

categories. The concept "social class" corresponds to real social forces with distinct interests and thus historical missions. Classes emerge as social forces in the class struggle inherent in the social organization of production. Social classes exist only in class struggle and it is class struggle that makes history. It matters, therefore, a great deal how classes are conceptualized and what social positions are placed within the boundaries of a particular class.

Answering the question posed as such, social classes are groupings of social agents defined principally but not exclusively by their place in the production process, which embraces the labor process, the productive forces and the relations of production. Social class is defined by its place in the social division of labor as a whole. This includes political and ideological relations. Class locations are thus structurally determined by the objective place in the social division of labor; and class interest is defined by the class determination which fixes the horizon of the class' struggle.¹⁴

The question of who belongs to which class involves identifying criteria defining the boundaries of social classes. The more division of labor there is, the more vague and controversial these boundaries become.¹⁵ The controversy gets especially heated when the proletariat class locations are concerned. Some argue that although not all proletarians are wage-workers, all wage-workers are proletarians.¹⁶ This position derives from the view that it is essentially the separation from the means of production that defines the proletariat.

Others argue that virtually all wage-laborers should be considered members of the working class.¹⁷ Underlying this position is the premise