

Gracie Trainum  
Dr. Pederson  
Sociological Theory  
February 16, 2024

## Reflection 2

Karl Marx has left many contributions to sociological theory. He is a German philosopher and socialist and is best known for his belief in a communist society. Throughout his lifetime he faced many struggles. In the mid 1800s, he was involved in the upbringings of the monarchs, leading him to be expelled from Germany and France (Pederson, 2024). He then spent the later parts of his life in England where he lived in poverty (Pederson, 2024).

He helped write the Communist Manifesto, which was published in 1848 and this led to the creation of his theory “Marxism”. Aside from his theory, he is widely known for his critiques of Capitalism. Capitalism is an economic system, created by Adam Smith (1776), where the means of production and services are controlled by private ownership and its main goal is to gain profit. According to Marx, Capitalism “creates a different world” (Pederson, 2024). Not only does it affect our country, but it impacts other countries which explains why many items we obtain are made in countries other than the United States. The system's main goal is to make the most money possible.

An article from the New York Times (2024) provides a great example of how a capitalist society works. A soccer team in Africa is highly known for wearing plastic sandals while playing soccer and these shoes are commonly known as the “sneaker of the poor” (Peltier & Silva, 2024). The team views the sandals as the complete opposite as they view the shoes as a badge of honor. While yes, the team can play in shiny and expensive shoes, they prefer wearing these sandals due to the practicality.

The sandal slowly started becoming part of the fashion industry. There were magazines and articles around the world that had people modeling these sandals. Soon after the sandals became well known, Gucci wanted to create a pair just like them. The original pair of sandals which costs \$1.50 is now being created by a brand and sold for a price of around \$1,000. Due to the private ownership of a capitalist society, brands have the freedom to do this. Because the sandals were created to replicate the ones used in the amateur games of soccer, the performance of the team affected the sales of the sandals. Whenever the team lost games, sales of the sandals decreased.

As said in the Karl Marx PowerPoint (2024), capitalism is a structure of production based on inequality. Sandals that originated in a low-income country are now being replicated and sold to people of high social classes. This causes a divide in social class which creates social inequalities amongst society. Not only are people in the working class unable to afford an item of luxury like this, but they are the ones creating items like these in factories for people of the capitalist class, the bourgeoisie. In a way, the proletariat, which are the wage workers, run a capitalist society because without them, the production of items in demand would not be met. All aspects of a capitalist society create a large divide amongst social classes.

## References

Pederson, J. (2024) *Karl Marx PowerPoint*. Retrieved from

[https://longwood.instructure.com/courses/1312457/files/58265220?module\\_item\\_id=13488185](https://longwood.instructure.com/courses/1312457/files/58265220?module_item_id=13488185)

Peltier, E., & Silva, J. (2024, February 7). *Playing soccer in \$1.50 sandals that even Gucci wants to copy*. The New York Times. <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/02/07/world/africa/ivory-coast-leke-africa-cup-of-nations.html>

Smith, A. (1776) *Theory of Capitalism*.

Link to article:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2024/02/07/world/africa/ivory-coast-leke-africa-cup-of-nations.html>