

Good Jobs & The Future of Work

PHIL 334: Pandemic Ethics

**PPE IN A TIME OF
PANDEMIC:**

**GENDER, LABOR,
AND THE PANDEMIC**



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Contents:
Professional Obligations
The Future of Work
Good Jobs & Bad Jobs

The Professional Obligations of Healthcare Workers

The Professional Obligations of Healthcare Workers

Udo Schuklenk argues that healthcare professionals are under no ethical obligation to treat COVID-19 patients.



Question 1:

What is the argument for this claim?

Question 2:

Do you agree with it? Why or why not?

The Professional Obligations of Healthcare Workers



Udo Schuklenk's central argument:

- P1** If the reason healthcare workers cannot perform a job safely is that they've deliberately been deprived of the resources to do so, then they are under no obligation to perform that job.
- P2** By electing particular governments, we've deliberately deprived healthcare workers of the resources necessary for them to do their jobs safely.

- C** By electing particular governments, we've ensured that healthcare workers are under no obligation to perform jobs (like treating COVID-19) when they lack the resources necessary for doing them safely.

Do you agree?

The Professional Obligations of Healthcare Workers



Let's take for granted that **P2** is true.

What about **P1**? Is it true? How could you argue for it?

- P1** If the reason healthcare workers cannot perform a job safely is that they've deliberately been deprived of the resources to do so, then they are under no obligation to perform that job.
- P2** By electing particular governments, we've deliberately deprived healthcare workers of the resources necessary for them to do their jobs safely.

- C** By electing particular governments, we've ensured that healthcare workers are under no obligation to perform jobs (like treating COVID-19) when they lack the resources necessary for doing them safely.

What Do You Think?

The Professional Obligations of Healthcare Workers

Udo Schuklenk argues that healthcare professionals are under no **ethical** obligation to treat COVID-19 patients.



Suppose it's right that healthcare workers have no *professional* obligation to treat COVID-19 patients.

Is it also the case that they have no *ethical* obligation to treat COVID-19 patients?



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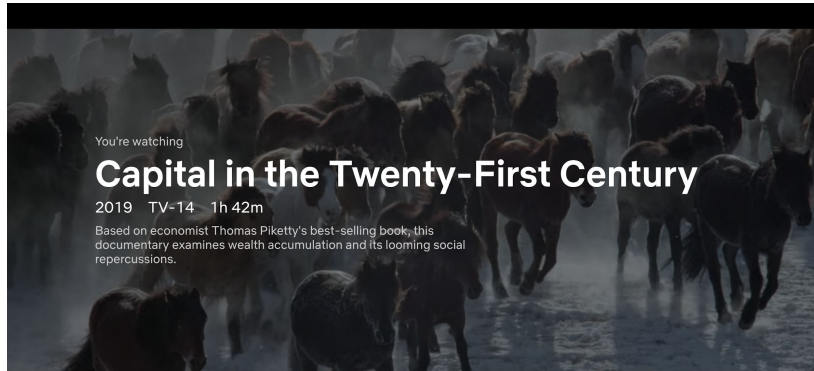
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What Do You Think?

The Future of Work



You're watching

Capital in the Twenty-First Century

2019 TV-14 1h 42m

Based on economist Thomas Piketty's best-selling book, this documentary examines wealth accumulation and its looming social repercussions.

The Future of Work: Automation

What If most work disappears?

What if we only worked 2-3 days a week?

What if we didn't work at all?



The Future of Work: Automation

What If most work disappears?

What if we only worked 2-3 days a week?

What if we didn't work at all?

It's a good time to ask:

What makes a good job *good* and a bad job *bad*?



Good Jobs (& Bad Jobs)

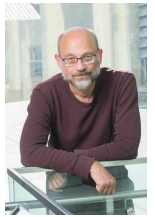
Discussion Question:
What's the **best** job you've
ever had? And what's the
worst job? (And what made
it so good/bad?)

Good Jobs

Josh Cohen asks "What makes a
job a *good* job?"

Standard Goods:

1. Compensation
2. Stability
3. Health and safety
4. Growth



These features contribute instrumentally
to the quality of life *outside* of work.

What else might make a job a good job?

Good Jobs

Josh Cohen asks "What makes a
job a *good* job?"

Standard Goods

Voice

Purpose

Pleasure in the Work Itself

Do you agree that these features can help
make a job good?

What qualities do you look for in a job?

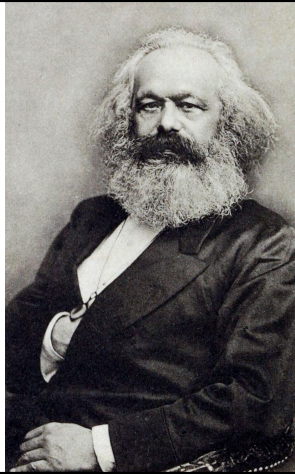


**Bad Jobs &
Marx's Alienation
Critique**

Marx's Alienation Critique

The worker becomes all the poorer the more wealth he produces, the more his production increases in power and size. The worker becomes an ever cheaper commodity the more commodities he creates. The *devaluation* of the world of men is in direct proportion to the *increasing value* of the world of things. Labor produces not only commodities; it produces itself and the worker as a *commodity* – and this at the same rate at which it produces commodities in general.

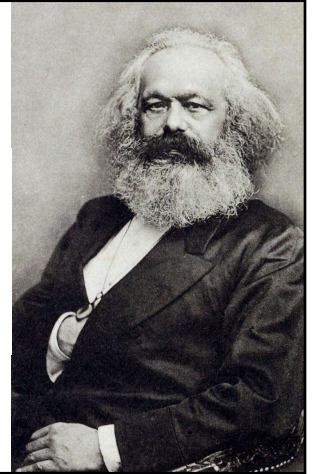
Karl Marx, *Estranged Labor*, XXII (1844)



Marx's Alienation Critique

All these consequences are implied in the statement that the worker is related to the *product of labor* as to an *alien* object. For on this premise it is clear that the more the worker spends himself, the more powerful becomes the alien world of objects which he creates over and against himself, the poorer he himself – his inner world – becomes, the less belongs to him as his own. It is the same in religion.

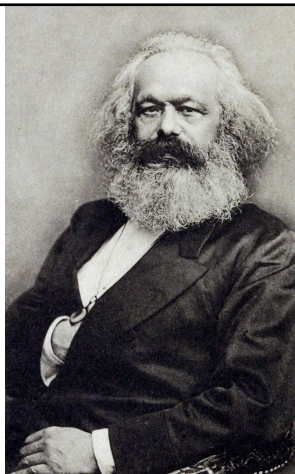
Karl Marx, *Estranged Labor*, XXII (1844)



Marx's Alienation Critique

Four Kinds of Alienation:

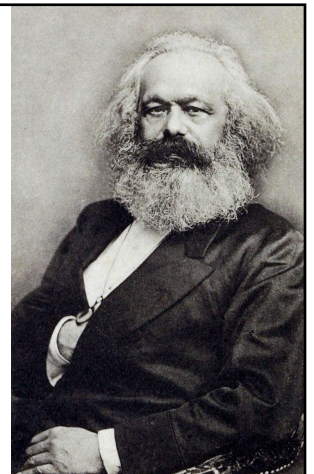
1. Alienation from the *product*.
2. Alienation from the *productive activity*.
3. Alienation from *each other*.
4. Alienation from our *creative nature as human beings*.



Marx's Alienation Critique

Four Kinds of Alienation:

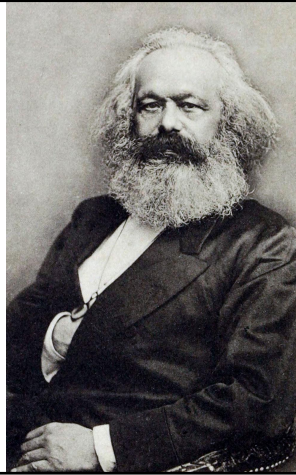
1. Alienation from the *product*.
 - In industrial economies, the worker plays a role in a larger production process over which she has no ownership.
 - The value that you create (the product) does not belong to you.



Marx's Alienation Critique

Four Kinds of Alienation:

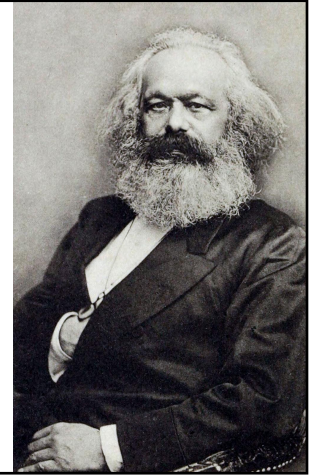
1. Alienation from the *product*.
2. Alienation from the *productive activity*.
 - He sees work as a means to a wage that allows him to subsist.
 - While at work, you are inherently unfree.
 - Work becomes something to be avoided.



Marx's Alienation Critique

Four Kinds of Alienation:

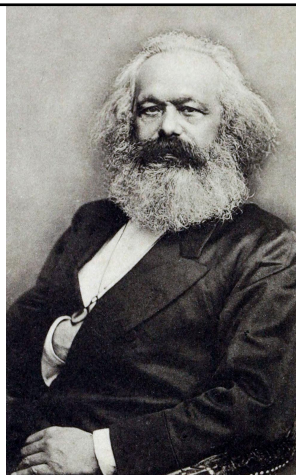
1. Alienation from the *product*.
2. Alienation from the *productive activity*.
3. Alienation from *each other*.
 - Does not see others' work in the products consumed.
 - Competition with other workers.



Marx's Alienation Critique

Four Kinds of Alienation:

1. Alienation from the *product*.
2. Alienation from the *productive activity*.
3. Alienation from *each other*.
4. Alienation from our *creative nature as human beings*.
 - Does not engage creativity at work.

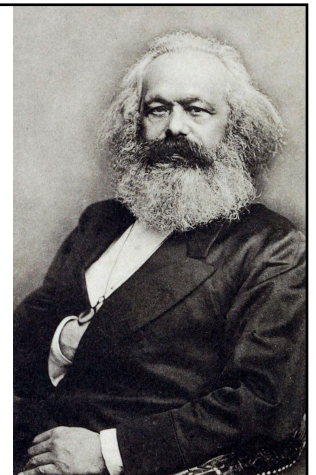


Marx's Alienation Critique

Four Kinds of Alienation:

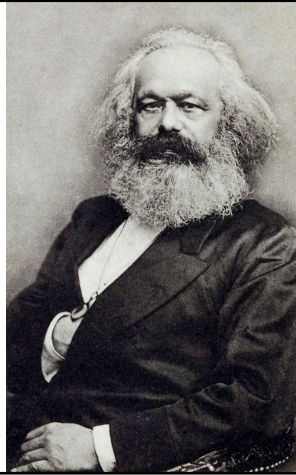
Workers are only one step removed from work that would be done by a machine.

The worker is a replaceable **cog in a gigantic machine**.



Marx's Alienation Critique

Four Kinds of Alienation:



Review: Marx's Worry

First, the fact that labor is *external* to the worker, i.e., it does not belong to his intrinsic nature; that in his work, therefore, he does not affirm himself but denies himself, does not feel content but unhappy, does not develop freely his physical and mental energy but mortifies his body and ruins his mind. The worker therefore only feels himself outside his work, and in his work feels outside himself. He feels at home when he is not working, and when he is working he does not feel at home. His labor is therefore not voluntary, but coerced; it is *forced labor*. It is therefore not the satisfaction of a need; it is merely a *means* to satisfy needs external to it. Its alien character emerges clearly in the fact that as soon as no physical or other compulsion exists, labor is shunned like the plague. External labor, labor in which man alienates

Universal Basic Income

UBI: What Is it?

- (a) is not restricted only to those willing to work [*work-tested*]
- (b) is not restricted to only those who fail to derive a sufficient income from other sources [*means-tested*]
- (c) is given irrespective of household situation
- (d) does not vary with place of residence



UBI: What Is it?

A UBI would replace one of the good-making features of having a job: **income**.

But are there other good-making features of a job that a UBI could not replace?



Discussion Question:



What Do We Want From Work? (If you were independently wealthy, what would you do with your time?)

Next Week:
Gender, Labor,
and Economic
Justice

