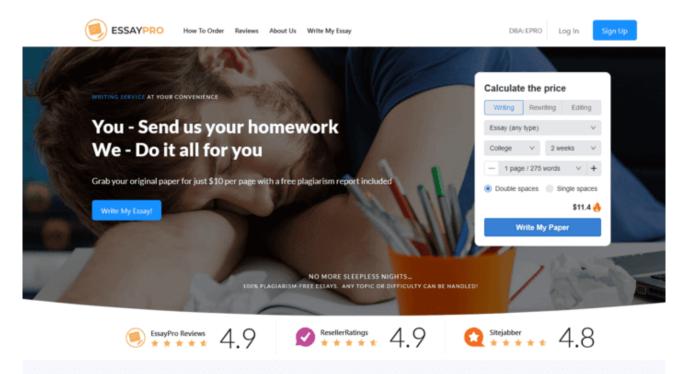
## **Karl Marx - Capitalist Alienation**



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A century and a half ago, Karl Marx established a theory that today is known as the backbone to modern socialism and communism. Marx viewed the early capitalism of his own day as inherently exploitive. At the core of capitalist production is what is considered surplus value, the value left over after the producer (in Marx's case, factory owner) had paid the fixed costs of production such as raw materials, machinery, overhead and wages. The left over amount was kept as profit, a profit that Marx saw that was earned from the sweat of the labor. Derived from his idea of surplus value was that of alienation. Marx gave an economic interpretation to alienation. People were alienated from their own labor; their work was appropriated by someone else and the work itself was compulsory, not creative; the cause was capitalism, and the cure was socialism. Marx believed that modern labor is an evolution of something that began centuries ago and encompassing everything from slave states to European feudalism right on up to today's version of commercial capitalism; which, completed or perfected the capitalist technique of worker alienation. Marx is correct in saying that capitalism exploits the working class, and that working under capitalism is in fact "alienating".

Worker alienation became an effective tool by which the capitalist could separate themselves from the <u>laborers</u> of their nations. The separation, however, was more to show

a capitalist's class status rather than having...

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