

Sociology 621
Lecture 1 OUTLINE
September 7, 2011

Marxism as an Emancipatory Social Science

INTRODUCTION

I. Prologue: What this course is about

- 1. The Marxist Tradition.**
- 2. My own relationship to the material**
- 3. Many Marxisms.**
- 4. Learning the Language of Marxism.**

II. Emancipatory + Social + Science

1. Foundations: an Empirical Claim, a theoretical proposition, a normative orientation

1. A foundational Empirical Claim and a Foundational Thesis

2. Marxian Variant

3. Normative foundations

2. Emancipatory Social Science

3. Reflexivity

4. Science

5. Summing up

6. Three tasks of Emancipatory Social Science

- 1. diagnosis and critique of the world as it exists;**
- 2. envisioning viable alternatives; and,**
- 3. a theory of transformation**

Addendum: Six Theses about Emancipatory theory.

1. **Fundamental change is possible**
2. **Agents for change come from within the game**
3. **Change comes through struggle**
4. **Punchline:** oppressed people can transform the conditions of their own oppression through struggle.

BUT

5. **Constraints:** They do so under constraints which can thwart their efforts
6. **Knowledge:** Therefore: *to transform the world we must understand and transform the constraints themselves.*