too corrupted by bourgeois values to envision it).

7) Future History: Marx expected a:

- Crisis in capitalism: increasing proletarianization of society; pauperization of the proletariat; proletarian organization and struggle; period of revolutionary struggle; proletarian attainment of state power.
- Transitional stage (often called socialism): collectivization of industry; maximization of production; end of class exploitation.
- Later stage of communism: elimination of classes; withering away of the state; reversal of the rigid division of labor (no more assembly-line work exclusively for a worker).

BIG QUESTIONS TO PONDER AS YOU READ MARX

Can you compare Locke to Marx? Do they hold the same attitude toward property and its preservation? How does the idea of labor fit into their concepts of society? Would you say that both draw upon moral principles to guide their visions of society and social change?

SMALLER QUESTIONS TO PONDER AS YOU READ CHAPTER I Bourgeois and Proletetarians (follows page sequence of Communist Manifesto; quotes from CM are in yellow highlight)

Remember that CM appears in 1848; Marx charts general tendencies apparent to him *at the time*. Just because he was not fully clairvoyant about what the future held does not mean we should dismiss his ideas.

This chapter is divided into 4 stages: 1) the rise of the bourgeoisie, 2) the b. transforming social relations and the world, 3) the b. producing the proletariat, 4) and the gradual development of class-consciousness of the proletariat (leading to revolt).

--The *CM* is, in effect, a history of the world. What defines history according to Marx? Is it just one event following upon another? Does Locke have a notion of classes or class conflict?

--Define "bourgeoisie" and "proletariat". What does Marx mean when he says that "Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great camps directly facing each other"?

--Think of an example of the transformation of old feudal guild labor into modern, industrial labor.

--Marx says that, once an "oppressed class under the sway of the feudal nobility . . . the bourgeoisie has at last, since the establishment of modern industry and of the world market, conquered for itself, in the modern representative state, exclusive political sway." Can you summarize, in your own words, the process that Marx describes here (and in the surrounding paragraphs of *CM*)?

--Can you define the "bond" that replaces the "feudal ties that bound man to his 'natural superiors'"?

--What is Marx's attitude toward the bourgeoisie's role in history? Does he lament entirely the

"everlasting uncertainty and agitation [that] distinguish[es] the bourgeois epoch from all earlier ones"?

--What are the pluses and negatives to the "universal inter-dependence of nations"?

--What does Marx mean when he compares the bourgeoisie to a "sorcerer who is no longer able to control the powers of the nether world whom he has called up by his spells"?

--Marx does not refer to alienation per se in CM, but he does provide an evocative passage on how "labor . . . has lost all individual character" for the worker. Why is this so?

--Marx believed that the proletariat's ranks would be expanded because the "small tradespeople" and "shopkeepers" would not be able to compete with the "large capitalists." Can you think of a contemporary example of his point?

--Does Marx think that the proletariat is doomed to be an "incoherent mass scattered over the whole country, and broken up by their mutual competition"?

SMALLER QUESTIONS TO PONDER AS YOU READ CHAPTER II Proletarians and Communists

--The communist emphasizes the "common interests of the entire proletariat, independently of all nationality." Do you think workers at General Motors align themselves with their bosses or with Japanese workers?

--The sequence of rhetorical questions following Marx's summary of the Communists' goal--"Abolition of private property"--may get confusing. He holds a cleverly satiric dialogue with an imagined representative of the bourgeoisie. What is the difference between the "personal appropriation of the products of labor" and what he calls "bourgeoisie private property"?

--Some of the crisscrossed phrases/sentences are, at first, difficult to grasp. One of the more crucial ones is: "In bourgeois society, living labor is but a means to increase accumulated labor. In Communist society, accumulated labor is but a means to widen, to enrich, to promote the existence of the laborer." Do you understand this? Consider the scenario below:

--Imagine that you buy a shirt for \$10.00 from Breezy Shirt Company. A Breezy employee gets, roughly, \$1.00 for the labor he or she expends in making the shirt. Mr. Breezy, the owner of the company, keeps roughly \$2.00 for himself, and the remaining \$7.00 reimburses him for the original capital outlay to build the factory, to maintain it, to buy raw materials, pay taxes, and to advertise. If Mr. Breezy employed 100 employees, and each made 25 shirts a day, each worker will have earned about \$25.00 by the end of the day; whereas, Mr. Breezy will be able to add \$5000 to his bank account. Marx calls value in excess of labor value or wage, surplus value. The big question is why should there be so MUCH surplus value or profit; why should labor value be discounted so much? The discount = exploitation. Does this seem fair and logical to you? Why or why not, using what you know from reading Locke's *Second Treatise* and Marx's CM? FOR AN EXTENDED VERSION OF THIS SCENARIO SEE THE LAST SECTION OF THIS LECTURE.

--Elsewhere in his economic writings, Marx refers to commodities as equaling "congealed exploited labor." When you see a fancy car, you might think "the guy or gal deserves it; he or she probably

worked hard”; Marx thinks, “the car equals the labor that went into it which was not fairly compensated, because so much surplus value went to the capitalist rather than the laborer.” It pains Marx’s eyes because the car represents servitude to wage slavery.

--What does Marx mean when he says education under bourgeois rule is “a mere training to act as a machine?”

--At the end of Section II, Marx and Engels make some concrete proposals. Think of those proposals both in terms of their world and our world today. How many of the proposals do you think would have seemed radical in the late 1840s? Which ones remain radical today?

--Why do you think the U.S. has not had a working-class revolution if, indeed, some 10% of the population holds 90% of the wealth?

SOME FINAL THOUGHTS ABOUT MARX

The liberal tradition (it comes from Locke and Adam Smith) champions a broad band of permissible behavior or rights (foremost: you are free to do what you want with your property, i.e. the free-market economy; and you are free to seek what employment you wish to, i.e. the state does not mandate your work choice). Marx, instead, emphasizes the freedom to become “self-actualized” (to use contemporary psychology jargon) via satisfying work (no more grueling labor, no more insecurity about whether you’ll be employed at all, no more rat-race in general). When you emphasize satisfying, fulfilling work as the basic human need you end up with a humanistic Marx (the last line of II: “In place of the old bourgeois society, with its classes and class antagonisms, we shall have an association, in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all”). When you emphasize that an economy not based (more or less) on the free-market mechanism of capitalism and the protections of legal contract would likely need to be coercive (to enforce cooperation among individuals, as it were), you end up with Marx as the father of the totalitarian Red Menace, of what Reagan called the “Evil Empire.”

Communism turns out not to have worked; during the reign of Stalin, millions of Russians died from forced re-settlement, starvation, labor camps, & imprisonment.

But does that mean that some social engineering/redistribution of wealth is wrong? Pushed too far, yes, indeed our economy (and the world economy in turn) would be crippled if taxes were too progressive (massive wealth distribution) to discourage investment and risk taking. BUT to reduce all social relations to the cold, harsh cash nexus of the market place (it’s just tough that you can’t survive on minimum or near-minimum wage) is fundamentally dehumanizing according to Marx. You, the laborer, should not just be a commodity in the marketplace, selling your labor to the dictates of supply and demand.

Marx, in a rather clever combo of materialism & soul, says in effect “the key to life is your work, how you interact with, broadly speaking, the substance of the world; the expression of that activity should not make you secondary to a machine or a slave to a mechanical work-schedule; what makes us free, as humans, is our capacity to transform the world, and not be subjugated to it.”

Work could be less alienating if there were simply less hours of work so you could fulfill yourself

after work in creative activity rather than being exhausted (and filling the vacancy of your soul with consumer possessions!). If the top 10% of the wealthy in this country were to be ½ less wealthy this would be easily possible for every citizen! Imagine working 20 (even grueling) hours a week BUT having the free time to develop all your intellectual/ creative/ physical abilities. Some facts:

--in 1998 the top/richest 1% owned 38% of the nation's wealth; the next 4% an additional 21%. I.e, 5 of you in this class of 80 students get more than 50% of everything.

--in 2001, the top 2.7 million people in the U.S. had as much income as the bottom 100 million.

DIALOGUE BETWEEN SHOE FACTORY WORKER AND SHOE FACTORY OWNER: IF YOU UNDERSTAND BELOW YOU WILL LARGELY HAVE UNDERSTOOD MARX

The scenario:

--workers gets \$5.00 for every shoe made; worker makes 20 shoes per day; workers gets \$100 per day (=about \$12.00 per hour)

--shoe factory owner sells each shoe at \$50.00, minus cost of running factory/raw materials/advertisement/taxes/worker insurance/etc. (total of say \$40.00); and so shoe factory owner clears roughly \$10.00 in profit for every shoe

--worker: \$100 per day = roughly \$36,000.00 per year

--owner has 100 workers in factory: \$10.00 x 20 shoes per day x 100 workers x year = \$7,200,000 per year (i.e. 200 times what workers makes)

PROFESSOR COMMENTS	WORKER	OWNER	PROFESSOR COMMENTS
<p>Marx's objection to capitalism is that the capitalist's profit comes from "surplus value", the underpayment to the worker for his or her labor.</p> <p>This "surplus" value accretes over time in one lifetime, or thru generations (via inheritance), into capital and property. So, when the owner says "It's my factory," Marx sees a long, multi-generational history of exploitation, of the long</p>	<p>"It's my labor; I deserve more, and I work really hard."</p> <p>"I'll unionize and you, Mr. Owner, will be obliged to listen to the collective voice of labor."</p>	<p>"But it's MY factory!!! You have the freedom to leave if you don't like it. Because it's my factory, I think I'll pay only \$2 a shoe, or \$1, or even outsource to China, for 10c."</p> <p>"But, but ... individuality and the get-ahead spirit will be lost if we allow the unions to get their way. Why should I take risks and spend my</p>	<p>If you start with ownership =absolute right ... then there is nothing to keep the owner from reducing wages/ increasing profit as much as he wants, as long as there are workers to replace workers who leave; this is one of the reasons unemployment is necessary ... to guarantee a steady supply of workers who can be treated like a commodity according to the law of supply-and-demand; if</p>

history of previous ripped-off/ undercompensated labor that has accrued over time.

If you think it is the right of the owner to determine the wage, how low would you allow the owner to go ... are you against minimum wage? If you aren't against a minimum wage, how high should the wage be? What should a minimum wage guarantee?

Let's grant the likelihood that the owner does work really hard, much harder than the average worker: But does he or she work 200 times as hard? (Remember how impressed John Locke was by the value labor brings to raw nature; wouldn't Locke support the worker argument? Or would he, having recognized the wonders of money, support the capitalist?) So.... should there be wealth distribution? Will progressive taxes (which redistribute profits to the less well-off) de-incentivize the less-well-off? Will the owner be less-incentivized to be ingenious, work-a-holic, whatever if he is making, gasp, ½ as much.... 18 million instead of 36 million a year)?

"Ok, we don't want the company to go under; we workers realize the company is in competition with other companies... but why can't you acknowledge we work hard, too; do you really think most of us are lazy? Moreover, can you get by on what you want to pay us, less than a living wage."

"Now we're feeling our strength as collective labor. We're not just concerned that our boss's profit is our loss in terms of pay. We'll also fight for a shorter work week ... how about only five days a week, how about only 8 hours a day ... and how about medical benefits and and... How about 20 hours a week?"

evenings reading the Wall-Street Journal, if lazy workers are going to dictate how I run my factory!?"

"And, gee, even if I didn't work superhard, my parents did; and I deserve to benefit from their hard work; or they deserve to pass it on—it's called freedom—the \$\$\$ from their years of toil."

"You'd think those shoe workers would be happy; they only work 40 hours a week. Now they want paid vacations... dental benefits... is this becoming socialist or what? If I have to pay for all these retirement benefits it's going to bankrupt my company!"

there was no unemployment, there would be a shortage of workers, and the capitalist would have to compete for workers and increase wages, which certainly happens in some types of work . . . if you're lucky to choose to be trained in the right sort of work.

The owner is trying to justify his/her profit because: a) the owner works harder or is more ingenious, b) the owner needs the compensation for taking the risk of building the factory, or c) the owner inherits his factory.

But maybe the owner should have replied that he/she doesn't need "ethics" to justify excessive profit: the harsh, supply-and-demand, Adam Smith sort of world. It's simply the way things are; nothing can be changed.

We use the term "living wage," to indicate a wage that will suffice a worker to maintain his/her (and family's) life. But what it means to get by is of course highly subjective; the poorest in the U.S. are better off than the vast majority of people in the rest of the world, so maybe that fact alone shuts down the Marx proponent's whining? Could it be possible that, although ingenuity & enterprising spirit is great (who would not want there to be Edisons discovering light bulbs

		<p>and so on?!), that all these rags-to-riches stories of “individualism” and “American opportunity” are also an <u>ideology</u> that keeps you from seeing the core/systemic injustice of excessive profit, or indeed that ALL profit comes from labor not receiving its just reward?</p>
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