**Literary Theory Cards**

**Marxists / Social Power Lens---think socio-economic class, owners v workers, rich v poor**

***Assumptions*** (Mindset; what you assume coming into a text/medium based on your prior knowledge)

1. Karl Marx argued that the way people think and behave in any society is determined by basic economic factors (rich vs poor)
2. In his view, those groups of people who owned and controlled major industries could exploit the rest of the population through conditions of employment and by forcing their own values and beliefs on to other social groups.

Marxist criticism applies these arguments in the study of texts and artifacts  
  
***Strategies: How to Read with a Marxist Lens***

1. Explore the way different groups of people (or individuals) are represented in the medium.
   1. What “groups” exist in the text/medium? Who has power? Who doesn’t? What role does economic/social class play in the distribution of power in the text?
2. Evaluate the level of social realism in the text and how society is portrayed.
   1. Is this a realistic depiction of the relationships shared by the different groups? How are the different groups portrayed?
3. Consider how the text/medium itself is a commodity that reproduces certain social beliefs and practices. Analyze the social effect of the literary work.
   1. What did the work make you understand/believe as a result of reading/viewing it?
   2. What ideas/beliefs is this piece “pushing” on the reader/viewer/listener?
4. Look at the effects of power drawn from economic or social class.
   1. How do the “powerful” impact the “powerless”?

Marxist-Social Power Artifact

