# Marxism AC v2

[brackets for clarification]

WTO=World Trade Organization

IP(P/R)=Intellectual Property (Protecions/Rights)

#### Capitalism sustains itself on expansions of the commodity form for the purpose of capital accumulation, and in the Information Age, traditional forms of private property have been superseded by new regimes of intellectual property.

Wright 14 [Jared M. Wright, PhD, 2020 Ph.D. in Sociology, Purdue University, IN Dissertation: Digital Contention: Collective Action Processes in Social Movements for Internet Rights and Freedom (Chair: Dr. Rachel L. Einwohner) 2012 M.A. in Sociology (Dean’s List), University of Houston, TX Master’s Thesis: Digital Contention: Anonymous and the Freedom of Information Movement (Chair: Dr. Helen Rose Ebaugh) 2006 B.A. in General Studies (Cum Laude), Lamar University, TX, The Digital Sociology Blog, “A Marxian View of Intellectual Property,” October 13, 2014, [https://jaredmwr.wordpress.com/2014/10/13/a-marxian-view-of-intellectual-property/]/](https://jaredmwr.wordpress.com/2014/10/13/a-marxian-view-of-intellectual-property/%5d/) lm

In the Information Age, post-industrial economies reward those who control and process information (Kennard 2000). As a result, access to and control over information has become a potent new source of power and tool of oppression. Powerful corporate elites, the modern bourgeoisie, have begun systematically amassing ownership of information and ideas; converting much of what was once considered part of the public sphere into their own private property. Meanwhile, those who produce and work within this realm of information and ideas, intellectual laborers, are being increasingly exploited, alienated, and deprived of the true value of the products of their labor. This consolidation of property into the hands of a few and exploitation of intellectual labor and its products is made possible by a relatively recently developed legal mechanism known as intellectual property (IP).

Because Marx believed that the act of creating something was essential to one’s identity, alienating workers from the products of their labor, and from their labor itself, alienated workers from their natural state of species-being and thus from themselves and each other. The Capitalist owners appropriated not only the workers’ labor and products thereof, but also the workers’ sense of identity and wholeness as a human being. Workers therefore become increasingly alienated and devalued. “The worker becomes an even cheaper commodity the more commodities he creates… Labour produces not only commodities; it produces itself and the worker as a commodity… the object which labour produces – labour’s product – confronts it as something alien, as a power independent of the producer… this realization of labour appears as a loss of reality for the workers; objectification as loss of the object and object-bondage; appropriation as estrangement, as alienation” (Marx & Engels 1978:71-72).

Ultimately, workers become alienated from the bourgeois owners and the entire system of private property. “An immediate consequence of the fact that man is estranged from the product of his labour, from his life activity, from [t]h[e]i[r]s species-being, is the estrangement of man from man” (Marx & Engels 1978:77). Marx further elaborates that it is not the ownership of private property that is the true problem, but the social power that results from the amassing of private property by the Bourgeoisie and the deprivation of private property from the working man. Inevitably, according to Marx, the Capitalist system of private property leads to crises of overproduction and substantial inequalities particularly in the distribution of wealth. By owning the means of production, the Bourgeoisie is able to exploit the Proletariat by paying bare minimum wages, further dichotomizing the class distinction and leading to “…the concentration of capital and land in a few hands; overproduction and crises; …the inevitable ruin of the petty bourgeois and peasant, the misery of the proletariat, the anarchy in production, the crying inequalities in the distribution of wealth…” (Marx & Engels 1978:493).

Despite the urging of Karl Marx, the Communist Revolution did not spread around the world and put an end to private property and class distinction as he had hoped. We still find ourselves today living in a Capitalist economic system based on private property. There are still strong class divisions and inequalities in the distribution of wealth. Workers are still exploited by their corporate masters, the modern Bourgeoisie, who exercise a great deal of power and influence over all of society. But the issues have also become more complicated. Private property, for example, has become articulated into new forms that Marx could never have anticipated. As I described in the introduction of this essay, new technology has led to the development of what is known as intellectual property (IP). IP refers to ideas, formulas, software code, or any other intangible product of labor which has been commodified into private property.

According to the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), much of the modern economic growth in the world market can be traced back to intellectual property. Some economists have estimated that two-thirds of the value of large businesses in the U.S. is derived from intangible assets (Shapiro & Pham 2007). Though these individuals and organizations have argued that our new information-based economy represents a post-modern, post-Capitalist mode of production, Marx’s theories of exploitation and private property still apply when we recognize that the concept of intellectual property is simply the newest device for the accumulation of wealth and power and the oppression of the masses by the corporate elites.

Modern intellectual property rights are a complicated and nuanced phenomenon whose application has drawn criticism from a variety of sources. The original intent of copyright, trademark, and patent laws was to encourage individual entrepreneurship and innovation. But today, thanks to powerful corporate lobbies and lawyers, IP has evolved as an amalgamation of these laws and applied as an entirely new set of rights and tools for expanding the power and wealth of corporations. “Intellectual property creates a new set of rights that the State is obliged to observe and respect. Patents are no longer instruments of public policy; they are now private entitlements. For any government to tamper with them is to violate private property rights that are constitutionally protected… in the United States” (Evans 2007:23).

Modern intellectual laborers who produce IP are alienated from the products of their labor just like the Proletariat Marx wrote about. For modern software developers, for example, corporations like Microsoft and Apple are the primary sources of employment in their field. Yet, when working for one of these companies, any products the laborers produce or innovate are immediately the intellectual property of the corporation thanks to legal disclaimers employees are required to sign upon being hired. Because there are few other employment opportunities in this field, many laborers have little choice in signing away their rights. According to Marx’s definition of alienated, or estranged, labor, “The external character of labour for the worker appears in the fact that it is not his own, but someone else’s, that it does not belong to him, that in it he belongs, not to himself, but to another” (Marx & Engels 1978:74).

Bill Gates, founder of one of the wealthiest corporations in the world, Microsoft, made his fortune from software he and his friends developed in their garage while in college. Today, however, brilliant young software designers most likely already work for Microsoft or some other computer company, so any new innovation will be the property of one of these companies, not the individual laborer. Bill Gates exemplifies the potential value of pure intellectual labor, yet today corporations like Microsoft and Apple exploit the intellectual workforce for their own gain. Much like the Proletariat described in Marx’s work, modern intellectual laborers, such as computer programmers, are being exploited by intellectual property rights.

But the greatest threat of IP is not simply exploiting laborers and underpaying employees; it is the threat to freedom. This is imposed on all levels of society by the modern corporate bourgeois elites. “When a group of scientists stops working on a protein molecule because there are too many intellectual property rights that surround the use of the molecule, a basic freedom, the freedom to research, has been interfered with” (Drahos & Braithwaite 2002:3). We all have a vested interest in seeing certain public health research take place, such as research into the genes that cause breast and ovarian cancer. Yet these very genes, known as BRCA1 and BRCA2 are now the intellectual property of the Myriad Corporation, who first discovered them (Drahos & Braithwaite 2002). Companies are legally entitled to protect the discoveries and inventions of their employees as intellectual property, but when such rights infringe upon the freedom of other researchers to even access the human genes that cause diseases, it is a loss for us all.

Intellectual property rights strongly favor the corporate elites in society, and more and more have come into conflict with basic freedoms and rights that are part of the common good. “The danger to basic rights posed by intellectual property regulation is not an obviously visible danger. Rather it is a danger based on the quiet accretion of restrictions – an accretion hardly visible because it is hidden behind technical rule-making, mystifying legal doctrine, and complex bureaucracies, all papered over by seemingly plausible appeals to the rights of inventors and authors and the need to encourage innovation” (Drahos & Braithwaite 2002:4).

As I stated earlier, Karl Marx did not want to abolish all private property, just that which is used for oppression by the Bourgeoisie. Today, intellectual property, which is a modern legal form of private property, is being use by corporate elites to oppress not only the intellectual laborers in high tech industries, but all of society. It has become an obstacle to one of our most basic freedoms, the freedom to tinker and innovate, as well as our ability to learn and pass on knowledge and culture to successive generations. In this sense, I believe if Marx were alive today, he would be opposed to the way intellectual property is being used and support free software advocates like the F/OSS movement. The real question today is not whether private property should be completely abolished, but just how much property should be private and how much should be in the public domain. Communal property, particularly when it comes to ideas and information, is essential to learning, innovation, and the production of culture. It is also essential to progress as a society.

#### That carries an ideological function in the Capitalist mode of production, naturalizing the neoliberal conceptions of private property by viewing reality as a collection of commodities to be bought and sold in a market.

Drahos 96 [Peter Drahos, Professor Peter Drahos is an Australian academic and researcher specializing in the areas of intellectual property and global business regulation amongst others, The Australian National University, ANU, National Library of Australia, “A Philosophy of Intellectual Property,” 1996, <http://press-files.anu.edu.au/downloads/press/n1902/html/cover.xhtml?referer=&page=0#]/> lm

The dramatic expansion of intellectual property regimes, both nationally and internationally, in recent decades is in Marx’s terms an important superstructural transformation. It may also be evidence of fundamental changes taking place in the productive forces of some major capitalist economies. The creation of legally enforceable international standards of intellectual protection may be evidence that some states (ruling states) are using intellectual property law to maintain their various forms of power as their mode of production undergoes a profound transformation. The march to prominence of intellectual property law suggests that at least some states will largely earn their living through the production and distribution of information.[14](http://press-files.anu.edu.au/downloads/press/n1902/html/ch05.xhtml#footnote-358)

Historical materialism could also be used to begin an explanation of some other features of intellectual property law. Typically, intellectual property statutes are based on the rights of owners rather than the originators of the relevant piece of intellectual property.[15](http://press-files.anu.edu.au/downloads/press/n1902/html/ch05.xhtml#footnote-357) Creators will often not be the owners of the intellectual property they generate because of the operation of doctrines of employment law that vest ownership of intellectual property in their employers, or because they have assigned ownership to another. In Marx’s terms it is capitalists rather than workers that end up owning most of the intellectual property that is produced within a capitalist economy. Conversely, protection for the interests of performers has tended to be characterised by a minimalist approach.[16](http://press-files.anu.edu.au/downloads/press/n1902/html/ch05.xhtml#footnote-356)

Given that a standard justification for intellectual property is that it provides individuals with a reason to devote the time and resources to innovation and creation, it is at first instance surprising that intellectual property law is less concerned with the rights and protection of originators of intellectual property than with the rights of others, such as employers or publishers.[17](http://press-files.anu.edu.au/downloads/press/n1902/html/ch05.xhtml#footnote-355) There would probably be nothing surprising about this pattern for Marx, however. Creative labour (authors, scientists, performers) would in a capitalist economy be ‘exploited’ labour. Exploitation in Marx’s theory is a technical, theoretical term that refers to a social process in which the capitalist acquires labour power. Its essence, though, is simple enough: if a person works for more hours than is required to produce the goods he consumes, that person is being exploited.[18](http://press-files.anu.edu.au/downloads/press/n1902/html/ch05.xhtml#footnote-354) Unpaid labour is at the heart of Marx’s theory of exploitation. Labour power has the peculiar quality of producing ‘more value than it has itself’ or, putting it another way, labour produces more value than it exchanges for in a free market.[19](http://press-files.anu.edu.au/downloads/press/n1902/html/ch05.xhtml#footnote-353) The acquisition of surplus value is the basis of profit within the capitalist economy. Creative workers, that is to say workers who invent, write, paint and so on, would not be in any different position to other workers within capitalism. Out of necessity such workers would offer their creative labour power for sale. For this reason intellectual property laws are not needed to motivate individuals to work creatively. Instead, intellectual property laws would be needed to ensure that ruling interests retained and extended their control over a vital part of the means of production – abstract objects.

Marx in Capital clearly assumed that law, and in particular contract and property law, plays a vital role in the workings of the capitalist economy. So, for example, when he discusses the conditions under which labour power can appear as a commodity he stipulates that labour power must be capable of being traded in a free market.[20](http://press-files.anu.edu.au/downloads/press/n1902/html/ch05.xhtml#footnote-352) Similarly, the market exchange of commodities requires that there be owners who recognise each other’s private property rights.[21](http://press-files.anu.edu.au/downloads/press/n1902/html/ch05.xhtml#footnote-351) The juridical relation between owners remains an expression of ‘the real economic relation between the two’.[22](http://press-files.anu.edu.au/downloads/press/n1902/html/ch05.xhtml#footnote-350) But clearly Marx saw here a facilitative and protective role for property and contract law. Bearing this protective function of law in mind, we can say that another possible role of intellectual property within Marx’s theory is that it serves to protect the investment by individual members of the capitalist class in a mode of production based on abstract objects. Intellectual property, in other words, is primarily about the organisation and maintenance of production and a set of economic relations rather than an incentive to production by individuals. Intellectual property rights, rather than being a stimulus to creation, form the legal basis upon which one class organises production by another.

Ideology Theory

Intellectual property for Marx would also have a clear ideological function.[23](http://press-files.anu.edu.au/downloads/press/n1902/html/ch05.xhtml#footnote-349) A persistent theme in Marx’s work is that categories of bourgeois thought, whether they be legal, economic or religious, conceal the true character of capitalist production and its social relations. For Marx the view that intellectual property law functions to motivate and reward the creative proletarian would be an ideological fairy tale designed to hide the systematic exploitation of creative labour in the capitalist mode of production. Intellectual property law, because it turns abstract objects into things of ownership, adds to what Marx called the ‘Fetishism of commodities’.[24](http://press-files.anu.edu.au/downloads/press/n1902/html/ch05.xhtml#footnote-348) Fetishism in Marx’s economic theory is a belief by men that commodities and the exchange of commodities are relations that exist independently of their social relations. People’s perception of the social world becomes mediated by the seemingly independent world of commodities. People read off truths about the world, not based on a scientific understanding of it, but rather based on the behaviour of commodities. Fluctuations in the price of commodities, for instance, hide the true role of labour in the capitalist economy. Intellectual property, we have said, relates to the ownership of abstract objects. For Marx intellectual property would represent the commodification of the mental life of men and women. In intellectual property commodity fetishism reaches its peak. The mental life of individuals, the very thing which can be most said to belong to a person, becomes externalised (or alienated) and part of the relations between things, part of capitalism’s production and exchange mechanisms. One of the consequences of commodity fetishism is that bourgeois economics analyses intellectual property independently of its social relations. Intellectual property, for example, serves to correct the market in information, or is a solution to a free-riding problem or a way to deal with an externality. Nothing is said about the underlying social relations that the production of intellectual property is based on. The fact that people have, in the commodified world of abstract objects, divorced themselves from the social relations to be found in the notion of positive community and the intellectual commons is obscured by the fetishism of commodities.

The use of ideology theory to explain some aspects of intellectual property is worth considering. It may help to cast some light on why individual actors support intellectual property rights when, on the face of it, one might expect that it would be in their rational self-interest not to. We have already observed that many individuals will not be the owners of the intellectual property they produce. Intellectual property enables a price to be put on information. Consumers, generally speaking, will want to pay less rather than more for something and so could be expected to support weaker rather than stronger intellectual property regimes. This is particularly so if it turns out that much of the production of the information for which they are paying was not itself stimulated by intellectual property rights. Individual states which are net importers of intellectual property might also be expected to pursue lower rather than higher standards of intellectual property protection.[25](http://press-files.anu.edu.au/downloads/press/n1902/html/ch05.xhtml#footnote-347) And the costs of enforcing highly protectionist intellectual regimes are likely to be high – and not just in economic terms. Keeping track of who uses what information for pricing and enforcement purposes is likely to involve highly intrusive audit and surveillance procedures. So, in the light of these kinds of problems, what motivates the apparently strong commitment by many individuals in capitalist societies to support the ever-higher levels of intellectual property protection?

The upshot of our remarks is this. We must not make intellectual property reveal more than is there. For post-industrial scholars, the intellectual property phenomenon seems to offer support for their pronouncements of radical social transformation. Our position is a more cautious one. Through intellectual property law, capitalism engineers new production possibilities for itself.[68](http://press-files.anu.edu.au/downloads/press/n1902/html/ch05.xhtml#footnote-304) Creative labour is brought into the fold of productive labour, but the transformative possibilities of this remain for the time being grounded in a paradigm of commodity accumulation. So-called ‘knowledge societies’ have, through new communications and information technologies, the opportunity to reorganise the work patterns of their individual citizens in ways that liberate those citizens from conditions of alienated labour. But capitalist knowledge societies, if Marx is right about the commodity nature of capitalism, will not take that opportunity. Abstract objects are absorbed into production as part of a cycle of commodity production. Abstract objects are used to continue capitalism’s obsession with, to use modern parlance, the hardware of technology. Inequalities of an apparently new kind (for example, the information-poor versus the information-rich) appear, but in essence they are old forms of inequalities patterned around the ownership of productive forces. ‘Knowledge workers’ end up more like other workers, for like other wage-labourers they come to find themselves in conditions of alienated labour.

#### The pharmaceutical IP regime is an extension of private property that extracts profits from the suffering of the Global South and International Proletariat.

Rikowski 6 [Ruth Rikowski, London South Bank University, UK, Policy Futures in Education, “A Marxist Analysis of the World Trade Organisation’s Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights,” 2006, [https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.2304/pfie.2006.4.4.396]/](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.2304/pfie.2006.4.4.396%5d/) lm

In my book, Globalisation, Information and Libraries (Rikowski, 2005), I place TRIPS within an Open Marxist theoretical perspective. In essence, my argument is that IPRs, through TRIPS, are being transformed into international tradable commodities. Value that is created from labour (and particularly from intellectual labour in this regard) becomes embedded in the commodity. Furthermore, value can only ever be created from labour. These commodities are then sold in the marketplace and profits are made and this ensures the continued success of global capitalism, whilst labour is exploited, alienated and objectified. Following on from Marx, we need to begin our analysis of capitalism with the commodity. The logic of capitalism is the commodification of all that surrounds us. Now, we are seeing this process starting to take effect in areas that were unheard of before – this includes schools, universities and libraries. These are areas that were previously thought to be something beyond commercialisation and trading. But through the WTO we are now witnessing a dramatic change. The logic of this at a future date will be that the public will probably have to pay for services, the same way that they pay for other goods in shops, and services provided by other private companies, such as a taxi service. So, the aim in TRIPS is to transform knowledge, information and ideas into IPRs that can then be traded in the marketplace. Fundamentally, the TRIPS assists with the process of commodifying more and more areas of social life. But what exactly is this value, which becomes embedded in the commodity? I consider this in depth in my dissertation on value creation through knowledge (Rikowski, 2003a), and also provide an overview of it in Globalisation, Information and Libraries (Rikowski, 2005), and further explore it in the forthcoming book that I am editing, Knowledge Management: social, cultural and theoretical perspectives (Rikowski, 2007). Capitalism goes through different stages, such as the Agricultural Revolution and the Industrial Revolution, and now we are moving into the knowledge revolution (see Rikowski, 2000a, b, 2003b). Throughout all these periods, capitalism is sustained by value, and this value can only ever be created by labour. As Marx said: ‘human labour creates value, but is not itself value. It becomes value only in its congealed state, when embodied in the form of some object’ (1867, p. 57). In the Industrial Revolution, value was largely extracted from manual labour, but in the knowledge revolution value is being increasingly extracted from intellectual labour. TRIPS assists with this extraction of value, and with the embedding of it in the commodity.

Fundamentally, it will be impossible to implement TRIPS [to] in a way that will significantly benefit the developing world, because of the inherent inequalities and contradictions that are built into the very fabric of global capitalism itself. Furthermore, the drives of capital are infinite; it will never be satisfied. So, there will never come a point where it will be decided that the inequalities need to be lessened in any fundamental way. Instead, TRIPS, as a tool which aids the furtherance of global capitalism, is likely to increase the inequalities. Furthermore, inequalities and poverty will only ever be lessened (and largely on a temporary basis) when pressure is placed on those in positions of power. In regard to TRIPS this rests on putting pressure on the WTO through organisations such as the Third World Network and various NGOs in order to soften some of the most worrying of the implications of TRIPS for the poor and those in the developing world. However, capitalism is a battlefield upon which various compromises are and can only ever be made, but it can never ultimately be for the benefit of the labourer and the poor. To change the situation on a permanent basis, we need to terminate capitalism and replace it with socialism and eventually with communism in my opinion.

TRIPS and Large Corporations The power of large corporations and rich countries in the developed world and the lack of democracy at the WTO are illustrated clearly through TRIPS. The developed countries typically benefit at the expense of the developing countries. The Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA), is probably the world’s most powerful industrial lobby and in many ways it shapes the TRIPS agenda. As Watkins says: Dictated by the US pharmaceutical industry, and driven through by threats of US trade sanctions, the agreement was opposed by virtually every developing country in the Uruguay Round. (Watkins, 2003, p. 32) Furthermore, ‘TRIPS enshrines the US patent law in the multilateral trade system’ (Watkins, 2003, p. 32). It forces developing countries to adopt the standards of the rich countries in the west. Over 90% of patents for new technologies are held by corporations in rich countries.

#### Through Big Pharma, capitalism has created and justified a system of exploitation of our very bodies through capitalizing off of human suffering.

Mehta 14 [Akansha Mehta, Akansha Mehta is currently pursuing B.A. LL.B (Hons) from Dr. RML National Law University, Lucknow, India. She is also the founder of the NGO “Association for Medical Accessibility and Law” (AMAL). She is a columnist in the leading Indian newspaper- The Pioneer and a contributor at [Medicalblog](http://blog.medicallaw.in/) and [Ipleaders](http://blog.ipleaders.in/author/akansha-m/). She is presently engaged with the Eastern Book Company as a legal researcher, LSE, “Patenting of life-saving drugs has created a global health crisis where human life has become a commercial commodity.” August 6th, 2014, [https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2014/08/06/the-morality-of-patenting-life-saving-drugs/]/](https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2014/08/06/the-morality-of-patenting-life-saving-drugs/%5d/) lm

The concept of intellectual property rights is deeply rooted in the philosoph[y]ical foundations of capitalism. The basic tenants of this philosophy make it incumbent on governments to foster free enterprise and act as a protector of private properties including intellectual ones. Right to property is considered essential for individual and societies to attain their ultimate potentials and fulfilments. Unfortunately, applications of the same principles in global pharmaceutical research and development (R&D) have metamorphosed into a system that is causing misery and death to a substantial part of humanity. The irony of patenting of pharmaceutical products through private R&D is that while incentivising research it is preventing parallel innovations and impeding the benefit of new discoveries to reach the masses. This peculiar dilemma remains locked in abstraction which only a cutting edge academic debate through the growing open access movement can resolve.

High prices of such drugs and medicines can be attributed to the patenting system which allows the drugs companies to gain a monopoly over the production and marketing of pharmaceutical products and processes permitting them to fix prices at high rates to maximise profits. Millions of diseased people round the world —mostly in developing countries—lack access to life-saving drugs. Righting this imbalance is among the most important challenges of global public health of this century. One source of the access gap is lack of infrastructure and skills for research within developing nations. On the other hand, both public and private sectors in the developed world naturally devote relatively little research to develop cures to diseases without having markets for them in their own countries. As a result, relatively few new drugs target diseases specific to developing countries.

Patent rights are extended around the world through the provisions of WTO Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) which is based on the presumption that patents and other intellectual property rights are highly imperative to encourage innovation and research. Yet there is scant evidence to prove that the introduction of TRIPS-compliant framework of IPR protection has ensured transfer of technology, research & development and innovation in developing countries especially in context of life saving medicines and human health. However, in 2001, the Doha Ministerial Conference of the WTO adopted the [Declaration on the TRIPS Agreement and Public Health](http://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/trips_e/pharmpatent_e.htm), incorporating certain provisions in the interest of public health which was proposed initially by the developing countries. The Declaration allows least-developed countries to delay implementation of patent protection for pharmaceutical products and legal protection of undisclosed test data, submitted as a condition of approving the marketing of pharmaceuticals until 1 January 2016.

The most important provision is the one which clarifies the freedoms all WTO members have with respect to compulsory licensing, their determination of what constitutes a national emergency or other circumstances of extreme urgency, and exhaustion of rights. The Declaration explicitly mentions that public health crises “relating to HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, malaria and other epidemics, can represent a national emergency or other circumstances of extreme urgency.” Moreover, WTO members are free to establish their own regime for exhaustion of intellectual property rights. This is important because it means that, if national laws indicate that patent rights over drugs are exhausted by their first legitimate sale anywhere in the world, countries can then import drugs legally purchased in countries where they are sold at a lower price.

What IPR protection has ensured is that poor patients give their entire life savings to pharmaceutical companies to buy their treatments to save their lives. Pharmaceutical industry has built their profit systems around obscure set of intellectual property controls creating a commercial hegemony to capitalise human miseries. In the garb of protecting their intellectual property rights these multinational brands hold poor patients hostage to market forces. It amounts to denying known cures to a large part of humanity for commercial consideration and letting the public health remain degraded on a global scale. The struggle to access lifesaving medicines presents a legal and ethical minefield for rich and poor countries alike – one that is needed to be fought out by the common man by challenging pharmaceutical corporations over intellectual property rights.

This raises pertinent questions about global health equity. When the laws of trade and commerce override the human right to life saving medicines, can the society protect public health from unbridled private markets? In today’s time when the idea of life saving medicine as a social good is eclipsed by the commodification of health, is the IPR regime enough to protect people’s right to life? Nothing can be more dehumanising than equating human life with commercial commodity. Corporate houses should not be allowed to trade in human life.

The outcome of R&D related to life-saving drugs ought to be treated as public goods rather than private property. This idea can be realised through democratization of pharmaceutical production systems. One option is to have a global patent pool which is based on a system of free exchange of research without the traditional proprietary restrictions. This would safeguard public access to scientific discoveries and technologies that could be used for developing treatments. The International Genome project is a good example of that.

Another research model proposed to the World Health Organisation by Bangladesh, Barbados, Bolivia, and Suriname in 2009 was a centralized innovation fund, which would pool research and develop treatments like antibiotics and vaccines aimed at serving vulnerable communities. For HIV/AIDS drug development, the Medicines Patent Pool, based in Switzerland and funded by the United Nations, has already established a global knowledge-sharing platform to expand production of low-cost medicines.

Therefore, the ultimate solution can be nationalising the entire pharmaceutical  research & development activities related to  life saving drugs while letting private pharmaceutical industries to participate only in the production and distribution of drugs in the market Whether governments world over have the courage, political will and moral strength to take such a bold step remains a moot question.

#### The logics of Capitalism subordinate all interests to rules of the market, causing mass suffering, global inequality, and structural violence which causes extinction.

Duzgun 20 [Eren Duzgun, Eren Duzgun teaches Historical Sociology and International Relations at Leiden University, Netherlands, Socialist Project, The Bullet, Economy, Public Goods, “Capitalism, Coronavirus and the Road to Extinction,” April 5th, 2020, [https://socialistproject.ca/2020/04/capitalism-coronavirus-and-road-to-extinction/]/](https://socialistproject.ca/2020/04/capitalism-coronavirus-and-road-to-extinction/%5d/) lm

The Godzilla-like image of the virus Covid-19 has been haunting the world. Not only has the virus unraveled nightmarish possibilities leading to the extinction of millions of people, but it has also served as a quintessential case revealing the structural contradictions of and existential threats posed by capitalism on a global scale.

Covid-19, by contrast, has begun its journey and taken its biggest toll thus far in the most advanced and affluent parts of the world. This is to say, the contagion is no longer limited to the persistently undernourished, underdeveloped, and war-torn parts of the world; its impact is no longer restricted to a distant wet market or a third world country alone. Instead, it has emerged and expanded in the very heart of the capitalist world order at a time when [if] capitalism has not only been already firmly established across the globe but has been testing the eco-biological limits of the entire planet.

Should things remain the same, Covid-19 and its future [diseases]cousins are likely to claim the lives of not just ‘some’ people as they did in the past, but of humanity as a whole. In this sense, perhaps for the first time in modern history, the biological blitzkrieg activated by the coronavirus has thrown into sharp relief the immediately existential and undeniably global contradictions and consequences generated by capitalism.

Critical biologists and epidemiologists have put the blame on industrial agriculture as the root cause of the emergence of new pathogens since the 1990s. [According to Rob Wallace](https://climateandcapitalism.com/2020/03/11/capitalist-agriculture-and-covid-19-a-deadly-combination/), giant agribusiness and resource extraction firms have now reached the last virgin forests and smallholder-held farmlands in the world, subordinating them to the logic of capitalist markets.

The loss of the ecological diversity and complexity of these huge tracts of land has increasingly forced wild food operators to hunt in previously untouched parts of the jungle, which, in turn, has increased “the interaction with, and spillover of, previously boxed-in pathogens, including Covid-19.” Likewise, global warming has forced or allowed pathogens to escape their natural habitat. As a result, new viruses against which we have no immunity “are being sprung free, threatening the whole world.” In short, [as John Vidal writes](https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2020/mar/18/tip-of-the-iceberg-is-our-destruction-of-nature-responsible-for-covid-19-aoe), “we disrupt ecosystems, and we shake viruses loose from their natural hosts. When that happens, they need a new host. Often, we are it.”

That some agribusiness firms have been blatantly risking lives for profit would not come as a surprise to the critical reader. Even [Bill Gates has been sounding the alarm](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Af6b_wyiwI) about the potentially deadly consequences of irresponsible business practices and new viruses. Yet, what tends to remain underemphasized in these debates is that the blame belongs neither solely to ‘greedy’ firms that have driven viruses out of their natural habitat, nor to ‘short-sighted’ politicians who have not invested enough in vaccine technology or national health systems. Instead, the problem is rooted in the very structure and rationality of the system as a whole. That is, we may go extinct as a result of the ‘successes’ of the very system ‘we’ created in the first place, i.e., capitalism.

In order for ‘self-regulating’ markets to ‘self-regulate’, a variety of political and institutional arrangements had to be initiated to progressively eliminate the non-market survival strategies that humans previously relied upon. Most notably, the age-old communal systems of social and moral regulation needed to be eradicated, a process that systematically subordinated the ‘natural and human substance of society’, i.e., land and labour, to market relations for the first time in history.

At the heart of the rise of capitalism, therefore, rested a ‘political’, legal, and violent process that led to the historically unprecedented characterization of land and labour as commodities. Without commodifying land and labour, i.e., without treating the planet’s living substance as commodities, it would have been impossible to view the ‘economy’ as an institutionally and motivationally self-regulating sphere of life, an almost robotic creature functioning at the expense of human lives and livelihoods.

Capitalism presupposed from the very beginning a radical transformation in the human use of nature as well as in the provision of life’s essential requirements. In this sense, the danger of global extinction which we have been going through is not a temporary hiccup in an otherwise smoothly operating capitalist ecosystem but has always been a possibility built into the very structure of market society.

On the one hand, by treating land and labour as commodities, by subjecting people’s utilization of land and enjoyment of life to their ability to continuously increase market competitiveness and productivity, capitalism has enabled massive technological advancements in all spheres of life. This, in turn, has generated, above all, an unprecedented potential to feed, clothe, and accommodate an ever-increasing world population.

On the other hand, however, [as Ellen Wood argues](https://monthlyreview.org/1998/07/01/the-agrarian-origins-of-capitalism/), by subordinating all other considerations to the imperatives of market competition, capitalism has also created poverty, homelessness, environmental destruction and pandemics. Billions of people who could be fed and housed are subjected to immense doses of insecurity, living their lives under the constant threat of joblessness, homelessness, loss of status and starvation. In a similar fashion, the environment that could be protected is systematically destroyed for profit, and killer viruses that could be contained are unleashed.

Undoubtedly, Covid-19 has become the archetypal example that lays bare “the destructive impulses of a system in which the very fundamentals of existence are subjected to the requirements of profit.”

All in all, market imperatives have been regulating social reproduction almost worldwide for a long time but with no prospect of capitalist ‘development’ for an overwhelming majority of the world’s population in the South and the North alike. Furthermore, the ecologically disastrous and socially inhumane consequences of capitalism have long outweighed the prospects of material gain in the Global South. In this respect, what is being painfully realized in the current conjuncture is that the North is no longer able to externalize the worst consequences of such an unsustainable mode of life. The North isn’t and won’t be spared the existential threats posed by global capitalism.

The implication is that any meaningful attempt at solving the present, and future crises needs to take the bull by the horn. There is literally no choice to be made between ‘capitalism’ and ‘capitalism with a human face’. As long as the underlying dynamics of our lives remain the same, as long as we keep treating nature and human beings as commodities, no [cosmetic surgery](https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/09/12/why-growth-cant-be-green/) will do.

To the contrary, historical experience suggests that such minimal interventions will sooner or later backfire, re-legitimizing capitalism pure and simple. The only way to ‘re-embed’ our economies and save our lives from ecological collapse is by intervening in the very heart of the beast: land and human beings need to be taken out of the market. The beast is not tameable; it needs to be [killed](https://monthlyreview.org/product/what_every_environmentalist_needs_to_know_about_capitalism/).

#### Thus we affirm that member nations of the WTO ought to eliminate IPP for medicines as a means of resisting capitalism – the aff poses an antagonistic obligations on the state to reject commodification of medicine, in favor of social medicine.

Dutta 15 [Mohan J. Dutta, Professor and Head of the Department of Communications and New Media at the National University of Singapore, Adjunct Professor of Communication at the Brian Lamb School of Communication at Purdue University, Neoliberal Health Organizing, 2015, p. 231-234]

Latin American social medicine depicts a distinct and long strand of theorizing of health systems that challenges the liberal capitalist organizing of health, grounded in the organizing principles of social medicine and noting [END PAGE 231] that changing the overarching structures is central to transforming the conditions of poor health (Waitzkin, 1991, 2011; Waitzkin & Modell, 1974). That health is constituted within broader social conditions is the basis for research, teaching, clinical practice, and activism in socialist medicine, with early roots in Latin America. Social medicine thus connects health, healing, and health care delivery to the politics of social change and structural transformation, clearly voicing an activist agenda directed at transforming the unequal social conditions.

One of the earliest influences of social medicine was evident in the work of the medical student activist Salvador Allende, who would later become the president of Chile. In his book The Chilean Medico-Social Reality, Allende (1939) outlined the social conditions in Chile that resulted in poor health outcomes, emphasizing the broader conditions of foreign debt dependence, underdevelopment, international dependence, and resource consolidation in the hands of the local elite. Proposing social rather than medical solutions to health, Allende emphasized “income redistribution, state regulation of food and clothing supplies, a national housing program, and industrial reforms to address occupational health problems” (Waitzkin, 2011, p. 160). In his political life, Allende sought reforms in the Chilean national health service, complemented by reforms in the housing and nutrition areas, efforts at national income redistribution, and minimizing the role of multinational corporations.

The individualized model of public health that sees health and illness as a dichotomy is interrogated by the framework of social medicine that suggests that health and illness exist in a dialectical relationship that is dynamic and is continually shifting on the basis of social conditions, structures, cultural practices, economic production, reproduction, marginalizing practices, and processes of political participation. Thus, interventions in social medicine point toward the necessity for transforming the underlying relationships of production and resource distribution, resisting the public health narrative of interventions as mechanisms for improving economic productivity. Taking a social-class-driven approach to health inequities, Latin American social medicine sees the problems with health being situated within means of economic production, patterns of ownership of means of production, and control over productive processes. Therefore, health is approached from the framework of transforming the processes of economic production and labor processes.

The dominant framework of health as integral to growth and economic productivity is questioned by the framework of social medicine that situates the relationship between health and illness amid the very processes of economic organization, distribution of economic resources, and the pervasive effects of social class on health services and health outcomes. [END PAGE 232] The innovations in organizing of health structures in Chile, Cuba, Mexico, Bolivia, and Venezuela offer invaluable insights about the possibilities of alternative organizing that seek to redo the entire structure of social organizing that constitute health. The strong health indicators in Cuba demonstrate the effectiveness of a health system that is committed to addressing the structural determinants of health, creating equitable contexts for the realization and delivery of health (Campion & Morrissey, 2013). Social medicine research has looked at the relations among work, reproduction, the environment, and health, describing in-depth the material conditions that constitute health. For instance, researchers studying health in Mexico within the context of unions and local communities have documented health problems that relate to work processes and the environment. Similarly, researchers in Chile have documented the relations between gender, work, and environmental conditions. A key strand of social medicine examines the relationship between violence and health, connecting violence to poverty, the structures of organizing, and the inequities in ownership of processes of economic production. Investigations of violence attached to the U.S.-supported dictatorship in Chile, the violence connected to narcotics traffic and paramilitary operations, and the violence within the broader structures of the state-imperial networks draw linkages to the broader political economic configurations of neoliberalism.

Emerging from the broader framework of social medicine, the Barrio Adentro movement in Venezuela, started by former president Hugo Chavez, offers insights into structures and processes of alternative organizing of health, connecting local community structures, community ownership, and community solutions with state infrastructures and state-driven public health resources and solutions (Briggs & Mantini-Briggs, 2009; Muntaner et al., 2006; Waitzkin, 2011). The state-driven referendum by the Chavez government to create public health infrastructures and structures of delivery of integrated family medicine, build preventive infrastructures, and develop community health resources in extremely marginalized communities is supported by massive mass-based participation in popular politics and widespread community participation in developing local community infrastructures, community-based resources of problem solving, and community decision-making capacities. The community health centers built within the barrios serve approximately 250 families and are staffed with one integrated family care doctor, one community health worker, and one health promoter. The community health centers are stocked with medical supplies. The health team not only provides health care but also conducts health surveys in the communities and makes home visits for patients that are too ill to travel to the health centers. The Barrio Adentro is integrated with other missiones addressing education, food insecurity, housing, and [END PAGE 233] unemployment, addressing health within a broader structural context (Muntaner et al., 2006). Local community participatory processes are connected with state-driven processes of building community health infrastructures at the local level.

The narrative of Barrio Adentro offers an alternative to the neoliberal narrative of the community in mainstream health communication and yet is marked by its absence from disciplinary discourses. Similarly, social medicine and its tradition of addressing the structural contexts of health is marked by its absence from the dominant discourses of health communication. A review of the two major collections of health communication scholarship, The Routledge Handbook of Health Communication and The Handbook of Global Health Communication, depicts the marked absence of the Latin American innovations of social medicine from the discursive space. Opportunities for resistance to neoliberal organizing of health structures and the invitation to imagine alternative possibilities is grounded in materially grounded concrete politics of popular participation in supporting state policies for building public health and health care infrastructures, complemented by local processes of participation in the creation of health solutions.

#### Resisting capitalism starts with rejecting expansions of private property and the commodity forms.

Abrol 18 [Dinesh Abrol, India · Professor · Institute for Studies in Industrial Development Communist Party of India, Marxist, “Intellectual Property, Knowledge, Capital and Labour,” April-June 2018, [https://cpim.org/content/intellectual-property-knowledge-capital-and-labour]/](https://cpim.org/content/intellectual-property-knowledge-capital-and-labour%5d/) lm

Resistance for counter-hegemonic influence in knowledge production

Legal and surveillance studies scholars have pointed out that surrendering control of the information environment to opaque, immanent entities and processes amounts to surrendering control over self-development and self-government. The impact on markets is equally profound. The legal-institutional context of intellectual property formation has been able to alienate labour from their own product as a resource. The networks of secrecy and boilerplate tight agreements that constitute markets for information and knowledge are acts of enclosure. They represent strategies of (mis)appropriation of valuable resources from the intellectual commons. Appropriation strategies based on contractually mandated secrecy are acts that alter the legal status of collected information. This misappropriation or enclosure is a way of underscoring the power of capital in the field of knowledge production.  Unemployment, reserve army of labour, surplus population, are the flip side of the misappropriation or enclosure of knowledge commons.

While academics do not usually sell journal articles, books, or book chapters in markets for money, they sell some forms of knowledge commodities such as consultancy and advice in (quasi) markets. Today the commodification of knowledge in the field of higher education presents the distinctive features of the second enclosure movement wherein all kinds of scientific activities and their results are interpreted and assessed more on the basis of economic criteria. It is clear that knowledge can get commodified, but that it should not be commodified is also very clear.  Research should be conducted in a systematic and disciplined way with care and thoroughness and respect for legitimate principles, with an imperative to see and to speak truth. These principles and purposes become distorted if the seeing and speaking of truth becomes subordinate to other considerations. In the field of knowledge production, no place should exist for considerations like protecting the reputation of the political authority, promoting the vested interest of the capitalist and shielding wrongdoing from the criticism of the people. This drift, be it epistemic or political, needs correction.

Knowledge is a public good not only in terms of economic benefit but also in terms of the moral sense. Scientific knowledge is not only a public good which has characteristics of a non-rivalrous and non-exclusionary nature, but it is also an inexhaustible resource. Scientific knowledge can be put to infinite uses. Generic knowledge, be it scientific or technological knowledge, is not an asset that has limited specific use but is an asset with the characteristics of fungibility. Generic artefacts of knowledge have the potential of multiple meanings. New meanings of generic knowledge are possible. Science is the activity of manipulating nature with the use of conceptual machines, the study of technology and machinery can reveal facts of science just as the study of commodity reveals the nature of value and abstract labour.

Capital is trying to separate head and hand. Intellectual property widens the separation of head and hand.  Technology reveals the active relation of man to nature, the direct process of the production of his life, and thereby also lays bare the process of the production of the social relations of his life, and of the mental conceptions that flow from those relations. The dynamics of rent generation in global value chains lays bare this separation. Today, trans-national capital originating from the United States, Europe and Japan controls intellectual property and uses it for surplus extraction from all over the world.

Science and technology give capital a power of expansion which is independent of the given magnitude of the capital actually functioning. There is a clear parallel between scientific abstractions, concepts and conceptual systems on the one side and value as the manifestation of abstract labour on the other. The intellectual property system is imposing on science the rule of capital. Science is the cognition of necessity. For Marxists, socialism is recognition of necessity. Knowledge is liberation.

Capital envisages for knowledge commons a role in the process of capital accumulation. Socialism envisages knowledge commons for transformation. Science is for transformation. Science is not for domination. Capital is trying to dominate humanity as well as nature. Monopoly over knowledge is a threat to democracy, public interest and progress – scientific, technological and economic. Even under capitalism, intellectual property monopolies are undermining social and scientific progress.

For Marxists, class struggle starts with the resistance against immediate threats arising out of the strengthening of the property form and the imposition of the value form of knowledge production for market-based exchange. Struggles being undertaken to save and protect the space for social, scientific and technological progress need to be given importance. Production of knowledge for use towards the advancement of public interest, social progress and democracy is the integral goal of socialism.

When science is in the process of being subsumed to capital the challenge of protection of public interest in science requires struggle against the regressive trend of strengthening of intellectual property. For the achievement of counter-hegemony for social transformation Marxists must actively contribute to the struggle for transformative science which promotes the value form in which reflexivity, broadening of space for socially responsible innovations, participation, self-organization and public scrutiny and change in class correlation to alter the balance in favour of public interest, social progress and democracy are equally well counted.

#### The ROTB is to vote for the debate who best analyzes the resolution through dialectical materialism. Morality emerges not from abstract reason but through class struggle, as the ruling class seeks to justify their power through ideology.

Sewell 5 [Rob Sewell, In Defense of Marxism, Theory, “What is dialectical materialism,” July 8th 2005, <https://www.marxist.com/what-is-dialectical-materialism.htm#_c3]/> lm

The Marxist view of the world is not only materialist, but also dialectical. For its critics, the dialectic is portrayed as something totally mystical, and therefore irrelevant. But this is certainly not the case. The dialectical method is simply an attempt to understand more clearly our real interdependent world. Dialectics, states Engels in Anti-Duhring, "is nothing more than the science of the general laws of motion and development of nature, human society and thought." Put simply, it is the logic of motion.

Not everything is as appears on the surface of things. Every species, every aspect of organic life, is every moment the same and not the same. It develops by assimilating matter from without and simultaneously discards other unwanted matter; continually some cells die, while others are renewed. Over time, the body is completely transformed, renewed from top to bottom. Therefore, every organic entity is both itself and yet something other than itself.

This phenomenon cannot be explained by metaphysical thought or formal logic. This approach is incapable of explaining contradiction. This contradictory reality does not enter the realm of common sense reasoning. Dialectics, on the other hand, comprehends things in their connection, development, and motion. As far as Engels was concerned, "Nature is the proof of dialectics."

The young Marx and Engels were followers of the great Hegel. They learned a colossal amount from this teacher. He opened their eyes to a new outlook on the world epitomised by the dialectic. By embracing the dialectic, Hegel freed history from metaphysics. For the dialectic, there is nothing final, absolute, or sacred. It reveals the transitory character of everything. However, Hegel was limited by his knowledge, the knowledge of his age, and the fact he was an idealist. He regarded thoughts within the brain not as more or less abstract pictures of real things and processes, but as realisations of the "Absolute Idea", existing from eternity. Hegel's idealism turned reality on its head.

Marx stressed that the task of science is always to proceed from the immediate knowledge of appearances to the discovery of reality, of the essence, of the laws underlying the appearances. Marx's Capital is a fine example of this method. "The way of thinking of the vulgar economists", wrote Marx to Engels, "derives from the fact that it is always only the immediate form in which relationships appear which is reflected in the brain, and not their inner connections." (June 27, 1867)

The world in which we live is a unity of contradictions or a unity of opposites: cold-heat, light-darkness, Capital-Labour, birth-death, riches-poverty, positive-negative, boom-slump, thinking-being, finite-infinite, repulsion-attraction, left-right, above-below, evolution-revolution, chance-necessity, sale-purchase, and so on.

The fact that two poles of a contradictory antithesis can manage to coexist as a whole is regarded in popular wisdom as a paradox. The paradox is a recognition that two contradictory, or opposite, considerations may both be true. This is a reflection in thought of a unity of opposites in the material world.

Motion, space and time are nothing else but the mode of existence of matter. Motion, as we have explained is a contradiction, - being in one place and another at the same time. It is a unity of opposites. "Movement means to be in this place and not to be in it; this is the continuity of space and time - and it is this which first makes motion possible." (Hegel)

To understand something, its essence, it is necessary to seek out these internal contradictions. Under certain circumstances, the universal is the individual, and the individual is the universal. That things turn into their opposites, - cause can become effect and effect can become cause - is because they are merely links in the never-ending chain in the development of matter.

Lenin explains this self-movement in a note when he says, "Dialectics is the teaching which shows how opposites can be and how they become identical - under what conditions they are identical, becoming transformed into one another - why the human mind should grasp these opposites not as dead, rigid, but living, conditional, mobile, becoming transformed into one another."

This is best illustrated by the class struggle. Capitalism requires a capitalist class and a working class. The struggle over the surplus value created by the workers and expropriated by the capitalists leads to an irreconcilable struggle that will provide the basis for the eventual overthrow of capitalism, and the resolution of the contradiction through the abolition of classes.

The general pattern of historical development is not one of a straight line upward, but of a complex interaction in which each step forward is only achieved at the cost of a partial step backwards. These regressions, in turn, are remedied at the next stage of development.

The law of the negation of the negation explains the repetition at a higher level of certain features and properties of the lower level and the apparent return of past features. There is a constant struggle between form and content and between content and form, resulting in the eventual shattering of the old form and the transformation of the content.

This whole process can be best pictured as a spiral, where the movement comes back to the position it started, but at a higher level. In other words, historical progress is achieved through a series of contradictions. Where the previous stage is negated, this does not represent its total elimination. It does not wipe out completely the stage that it supplants.

"The capitalist method of appropriation, which springs from the capitalist method of production, and therefore capitalist private property, is the first negation of individual private property based on one's own labour. But capitalist production begets with the inevitableness of a natural process its own negation. It is the negation of the negation," remarked Marx in volume one of Capital.

According to Engels, dialectics was "our best working tool and our sharpest weapon." And for us also, it is a guide to action and our activities within the working class movement. It is similar to a compass or map, which allows us to get our bearings in the turmoil of events, and permits us to understand the underlying processes that shape our world.

Whether we like it or not, consciously or unconsciously, everyone has a philosophy. A philosophy is simply a way of looking at the world. Under capitalism, without our own scientific philosophy, we will inevitably adopt the dominant philosophy of the ruling class and the prejudices of the society in which we live. "Things will never change" is a common refrain, reflecting the futility of changing things and of the need to accept our lot in life. There are other such proverbs as "There is nothing new under the sun", and "History always repeats itself", which reflect the same conservative outlook. Such ideas, explained Marx, form a crushing weight on the consciousness of men and women.

Just as the emerging bourgeoisie in its revolution against feudal society challenged the conservative ideas of the old feudal aristocracy, so the working class, in its fight for a new society, needs to challenge the dominant outlook of its own oppressor, the capitalist class. Of course, the ruling class, through its monopoly control of the mass media, the press, school, university and pulpit, consciously justifies its system of exploitation as the most "natural form of society". The repressive state machine, with its "armed bodies of men", is not sufficient to maintain the capitalist system. The dominant ideas and morality of bourgeois society serve as a vital defence of the material interests of the ruling class. Without this powerful ideology, the capitalist system could not last for any length of time.

In the fight for the emancipation of the working class, Marxism also wages a relentless war against capitalism and its ideology, which defends and justifies its system of exploitation, the "market economy". But Marxism does more than this. Marxism provides the working class with "an integral world outlook irreconcilable with any form of superstition, reaction, or defence of bourgeois oppression." (Lenin) It seeks to reveal the real relationships that exist under capitalism and arms the working class with an understanding of how [to] it can achieve its own emancipation. Dialectical materialism, to use the words of the Russian Marxist Plekhanov, is more than an outlook, it is a "philosophy of action."

#### Capitalism has created a pedagogy of exclusion justifying oppressive hierarchies and inequalities that preclude ethical reasoning. That means resisting capitalism is an a-priori obligation for the judge in this round.

Zizek and Daly 4 [Glyn Daly, Lecturer in International Studies at the University College Northampton. Conversations with Žižek. 14-19, 2004]

For Žižek it is imperative that we cut through this Gordian knot of postmodern protocol and recognize that our ethico-political responsibility is to confront the constitutive violence of today's global capitalism and its obscene naturalization/anonymization of the millions who are subjugated by it throughout the world. Against the standardized positions of postmodern culture - with all its pieties concerning 'multiculturalist' etiquette - Žižek is arguing for a politics that might be called 'radically incorrect' in the sense that it breaks with these types of positions and focuses instead on the very organizing principles of today's social reality: the principles of global liberal capitalism. This requires some care and subtlety. For too long, Marxism has been bedevilled by an almost fetishistic economism that has tended towards political morbidity. With the likes of Hilferding and Gramsci, and more recently Laclau and Mouffe, crucial theoretical advances have been made that enable the trascendence of all forms of economism. In this new context, however, Žižek argues that the problem that now presents itself is almost that of the opposite fetish. That is to say, the prohibitive anxieties surrounding the taboo of economism can function as a way of not engaging with the economic reality and as a way of implicitly accepting the latter as a basic horizon of existence. In an ironic Freudian-Lacanian twist, the fear of economism can end up reinforcing a de facto economic necessity in respect of contemporary capitalism (i.e. the initial prohibition conjures up the very thing it fears). This is not to endorse any retrograde return to economism. Žižek's point is rather that in rejecting economism we should not lose sight of the systemic power of capital in shaping the lives and destinies of humanity and our very sense of the possible. In particular, we should not overlook Marx's central insight that in order to create a universal global system the forces of capitalism seek to conceal the politico-discursive violence of its construction through a kind of gentrification of that system. What is persistently denied by neo-liberals such as Rorty (1989) and Fukuyama (1992) is that the gentrification of global liberal capitalism is one whose 'universalism' fundamentally reproduces and depends upon a disavowed violence that excludes vast sectors of the world's population. In this way, neo-liberal ideology attempts to naturalize capitalism by presenting its outcomes of winning and losing as if they were simply a matter of chance and sound judgement in a neutral marketplace. Capitalism does indeed create a space for a certain diversity, at least for the central capitalist regions, but it is neither neutral nor ideal and its price in terms of social exclusion is exorbitant. That is to say, the human cost in terms of inherent global poverty and degraded 'life-chances' cannot be calculated within the existing economic rationale and, in consequence, social exclusion remains mystified and nameless (viz. the patronizing reference to the developing world). And Žižek's point is that this mystification is magnified through capitalism's profound capacity to ingest its own excesses and negativity; to redirect (or misdirect) social antagonisms and to absorb them within a culture of differential affirmation. Instead of Bolshevism, the tendency of today is towards a kind of political boutiquism that is readily sustained by postmodern forms of consumerism and lifestyle. Against this Žižek argues for a new universalism whose primary ethical directive is to confront the fact that our forms of social existence are founded on exclusion on a global scale.

#### Policy-oriented debate kills engagement with the topics, and turns debate into a harmful space that recreates exclusionary power structures.

Reid-Brinkley 8 [Reid-Brinkley, Dr. Shanara. [Ph.D., Assistant Professor and Co-Director of Forensics at California State University, Fullerton] “The Harsh Realities of ‘Acting Black’: How African-American Policy Debaters Negotiate Representation Through Racial Performance and Style.” University of Georgia, Spring 2008.]

Genre Violation Four: Policymaker as Impersonal and the Rhetoric of Personal Experience. Debate is a competitive game. 112 It requires that its participants take on the positions of state actors (at least when they are affirming the resolution). Debate resolutions normally call for federal action in some area of domestic or foreign policy. Affirmative teams must support the resolution, while the negative negates it. The debate then becomes a “laboratory” within which debaters may test policies. 113 Argumentation scholar Gordon Mitchell notes that “Although they may research and track public argument as it unfolds outside the confines of the laboratory for research purposes, in this approach students witness argumentation beyond the walls of the academy as spectators, with little or no apparent recourse to directly participate or alter the course of events.” 114 Although debaters spend a great deal of time discussing and researching government action and articulating arguments relevant to such action, what happens in debate rounds has limited or no real impact on contemporary governmental policy making. And participation does not result in the majority of the debate[rs] community engaging in activism around the issues they research. Mitchell observes that the stance of the policymaker in debate comes with a “sense of detachment associated with the spectator posture.” 115 In other words, its participants are able to engage in debates where they are able to distance themselves from the events that are the subjects of debates. Debaters can throw around terms like torture, terrorism, genocide and nuclear war without blinking. Debate simulations can only serve to distance the debaters from real world participation in the political contexts they debate about. As William Shanahan remarks: …the topic established a relationship through interpellation that inhered irrespective of what the particular political affinities of the debaters were. The relationship was both political and ethical, and needed to be debated as such. When we blithely call for United States Federal Government policymaking, we are not immune to the colonialist legacy that establishes our place on this continent. We cannot wish away the horrific atrocities perpetrated everyday in our name simply by refusing to acknowledge these implications” (emphasis in original). 116 The “objective” stance of the policymaker is an impersonal or imperialist persona. The policymaker relies upon “acceptable” forms of evidence, engaging in logical discussion, producing rational thoughts. As Shanahan, and the Louisville debaters’ note, such a stance is integrally linked to the normative, historical and contemporary practices of power that produce and maintain varying networks of oppression. In other words, the discursive practices of policyoriented debate are developed within, through and from systems of power and privilege. Thus, these practices are critically implicated in the maintenance of hegemony. So, rather than seeing themselves as government or state actors, Jones and Green choose to perform themselves in debate, violating the more “objective” stance of the “policymaker” and require their opponents to do the same.

#### Filter their offense through an epistemic questioning of capitalism – knowledge production in education is framed and controlled by capitalism.

Hall 19 [Richard Hall is Professor of Education and Technology at De Montfort University, and a National Teaching Fellow. He is a Director of Leicester Vaughan College, a trustee of the Open Library of Humanities, and a co-operator at the Social Science Centre in Lincoln, UK. “On authoritarian neoliberalism and poetic epistemology”]

Both the process of reproducing higher education (HE) and the meaning of academic institutions in the global North is framed by the secular crisis of capitalism (Hall 2015). Across a global terrain, the failure to reinstate stable forms of accumulation and to counteract the tendency of the rate of profit to fall has catalysed educational policy focused upon discourses of entrepreneurship, employability, excellence, and impact. Education has been recalibrated as a site for the extraction of rents, the generation of surpluses, and the creation of new human capital, grounded in a desire for productivity (McGettigan 2015). One result has been that academic practices, such as public engagement and the production of scholarship, have been tied to the imposition of value-for-money (Newfield 2016), behind which hides the labour theory of value. This tends to reduce both academic autonomy and knowledge production to their exchange-value as representative of their social utility. One critical terrain for analysing this reduction is through the policy- and practice-based framings of authoritarian neoliberalism, as a mode of control. Authoritarian neoliberalism emerges from forms of governance that normalise hegemonic modes of behaviour and discourses, by disciplining non-co-operative individuals and groups (Johnson 2018). Such forms of non-co-operation include: first, dissent and opposition to the commodification of social goods like welfare, healthcare and education; and second, the failure to generate new forms of human capital or to maintain well-being in the face of precarious employment or performance management. Such symptoms are a function of an individual’s failure to manage their own risk in relation to the market and the value of their own labour in the reproduction of existing social norms. This tends to increase the marginalisation of specific individuals and groups, based upon their relationship to dominant, authoritative positions rooted in the intersection of whiteness, heterosexuality, maleness and ableism (Steinþórsdóttir at al. 2017). The technocratic practices, policies and ideas that are associated with authoritarian neoliberalism as a mode of disciplinary governance enable an analysis of knowledge production at the level of society (Bruff 2014; Bruff and Tansel 2018; Tansel et al. 2017). Knowledge production is recalibrated by audit technologies that correct performance through corporate governance, national and international league tables, excellence frameworks, competition for student numbers and fees, and tenure arrangements. This is not a smooth or uncontested terrain, but it places the academic in sharp, disciplinary relief to her own labour process, knowledge production, academic communities and her sense of Self (Hall 2018). Here, there is a powerful relationship between audit technologies and commodification processes, which both proletarianise academic labour by instantiating a precarious, gig economy, and also connect knowledge production and dissemination to techniques that enable learning analytics about those activities to be captured in near real-time. This allows institutions and corporations to finesse educational performance, through performative, audit cultures (Pasquale 2018). However, there are counter-narratives of ways in which knowledge production might be reimagined, and through which that knowledge might be reproduced as a movement of becoming across a social terrain (Braidotti 2017; Motta 2018). The potential for new forms of humanism related to the functions of intellectual knowledge at the level of society critique the imposition of a prosaic, epistemic starting point for life. Instead, they imagine life reflected and refracted by a poetry of illumination, or a quality of light that enables us to see how understanding is born of a collective, visceral, emotional, cognitive and philosophical experience (Lorde 2013). Here, engagement with indigenous and decolonising studies in education enable us to turn these processes that erupt in the global North back upon themselves, by holding a mirror up to commodification and objectification, and instead revealing the power of stories and narratives that de-centre the world as it is projected hegemonically (Bhambra et al. 2018; Tuhiwai Smith et al. 2018).