

American Dream: Exploring Class in the U.S.
Reading Questions for 9/25/09

Questions to think about while reading Marx's Communist Manifesto:

- 1) what is Marx's conception of history and where it is going?
- 2) what does he view class relations as like? How many classes are there? What is their relationship to each other?
- 3) What is his view of what work is like in a factory mode of production? Why?
- 4) In his view, how do capitalist relationships shape interactions between different parts of the world?
- 5) What importance does he place on economic factors? On religion, law, culture, and nationality?

Questions to think about while reading Weber:

- 1) how does Weber's conceptions of class differ from those of Marx?
- 2) For Weber, do classes act as cohesive entities?
- 3) In the reading on "the spirit of capitalism," how is work conceptualized in a different way from the ways Marx conceives of it?
- 4) In Weber's view, what is the relationship between economic factors and what we would think of as cultural factors? Which takes precedence? How does this differ from Marx's viewpoints?

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