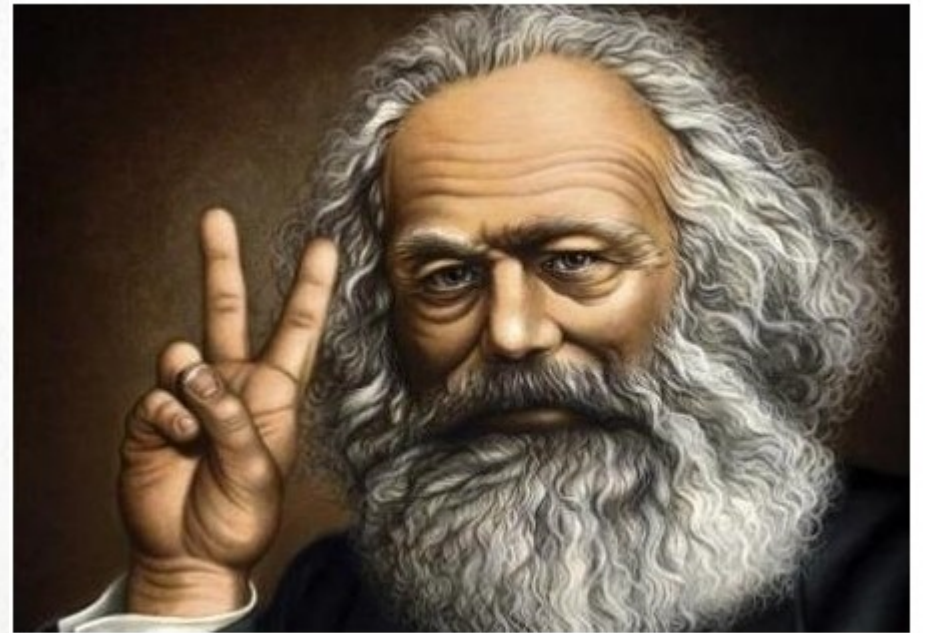


Critical Theory

Sam Kniknie

Beyond Marx

- Marx' predictions → not true
- Revolution in Russia
- Capitalism was/is not overthrown
- Marx = useless?



Frankfurter Schule

- Founded in the 1930s in Frankfurt, Germany
- Max Horkheimer, Theodor Wiesengrund Adorno, Walter Benjamin & Herbert Marcuse
- Critique on Western, capitalist society
- Enlightenment did not result in human emancipation (Fascism, Stalinism)



Basics of Critical Theory

- Combines the ideas of Marx, Weber and Hegel
 - Economic determinism → cultural determinism
 - Interdisciplinarity
 - 4 critiques
-

Criticism of economic determinism

- Economic determinism in Marx's original work & followers
- Not whole story
- Interaction between 'superstructure' and 'base'
- Gramsci

Criticism of positivism

- \approx critique on economic determinism
 - Human sciences \neq natural sciences
 - Loses sight on human actors
 - Conservative: no attention for change
-

Criticism of sociology in general

- Conservative science
 - Legitimizes status quo of society
 - Should help creating a 'just and humane society'
 - Sociology as a political instrument
-

Criticism of culture industry

- Critique on mass media
 - Commodification of media
 - Driven by profit, money
 - Conformism
 - Stupifies people
 - False feeling of individualism
-

Criticism of culture industry

- \approx knowledge industry
- Commodification of knowledge
- Universities become companies?



Critiques on Critical Theory

- A-historical
 - Not enough attention for economy
 - Bourgeois idealism
 - Too ideological?
-

Questions

- Can a university be objective and independent in its research when it goes to stock exchange?
- Is sociology conservative and does it approve for the status quo of society? Should it take a progressive role and fight for emancipation?