

Marxist theory and Feminism

Black Label Logic | 13 February, 2016 | by Black Label Logic

✘ The whole foundation of Marxism is conflict, the struggle between the exploited and the exploiters. To give a short summary of Marxist class struggle, his argument is that workers (Proletariat) produce goods that a capital owner (Bourgeois) sells to the market. However, the capital owner does not pay the workers the full value of goods produced, he pays them less than the full value and then appropriates the surplus to himself.

The solution was for the workers to be the capital owners, removing the Bourgeois from society and leaving only a rule by the proletariat. As everyone is both owner and worker, and all jobs are equal, the full value can be equally distributed to all the workers.

However, even Marx understood that not everyone is equal from nature, this is embodied in the quote

“From each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs.”

Implicit in this quote are two statements that each worker should produce as much as he can, and that each worker shall be paid according to each workers need.

This produces the Marxist contradiction, that those who are capable of producing the most, should have their surplus reallocated to those who cannot produce as much. Which is to say Marx’s solution to the problem of workers not receiving the full value of their labor, is for workers not to receive the full value of their labor.

Marx was fully aware that his strategy would not be received very well by the capital owners, who strangely enough felt like they had earned their wealth. Behind every fortune is a person who did something that produced for him a great amount of surplus wealth. Therefore, he advocated a revolution, as the workers had nothing to lose but their chains.

We saw this happen in Russia, which grew into the Soviet Union, we saw it happen in Cambodia, we saw it in Vietnam, North Korea and we saw it in China. Each of these Marxist constructs had/have their own variant on Marxism. North Korea has the Juche philosophy, Pol-Pot had the vision of an agrarian commune, China had Maoism and the Soviet Union had Leninism and then Stalinism.

While there are small differences they tend to be about implementation, rather than ideology. All these countries accepted the “Class struggle” narrative that Marx presents.

A narrative which is also en-vogue again, in the form of Feminism and Social Justice groups. In feminism, Class is morphed into Gender, and with inter-sectional feminism, race, and various other identities. The capitalism morphed into the Patriarchy, the Bourgeois morphed into “all men” and the proletariat became #yesallwomen

The trouble with the shoehorning, is that the Marxist classes can be proven to exist, and it is very easy to determine who is worker and who is a capital owner. Not so much with feminism, unless the movement is defined as “women against men”, however, this presents a problem with Rhetoric. Unlike Marx who made it clear that capital owners were to be stripped of their capital, under threat of force, feminists have been better at marketing.

The suffragettes get a good rep from history, few mention that they used a shaming campaign to get young men to defend them in World War 1. Few people mention the racist undertones and sometimes overt racist statements made by the suffragettes, and most of people in the western world agree that giving women the vote was a good thing. The suffragettes had a measurable goal.

The second wave feminists, that fought for equal rights in the workplace, for a women's right to self-determination, reproductive rights and sexual freedom were slightly less horrible than the suffragettes, but they relied on the same set of shaming tactics. However, they did have somewhat of a measurable goal.

Once feminism hits the third wave however it becomes very much influenced by the Marxist class struggle and other Marxist ideals. The war is still for the equality of women to men, however the pendulum has swung too far in the other direction and there are laws on the books giving women rights that men do not have, while there are no legal rights that only men have. Women are attending college in higher numbers than men, in the younger age groups women are making as much if not more than their male counterparts. So, feminists are still working for equality, yet there are no goals anymore that can give an answer to when the genders are equal.

This coincides very well with the Marxist notion of eternal revolution as outlined by Marx:

1. They can force the democrats to make inroads into as many areas of the existing social order as possible, so as to disturb its regular functioning and so that the petty-bourgeois democrats compromise themselves; furthermore, the workers can force the concentration of as many productive forces as possible – means of transport, factories, railways, etc. – in the hands of the state.

The approach to principle 1 by feminism, has been to push for feminist legislation. This includes domestic violence (VAWA), Deadbeat dad laws, the recent turning of judicial process on its head with “Yes means Yes” legislation, which puts the burden of proof on the accused.

Less severe approaches have been the implementation of stricter codes of conduct on social media sites, under the guise of protecting women, but in order to silence opponents. The contradictory nature of Marxism shines through in the feminist movement as well, in that feminists vehemently oppose legislation to bring “government into the bedroom” when it defends reproductive rights or gay marriage, yet invite government into the bedroom when it is about domestic violence, or consent.

Feminism will use government, and the threat of force it represents in the ultimate irony, when the “strong independent woman who don't need no man” uses the many men our police forces to put men in prison for not paying child support.

2. They must drive the proposals of the democrats to their logical extreme (the democrats will in any case act in a reformist and not a revolutionary manner) and transform these proposals into direct attacks on private property. If, for instance, the petty bourgeoisie propose the purchase of the railways and factories, the workers must demand that these railways and factories simply be confiscated by the state without compensation as the property of reactionaries. [...] The demands of the workers will thus have to be adjusted according to the measures and concessions of the democrats

This may appear less applicable as it is about property rights, yet if you replace the word “private property” with “men”. Domestic violence legislation is a great example of where a good legislation has fallen victim to the feminist narrative. The narrative is so pervasive, that when people hear the word “domestic violence” they think “man beating his wife”, despite the fact that according to the CDC, more

men than women are victims of partner violence. [1] VAWA says it very clearly, “*violence against women is more important than violence against men*”.

There are now so called “Rape shield laws”, the absurdity of which is evident, if applied to a different scenario, “Investment fraud shield law” “*In accordance with the investment fraud law, my client’s alleged history of defrauding people for the past 25 years cannot be mentioned.*”

The key here is that in true Marxist fashion, feminism is using the state very effectively to push an agenda that is damaging to males.

I know feminism is about equality, that is after all the dictionary definition. However, equality itself is a rather hard term to define outside of mathematics.

However, Marcus Aurelius writes in “Meditations”

“Of each particular thing ask: what is it in itself? What is its nature?”

With Feminism this is a complex question, because it is a highly diverse ideology, however if one observes what has been the approach, what legislation has been passed and what actions have been taken by feminists.

I put the question to the reader, is feminism about equality, or is it the “feminism is about gender equality” definition, a clever Marxist strategy?

[1] <http://www.saveservices.org/2012/02/cdc-study-more-men-than-women-victims-of-partner-abuse/>

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