Socialist and Marxist Speaker Series
Fall 2026

Thursdays

12:30-1:45 P.M.

Bangor Room, Memorial Union

The University of Maine

Zoom link for those who cannot attend in person:
https://maine.zoom.us/j/86720888983



Nov 12: THE IMPORTANCE OF KARL MARX, MAHATMA GANDHI, AND THEIR MUTUAL RELATIONS FOR THE USA AND THE WORLD IN 2027

Doug Allen, Prof Emeritus of Phil, UMaine, has authored 17 books, 150 book chapters and scholarly articles, including 6 Gandhi-informed books and many Marx-informed publications. He taught Phil of Karl Marx every year and has served as Coordinator of Socialist-Marxist Series since it began in the mid-1980s. A peace and justice scholar activist, he has been active in the Civil Rights Movement, the Vietnam Antiwar Movement, the Anti-Apartheid Movement, and many other struggles resisting violence, war, class exploitation, imperialism, racial and gender oppression, and environmental destruction. He will present Marx and Gandhi as significant and insightful for understanding our lives and our world and how they can be selectively, creatively, dialectically related of greatest value for 2027.

Karl Marx was born in Trier, Germany in 1818 and died in London in 1883. Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, M.K. Gandhi, better known by his honorific title Mahatma Gandhi, was born in Porbandar, India in 1869 and was assassinated in New Delhi on January 30, 1948. Marx and Gandhi are two of the most significant contributors for our understanding of the modern world, each with many hundreds of millions of followers today. We will explore how they can be brought into dialectical relations providing new creative understandings and practices in our lives and in the world.

Gandhi and Marx, as well as diverse Gandhians and Marxists, seem completely unrelated and extremely hostile in their oppositional perspectives. We'll consider their sharp disagreements. We'll examine how Marx is often more insightful and developed in areas where Gandhi is weaker and sometimes needs to be totally rejected. We'll examine how Gandhi is often more insightful and developed in areas where Marx is weaker and sometimes needs to be totally rejected. This will involve analyzing such key topics as violence and nonviolence, capitalism and socialism, ethics, alienation, freedom, class exploitation, gender and race oppression, modern individual ego and its possessive, greed-driven attachments, modern technology and destructive approaches to nature. What are Marx-informed and Gandhi-informed positive alternatives and ways of living?

The most original part of the presentation will involve bringing such diverse and contradictory Marxist and Gandhian perspectives into dynamic, unifying, creative, dialectical relations, but not in the static rigid ways embraced by most traditional and many contemporary Marxists, Gandhians, and others. The remarkable Marx and the remarkable Gandhi do not have all of the answers. We must include the complementary, insightful, ethical, spiritual, feminist, scientific, environmental

perspectives of others. Much more than this shapes what is most original in this unifying, creative, dialectical process consisting of dramatic breakthroughs, paradigm shifts, and new ways of understanding and living. Each of us lives in a world that largely shapes our past, present, and future, but we are also now empowered to view ourselves as active subjects, as co-authors, who will reconstitute dominant relations and realize new ways moving us toward greater meaningful realizations and greater human and planetary flourishing in 2027.

Next Program, Nov 19: MAKING AI FIT THE WAY LIFE SHOULD BE: BUILDING DIGITAL COMMONS WHERE PRODUCERS AND USERS OF DATA OWN IT IN MAINE

Gray Cox teaches Philosophy, Peace Studies, and Artificial Intelligence at the College of the Atlantic and is lead officer of the Quaker Institute for the Future. His writings on AI include his book *Smarter Planet or Wiser Earth?* (Developing a Human Ecological and Peace Studies Approach to AI), and a recent technological article in *Ai Magazine* (journal of Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence).

This Series, offered since the mid-1980s as the academic Socialist and Marxist Studies Series, is coordinated by Doug Allen, Professor Emeritus of Philosophy. The series is co-sponsored by the Bureau of Labor Education and others. Speakers do not necessarily present socialist or Marxist viewpoints. For additional information, contact Doug Allen at dallen@maine.edu.

PLEASE ANNOUNCE TO CLASSES AND INTERESTED GROUPS AND LIST IN CALENDARS

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