

**College Unbound!: The MRC's Liberty Learning Program**

*"Saving Liberty Requires Knowledge of Its Enemy"*



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**Series 1: Marxism-Collectivism**

**Episode 08: Cultural Marxism, The Frankfurt School, and Postmodernism**

**Teaching Text**

Marx, from *Communist Manifesto*:

*"The proletariat will use its political supremacy to wrest, by degrees, all capital from the bourgeoisie, to centralise all instruments of production in the hands of the State, i.e., of the proletariat organised as the ruling class; and to increase the total of productive forces as rapidly as possible."*

We can read Marx and see what he wanted.

But, what is Cultural Marxism, and what is Postmodernism? And how are all of these merely parts of a larger problem going back to Plato, that of collectivism?

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What is Cultural Marxism?

Much has been said of both Marxism and Cultural Marxism. Many leftists claim that the term “Cultural Marxism” is a misnomer, that Marx concentrated on “economics.” But this is utterly false.

The progenitor of Cultural Marxism was Antonio Gramsci, an Italian communist who lived from 1891 to 1937 and led the Italian Communist Party in the 1920s. [As international relations consultant Shayn McCallum notes:](#)

“Gramsci’s theory of hegemony extends Marx’s theory of class consciousness, the awareness of one’s exploitation under capitalism (which has yet to be realised by the masses), by suggesting that the ruling class not only dominate the political and economic spheres but also the cultural. “

As economist Gary North has explained, “Noting that Western society was deeply religious, Gramsci believed that the only way to achieve a proletarian revolution would be to break the faith of the masses of Western voters in Christianity and the moral system derived from Christianity.”

And that moral system is the set of interpersonal rules we call Natural Rights, which have as their bases the idea of self-ownership and its axiomatic corollaries of free will,

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free speech and worship, individual autonomy, natural rights to property, free association, and the right to self-defense.

Clearly, Gramsci understood the fact that the economics of free market participation, the philosophical principles of individual liberty, and the moral, God-given, free-will-based tenets of the Old and New Testaments were actually one inseparable unit, and he decided that the most powerful way to attack what he saw as unfair economic disparities and power differentials was to attack capitalism, individuality, and property respect through those moral Judeo-Christian tenets, or what Gramsci called “Cultural Hegemony.”

As economist Daniel Ajamian offered in a recent speech on Cultural Marxism:

“Through his notebooks, he (Gramsci) introduced several ideas in Marxist theory, critical theory, and educational theory. Most important was the idea of Cultural Hegemony, which was the unifying idea of Gramsci’s work from 1917 until he died. (...) The values of the bourgeoisie were the common values of all. These values helped to maintain the status quo, and limited any possibility of revolution.”

And, as Robert S. Smith notes, in part, Cultural Marxism:

“...simply refers to a twentieth century development in Marxist thought that came to view Western culture as a key source of human oppression. As such, Cultural Marxism is nothing more than the application of Marxist theory to culture.”

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But, some leftists claim that this is an inappropriate view of Marxism, used as a way to, somehow, smear, and demonize Marxists, frightening Westerners to think that leftists-progressives, Marxists, and socialists are constantly working to undermine Western culture, and, thus, using the fear that the reckless accusation inspires to push “conservatism.” [Writes David Neiwert, for The Daily Kos:](#)

“The only place that ‘cultural Marxism’ actually exists is within a very narrow and relatively minor faction of academia, and in the fertile imaginations of the right-wing ideologues who see it as the wellspring of a nefarious conspiracy to undermine and eventually destroy Western civilization.”

And this is profoundly wrong.

The entire basis of Marx’s supposedly “economic” argument in favor of collectivism is sourced from Marx’s cultural hatreds. He hated the “upper classes.” He hated the Industrial Revolution, despite the fact that, by the time he was writing *Das Kapital*, the market breakthroughs of the Industrial Revolution had launched even the wages of the lowest laborers in Europe to the stratosphere. Marx hated the march away from what he saw as “idyllic” patriarchal relationships of the Feudal Era. He was emotion-based and envious, just like Jean Jacques Rousseau. Gramsci didn’t warp Marx’s views. He took Marx’s cultural envy roots, amplified them, and let them gallop into the universities.

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Gramsci was imprisoned by the ruling fascists of Italy between 1926 and 1937, when, in a tragedy piled upon his intellectual tragedy, he suffered a cerebral hemorrhage the day he heard he was to be released, and died two days later

His anti-individualist ideas were spread into the “Ivory Tower,” first, by the so-called Frankfurt School, a group of Marxist academicians originally centered in Goethe University that included Herbert Marcuse, Theodor Adorno, Jurgen Habermas, Walter Benjamin, and Max Horkheimer who brought the ideas into the universities.

And those ideas were simple. Use Hegelian dialectics to create false “dialectical opposites” that always direct towards the collectivist and anti-Christian, anti-rights, goal – that expand the “class struggle” to include unionism, racial politics, and feminism. (In recent decades, this has been expanded to include anti-property rights attacks via radical environmentalism and gender-politics.)

It has been broadened through the use of postmodernist semiotics and “critical theory,” which are ways to demonize writers and speakers, claiming the words they offer express ideas that, though never explicitly acknowledged by the writers or speakers, expose intent or “inherent evil” of the speaker or writer. It’s all done to silence dissent and lift the collectivist aggressor to greater levels of political power, eventually allowing the collectivist to control the parameters of debate, the meanings of words, and the parameters of acceptable thought itself.

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Essentially, it's "NewSpeak," from George Orwell's "1984," in practice. Orwell, whose real name was Eric Arthur Blair, knew quite well how collectivist propagandists worked. Today, Black Lives Matter and Antifa (both of which are Marxist-collectivist) and the pop media work arm in arm to hide the true nature of the organizations and to demonize anyone who opposes them, smearing opponents as "racist," "sexist," so-called "fascists," and "homophobes."

Their attacks have much less to do with asking for respectful human interaction, than they do with silencing and demonizing political opposition – demonizing Natural Rights.

And they are all intent on one goal: Destroying the principle of individual will, and all the philosophical and economic tenets that are natural extensions of free will, in order to enslave beneath the whip of the state each sovereign soul created by God.

One cannot stress this enough: collectivism is an intellectual grifter, moving behind many guises and trying to gain political power by, as the saying goes, any means its backers believe are necessary. Honesty, truth, and the dignity of mankind require us to recognize its slippery proponents and their tactics, and to always, unflaggingly, stand against them while we stand FOR the individual. Goodness and human worth demand nothing less.

Quiz 08: <https://forms.gle/amZjakPqwSiHFnmC7>