

# Britain: ISSE to hold meetings on Charles Darwin

9 May 2009

This month, the International Students for Social Equality in Britain are holding a series of meetings to mark the anniversary year of Charles Darwin—2009 marks 200 years since the birth of Darwin and 150 years since the publication of *On the Origin of Species*.

The meetings are being held in Sheffield on May 13, Manchester on May 15, London on May 19 and Brighton on May 20 (full details below).

We invite all students, young people and readers of the *World Socialist Web Site* to attend these meetings, where we will look at the connection between Darwin and Karl Marx. When Marx read *On the Origin of Species* he wrote, “Darwin’s work is most important and suits my purpose in that it provides a basis in natural science for the historical class struggle.”

So impressed was Marx by Darwin’s work that he sent an inscribed copy of the second edition of *Das Kapital* to Darwin when it was published in 1873.

At Marx’s graveside his friend Friedrich Engels declared, “Just as Darwin discovered the law of evolution in organic nature, so Marx discovered the law of evolution in human history; he discovered the simple fact, hitherto concealed by an overgrowth of ideology, that humankind must first of all eat and drink, have shelter and clothing, before it can pursue politics, science, art, religion, etc.; and that therefore the production of the immediate material means of life and consequently the degree of economic development attained by a given people or during a given epoch form the foundation upon which the state institutions, the legal conceptions, the art and even the religious ideas of the people concerned have been evolved, and in the light of which these things must therefore be explained, instead of vice versa as had hitherto been the case.”

These two giants of science defined the modern era and the full implication of their work is only just beginning to become apparent today. Evolution has

come into its own with the discovery of DNA and, despite opposition from religious fundamentalists, has become an essential part of our everyday lives and experience. Marx has long been dismissed as outmoded, particularly since the collapse of the Soviet Union, but his work has taken on a new relevance as the world financial system implodes and the economy descends into an unparalleled depression.

This talk will examine the ideas of both these seminal thinkers, drawing out the common themes that animate their work and exploring their significance for the present day.

Chris Talbot, the speaker at these meetings, writes for the *World Socialist Web Site* on science, philosophy and contemporary politics.

## Sheffield

Wednesday, May 13, 7 p.m.  
St. Matthew’s Meeting Rooms  
Carver Street  
Sheffield  
S1 4FE

## Manchester

Friday, May 15, 7:30 p.m.  
Meeting Room 1  
University of Manchester Student Union  
Oxford Road  
Manchester  
M13 9PR

## London

Tuesday, May 19, 7 p.m.  
Room Z129  
St. Phillip’s North Block  
London School of Economics  
Sheffield Street  
WC2A 2ES

## Brighton

Wednesday, May 20, 2 p.m.

Small meeting room  
Bramber House Conference Centre  
University of Sussex  
Brighton  
BN1 9QU



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Socialist Equality Party visit:

**[wsws.org/contact](https://wsws.org/contact)**