

Capitalism and Socialism, Marx on Class Conflict

As you're reading the selection from Karl Marx's *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (pp. 473-83), consider the questions below.

1. What does Marx mean by class struggle? Is class struggle always clear and obvious when it's happening?
2. What two classes define the class struggle of the modern age? What defines each class?
3. What is the origin of the bourgeoisie? What specific historical developments helped them emerge?
4. What does Marx mean when he says that the bourgeoisie "constantly revolutionize the instruments of production?" How does this impact society? How does it impact the wider world?
5. What political changes do the bourgeoisie cause?
6. How much is labor paid by the bourgeoisie? Why does paying this amount make sense under capitalism?
7. What are the effects on the proletarians of bourgeois production (capitalism)?
8. Why does the bourgeoisie "produce, above all...its own gravediggers?"
9. Could the bourgeoisie just be nicer to the proletarians? How much choice does it seem like they have in how they treat workers? How much choice does it seem like the proletariat have in how they respond to their treatment?