**SOC 3150: Classical Sociological Theory**

**Lecture 11: Marx: Criticisms of his Theory**

Marx’s work presents a complex and still relevant analysis of the historical basis of inequality in capitalism and how to change it

Yet, before we wrap up our discussion of Marx, there are several criticisms of his approach that should be noted:

1. The failure of so-called “communist” societies and their

return to more capitalistically oriented economies;

1. Marx’s lack of a theory of state bureaucracy, one factor

leading to the demise of communist states;

(3) The “missing emancipatory subject,” where the proletariat:

* 1. did not act to overthrow the bourgeoisie as Marx predicted

(b) were often opposed to communism

(c) were overtaken by radical intellectuals in this endeavour in certain societies

(4) The power of ideology: 3 (c) suggests that ideology

plays a stronger role than Marx’s theory would have suggested;

1. The missing dimension of gender in Marx’s work (i.e.

his focus on men’s paid labour as the basis for society neglects women’s unpaid labour, another form of inequality);

1. Marx’s view that the economy was driven almost entirely by production tends to ignore the important role of consumption in the modern economy;
2. Marx’s uncritical acceptance of Western conceptions of progress.