### 1AC

#### Volition, or the structure of the will, is the precondition for ethics and has intrinsic value. Desires like wanting to smoke a cigarette might arise against our will, but unlike animals, we can ultimately choose to identify with or discard those desires through examining the existing structure of our will– i.e., our underlying volition to quit smoking even if we’re addicted.

#### Our moral choices as agents to act on what makes us who we are, like our desires and passions, thus presupposes the use of an unobstructed volition that compels us to establish our unique identity. Subjectivity and ethics can’t be a matter of pure passion or impulse, since whether a person identifies with their passion depends first on their volition.

Rahel Jaeggi (August 2014). “Alienation.” Columbia University Press. Translated by Frederick Neuhouser and Alan E. Smith. Edited by Frederick Neuhouser. Rahel Jaeggi is professor of social and political philosophy at the Humboldt University in Berlin. Her research focuses on ethics, social philosophy, political philosophy, philosophical anthropology, social ontology, and critical theory.

On the one hand, self-**alienation can be understood**, with Frankfurt, as being “delivered over to” our own desires and longings. (We could call this “first order” alienation.) These desires can take on an overwhelming power that presents itself as a “force alien to ourselves.” This is not due to their irresistible character alone: “It is because we do not identify ourselves with them and do not want them to move us.”29 2. These feelings and passions are the raw material that we relate to evaluatively or with respect to which we form our will. Whether a person identifies himself with these passions, or whether they occur as alien forces that remain outside the boundaries of his volitional identity, depends upon what [they themselves] he himself wants **his** [their] will to be.**30** Hence the volitional attitudes on this level, in contrast to unformed first- order desires, can be shaped and structured and are wholly at our command: they are “entirely up to” us. A crucial implication of this account is the distinction between power and authority. Passions, according to this account, have volitional power but no volitional authority. Frankfurt elaborates: “In fact, the passions do not really make any claims on us at all. **. . .** Their effectiveness in moving us is entirely a matter of sheer brute force.”31 3. What we do not freely have at our command, in contrast, is our volitional nature, the deep structure of our will itself. On the level of volitional necessities we are determined; here it is not “entirely up to us” how we determine our will; our volitional nature determines us. Yet our volitional necessities [and] determine us in a different sense from that in which passions or first-order desires do: they compel us, one could say, not as alien powers but rather to be ourselves. They are not a brute force because they are not an external power but rather the power of what we really want or really are. “It is an element of his established volitional nature and hence of his identity as a person.”32 For this reason Frankfurt can claim in his adoption example that the mother experiences the limitation of her will—her “not being able to”—as a kind of liberation. Self-alienation, then, means acting against one’s volitional nature. Hence the mother who wants to give up her child has formed a second order volition that conflicts with her volitional nature. If she acted in accordance with this second order volition, she would alienate herself—a “second order” alienation. This means that it would run counter to what constitutes her as a person; it would undermine the conditions of her identity. Self-alienation on this level consists, then, in not being in agreement with one’s own person, with what constitutes oneself as a person. The assumption of a volitional nature appears, then, to solve the problem of finding a criterion for authentic desires and their authorization that I have raised in conjunction with the theme of self-alienation. The standard for the appropriateness or inappropriateness of identifying with a desire is our volitional nature; our desires—our real desires—are authorized in relation to it. In what follows, however, I will explain why this, too, fails to solve the problem raised in our initial example.]]

#### Alienation occurs when an agent doesn’t know why their desires belong to them. The difference between an alienated and non-alienated person is that an alienated person cannot identify their desire as being important to their will, and thus cannot act purely on their own principles.

#### Thus, volition comes first and outweighs: A) Proceduralism – the will is the mechanism by which every agent engages in any activity, which means regardless of the content of any ethical theory, the ability to will that theory is an intrinsic good B) Foundations – the will is the basis for what constitutes an ethical subject which means its relation to the world is the primary ethical consideration C) Motivation – the structure of the will is the primary source of all our desires, reasons, and beliefs since it generates what counts as motivational to the subject D) Identity – the nature of the will is most constitutive to the creation of the subject since it determines what each subject considers intrinsic to its identity and what exists externally as an façade.

#### However, ethical theories to evaluate the will face a dilemma – they are either paternally objectivist to the extent they restrict the will by presupposing an objective “good” that not everyone identifies with, or they are weakened by subjectivism to the extent that it’s impossible to make true moral claims. The only solution is a concept of alienation that understands the will as a functional capacity to relate to itself and the world – a criterion that is concerned with how one wills, rather than what one wills.

#### That functional capacity of willing is mediated by social roles – as the authentic self is inexplicably linked to the self that engages in social communities with others through duplication. Understanding the functionality of the will is impossible in a vacuum.

**Jaeggi 2,** Jaeggi, Rahel. “Alienation.” Columbia University Press, cup.columbia.edu/book/alienation///Scopa.

The positions of both authors can be reduced to the following common denominator: **roles are** less alienating than **constitutive for the development of persons** and personality. They are constitutive in the sense that they are directly bound up with a person’s development and, so, “productive.” At first glance this position might seem to come down on one side of the two alternatives—an unconditional affirmation of roles—but after giving a brief account of the position, I will make use of it to move beyond the two alternatives. Once the “productivity thesis” has been articulated, it will be possible to distinguish between alienating and non-alienating aspects of role behavior. THE HUMAN BEING AS DOPPELGÄNGER Roles are productive. In and through them we first become ourselves. This is the essence of Helmuth Plessner’s conception of the positive significance of roles (which he developed as a direct response to critiques of them as alienating). “**The human being is always himself only in ‘doubling’ in relation to a role figure he can experience. Also, all that he sees as comprising his authenticity is but the role he plays before himself and others.**22 Roles on this view are not only necessary in order **to make social interaction possible**, whether this be a “being together” of individuals or a benign “passing each other by;” **interaction mediated by roles is also constitutive of an individual’s relation to herself**. When Plessner speaks of a “doubling in relation to a role figure,” he **means that one depends on roles not only to become a “figure” of experience for others but also in order to become such a figure for oneself**. Plessner’s thesis that the human being is a Doppelgänger is grounded in a comprehensive theory of human nature that, beginning from the fundamental concept of “eccentric positionality,” is critical of every idea of immediacy or spontaneity.23 According to Plessner: The distance that the role creates in family life, as well as in one’s profession, work, or public offices, is the human being’s characteristic detour to his fellow human being; it is the means of his immediacy. Whoever wants to see in this an instance of selfalienation misunderstands the human essence and foists on it a possibility of existence such as animals have on the level of life or angels have on the spiritual level. . . . Only the human being appears as a Doppelgänger, on the outside in the figure of his role and on the inside, privately, as himself. 24 Although at first glance the talk of a Doppelgänger raises the suspicion that Plessner, too, is trapped in a model of doubling that relies on an opposition between authenticity and role behavior—between the inner and the outer—this suspicion turns out to be unwarranted: the Doppelgänger character of human beings is illusory because there are not two real entities there; **our character as a “double” is a construct. There is not an internal division here to be overcome; rather, doubling is constitutive of the human self.** “The human being cannot abolish his status as a Doppelgänger without negating his humanity. He cannot complain of this doubling and play it off against the ideal of an original oneness, **for I can be one only with something, with someone, even if it is only myself.** The human being gets a hold of himself in others. He encounters these others on a detour via roles, exactly as the others encounter him.”25 **If the other “gets a hold of himself” in the other, and if these two can encounter each other only through roles, then a self that is prior to or outside roles is a fiction.** When Plessner says that “I can be one only with something, with someone, even if it is only myself,”26 he is referring to a constitutive internal division that precedes all possible unity—**it points to the fact that one’s relation to oneself must also be conceived of as a certain kind of relation, namely, one mediated by a relation to the outside or to others.** Thus I am not “someone” already at the outset; **I can become someone only in relation to others and hence only via the roles in which we reciprocally encounter one another:** “The human being gets a hold of himself in others.” Behind all roles, then, there is nothing or, in any case, **there is no “authentic being” there. No matter where we look, behind roles we find nothing we can grab hold of except for more roles that one “plays before oneself and others.”** We could call this an onion conception of the self: there are various layers but no inner core.

#### This culminates in the act of appropriation – the ability to view yourself as a practical agent capable of taking up a project that actively changes your own subject and the role itself. Only this allows agents to act in a way that is consistent with their will, and thus achieve any end that they value.

**Jaeggi 3,** Jaeggi, Rahel. “Alienation.” Columbia University Press, cup.columbia.edu/book/alienation///Scopa. What does it mean to appropriate something?12 If the concept of appropriation refers to a specific relation between self and world, between individuals and objects (whether spiritual or material), what precisely does this relation look like, what are its particular character and its specific structure? Various aspects come together here, and together they account for the concept’s appeal and potential. As opposed to the mere learning of certain contents, talk of appropriation emphasizes that something is not merely passively taken up but actively worked through and independently assimilated. **In contrast to merely theoretical insight into some issue, appropriation**—comparable to the psychoanalytic process of “working through”—**means that one can “deal with” what one knows, that it stands at one’s disposal as knowledge and that one really and practically has command over it**. And appropriating a role means more than being able to fill it: one is, we could say, identified with it. Something that we appropriate does not remain external to ourselves. **In making something our own, it becomes a part of ourselves** in a certain respect. This suggests a kind of introjection and a mixing of oneself with the objects of appropriation. **It also evokes the idea of productively and formatively interacting with what one makes one’s own**. Appropriation does not leave what is appropriated unchanged. **This is why the appropriation of public spaces, for example, means more than that one uses them. We make them our own by making a mark on them through what we do in and with them**, by transforming them through appropriative use such that they first acquire a specific form through this use (though not necessarily in a material sense). Although it has one of its roots in an account of property relations, the concept of appropriation, in contrast to mere possession, emphasizes the particular quality of a process that first constitutes a real act of taking possession of something. Accordingly, appropriation is a particular mode of seizing possession.13 Someone who appropriates something puts her individual mark on it, inserts her own ends and qualities into it. This means that sometimes we must still make something that we already possess our own. Relations of appropriation, then, are characterized by several features: appropriation is a form of praxis, a way of relating practically to the world. It refers to a relation of penetration, assimilation, and internalization in which what is appropriated is at the same time altered, structured, and formed. The crucial point of this model (also of great importance for Marx) is a consequence of this structure of penetration and assimilation: appropriation always means a transformation of both poles of the relation. **In a process of appropriation both what is appropriated and the appropriator are transformed**. In the process of incorporation (appropriative assimilation) the incorporator does not remain the same. This point can be given a constructivist turn: what is appropriated is itself constituted in the process of appropriation; by the same token, what is appropriated does not exist in the absence of appropriation. (In some cases this is obvious: there is no public space as such without its being publicly appropriated; but even social roles exist only insofar as they are constantly reappropriated.) One now sees the potential and the peculiar character of the concept: the possibility of appropriating something refers, on the one hand, to a subject’s power to act and form and to impose its own meaningful mark on the world it appropriates. (A successful appropriation of social roles or activities and, by extension, the appropriating relation one can take to one’s life in general constitute something like self-determination and being the author of one’s own life.) On the other hand, a process of appropriation is always bound to a given, previously existing content and thereby also to an independent meaning and dynamic over which one does not have complete command. (**Thus a role**, for example, **in order to be appropriated, must always be “found” as an already existing model and complex of rules; it can be reinterpreted but not invented from scratch**. Skills that we appropriate are constrained by success conditions; leading our own life depends on circumstances over which we do not have complete command.) There is, then, an interesting tension in the idea of appropriation between what is previously given and what is formable, between taking over and creating, between the subject’s sovereignty and its dependence. The crucial relation here is that between something’s being alien and its accessibility: objects of appropriation are neither exclusively alien nor exclusively one’s own. As Michael Theunissen puts it, “I do not need to appropriate what is exclusively my own, and what is exclusively alien I am unable to appropriate.”14 In contrast to Marx, then, for whom appropriation is conceived of according to a model of reappropriation, the account of the dynamic of appropriation and alienation that I am proposing reconceives the very concept of appropriation. This involves rehabilitating what is alien in the model of appropriation and radicalizing that model in the direction of a nonessentialist conception of appropriation. Appropriation would then be a permanent process of transformation in which what is appropriated first comes to be through its appropriation, without one needing to fall back into the myth of a creation ex nihilo. Understanding appropriation as a relation in which we are simultaneously bound to something and separated from it, and in which what is appropriated always remains both alien and our own, has important implications for the ideas of emancipation and alienation bound up with the concept of appropriation. The aspiration of a **successful appropriation of self and world would be, then, to make the world one’s own without it having been already one’s own and in wanting to give structure to the world and to one’s own life without beginning from a position of already having complete command over them**.

#### Thus, the standard is consistency with non-alienated relations. Only this coheres the nature of who you are and prevents psychological violence.

#### Impact calc: 1. There are four types of alienating relations: A) Objectification – treating an agent with normative potential as a passive object B) Standardization – Enforcing one particular way to engage in a role such that the subject has no interpretive leeway C) Fixation – preventing the acquisition of new experiences within a particular role rather than fostering the development of an agent and D) Over-identification – allowing the portrayal of a particular role to over-identify you as merely that role.

#### Prefer additionally –

#### [1] Epistemology – only my framework can account for the types of moral knowledge that become practically relevant, anything else fails to bridge the is/ought gap by merely making claims about what is the case theoretically.

**Haase No Date,** Matthias Haase, Knowing What I have Done. //Scopa. Now, our kitchen scene suggests that the kind of cognitive advance sketched above can be made in the first person perspective of acting. **When I answer** your question **how I know that the spatula is in the left drawer by saying ‘I put it there’, I** seem to **claim that** in this case **I was epistemically excluding all those possibilities by determining reality accordingly – that is, through my actualizing my power to move things:** I intentionally went, step by step, through the motions until there was no space for possible interference anymore. Our topic seems to be connected with what the tradition calls **‘practical’** or ‘spontaneous’ **knowledge**. It is said to **differ[s] from ‘theoretical’** or ‘receptive’ **knowledge through the way in which it relates to its object. While theoretical knowledge depends on the reality of its object, practical knowledge is productive of the reality of its object.**16As knowledge in general is the self-conscious exclusion of the possibility of things being otherwise, **practical knowledge is understanding of necessity: in ‘producing’ the reality of its object practical knowledge is knowledge of why this reality comes about;** it is, to quote the famous line G.E.M. Anscombe takes from Aquinas, knowledge that is “the cause of what it understands”.

#### [2] Action theory – only viewing an agent as an active body capable of generating intentions can hold agents culpable and decipher the difference between actions and wishes.

**Small No Date,** Will Small, *Practical Knowledge and the Structure of Action,* UChicago//Scopa **Aspiring to do something differs from merely wishing** for some state of affairs or event to obtain or transpire. As Anscombe notes, **“[a] chief mark of an idle wish is that a man does nothing**—whether he could or no—**towards the fulfilment of the wish”** (63, §36).Even though **a mere** or idle **wish** represents its object as in some sense good, it **does not amount to practical thought because it has no inner tendency towards action, which is what practical thought is ultimately for.**³²By contrast, just as an intention has the inner tendency to further articulate and re-articulate itself in action, so an aspiration has the inner tendency to articulate itself such that it becomes an intention. This articulation too is the work of practical reasoning: **an agent’s aspiration can become an intention, by his coming up with a plan**—by reasoning from the end which is at a distance, to an immediate means that he can take. **This inner tendency towards such articulation**—an inner tendency towards perfecting itself in action and practical knowledge—**is what marks practical thought out as rationally efficacious;** that is, **as practical.** It is in the nature of the thought ‘I want (aspire, intend) doing A’ and realizes that articulation in action and practical knowledge: ‘I am doing D by doing C by doing B by doing A’. Such inner efficacy is absent in mere wish”

#### [3] Performativity – Every exercise you engage in is an instance of using your volition to establish some relation to the world and only non-alienation can establish that relationship as normatively legitimate.

#### [4] Solves oppression – A) Empowerment – it ensures agents view themselves as active which motivates agents to combat systems of oppression rather than viewing themselves as passive objects B) Explanatory power –oppression operates through the alienation of oneself from the world through various categories of relations C) Movement building – it’s normativity can explain why oppression is wrong and convince others to agree through rigorous explanation that impact justified frameworks can’t provide.

### Contention

#### I defend that a just government ought to recognize an unconditional right of workers to strike through coercive tactics as outlined in Gourevitch. I’ll defend the resolution as a general principle and PICS don’t negate because they just steal aff ground. I’ll spec whatever you want me to in CX as long as it doesn’t force me to abandon my maxim.

#### [1] The aff rectifies conditions of alienation:

#### [A] Objectification – coercive strikes are intrinsic expressions of collective appropriation and self-determination that are key to resist capitalist oppression and self-alienation due to worker passivity - that comes first

**Gourevitch ‘18** [Alex, associate professor of political science at Brown University and the author of From Slavery To the Cooperative Commonwealth: Labor and Republican Liberty in the Nineteenth Century. “A Radical Defense of the Right to Strike,” (Jacobin), https://jacobinmag.com/2018/07/right-to-strike-freedom-civil-liberties-oppression.] BXNK

**Workers have an interest in resisting the oppression of class society by using their collective power to reduce, or even overcome, that oppression**. Their interest is a liberty interest in a double sense. First, **resistance to** that **class-based oppression carries** with it, at least implicitly, a **demand for freedoms not yet enjoyed**. A higher wage expands workers’ freedom of choice. Expanded labor rights increase workers’ collective freedom to influence the terms of employment. Whatever the concrete set of issues, workers’ strike demands are **always also** a demand for control over portions of one’s life that they do not yet enjoy. Second, strikes don’t just aim at winning more freedom — they are themselves expressions of freedom. When workers walk out, they’re using their own individual and collective agency to win the liberties they deserve. The same capacity for self-determination that workers invoke to demand more freedom is the capacity they exercise when winning their demands. Freedom, not industrial stability or simply higher living standards, is the name of their desire. Put differently, the right to strike has both an intrinsic and instrumental relation to freedom**. It has intrinsic value as an (at least implicit) demand for self-emancipation. And it has instrumental value insofar as the strike is an effective means for resisting the oppressiveness of a class society and achieving new freedoms**. But if all this is correct, and the right to strike is something that we should defend, then it also has to be meaningful. The right loses its connection to workers’ freedom if they have little chance of exercising it effectively. Otherwise they’re simply engaging in a symbolic act of defiance — laudable, perhaps, but not a tangible means of fighting oppression. The right to strike must therefore cover at least some of the coercive tactics that make strikes potent, like sit-downs and mass pickets. It is therefore often perfectly justified for strikers to exercise their right to strike by using these tactics, even when these tactics are illegal. Still, the question remains: why should the right to strike be given moral priority over other basic liberties? The reason is not just that liberal capitalism produces economic oppression but that the economic oppression that workers face is in part created and sustained by the very economic and civil liberties that liberal capitalism cherishes. Workers find themselves oppressed because of the way property rights, freedom of contract, corporate authority, and tax and labor law operate. Deeming these liberties inviolable doesn’t foster less oppressive, exploitative outcomes, as its defenders insist — quite the opposite. The right to strike has a stronger claim to be protecting a zone of activity that serves the aims of justice itself — coercing people into relations of less oppressive social cooperation. Simply put, to argue for the right to strike is to prioritize democratic freedoms over property rights. Which Side Are You On? Skeptics might still object that the right to strike is the wrong answer to the facts of oppression. Isn’t the proper response to push for altogether different social policies — like a universal basic income, workplace democracy, and socialized means of production — that would eliminate oppression? Why bother with the chaos and collateral injustice that strikes often unleash? The short answer is that this is a non **sequitur. The question for us is, “Given the facts of oppression, what may those who suffer it do to resist it?” It does no good to ask, instead, “What would the ideal, or at least reasonably just, society look like?**” The latter is its own question, but as a response to our question it is unacceptably quietist. It verges on arguing that those who are oppressed must suffer until utopia becomes possible. And anyhow, utopia [only becomes possible](https://catalyst-journal.com/vol1/no4/the-basic-income-illusion) when the many have taken it upon themselves to exercise their own collective power to demand that utopia. One might also object that it sounds like I am saying there are no restraints on what strikers may do. I am not saying that either. My point is to explain why a specific set of coercive strike tactics, which have been the centerpiece of the strike repertoire whenever the majority of workers have had it in their mind to walk out, are not limited by the requirement to respect those economic liberties that they violate. There are all kinds of things strikers shouldn’t do just to win a strike. But that is a complex and separate problem of political ethics — and it is one that we can only tackle once we have first acknowledged the shortcomings of liberal capitalism and the prevailing political morality that surrounds it. The stakes of all of this are high**. If one does not agree that workers are generally justified in engaging in mass, disruptive, and unlawful activity as part of exercising the right to strike, then one is committed to arguing that the state is justified in violently suppressing strikes — a violence with a** [**long**](http://www.cornellpress.cornell.edu/book/?GCOI=80140100529240) **and** [**bloody**](https://www.amazon.com/Labor-Wars-Maguires-Workers-Memorial/dp/1931859701)[**history**](https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/perspectives-on-politics/article/div-classtitlepolice-work-the-centrality-of-labor-repression-in-american-political-historydiv/7DF60C0EBD68C32C500D28EF215D765B). Some might very well draw that latter conclusion. But they should be clear about which side they’re choosing. Either workers are justified in resisting the use of legal violence to suppress their strikes, or the state is justified in violently suppressing coercive strike tactics. No amount of dressed-up rhetoric about liberty and justice for all can shroud that inescapable fact.

#### [B] Standardization – the neg prevents all workers from striking while the aff provides the option for them to do so if they will it.

#### [C] Appropriation – recognizing the right to strike ensures every agent has the ability to positively and productively reshape their work environment by forming more meaningful relations

**Nielson et al 19** “No Future: Alienation as Futurelessness in an Era of Financial Capitalism” Tad Skotnicki tpskotni@uncg.edu University of North Carolina – Greensboro Kelly Nielsen knielsen8@ucmerced.edu University of California – Merced // [https://osf.io/preprints/socarxiv/jkstw/ ] ahs emi

Though it goes unconceptualized, we can see the role of possibility in both Jaeggi and Rosa’s efforts to resuscitate the concept. The language of possibility suffuses Jaeggi’s account of alienation, in particular. In turning toward the question of alienation’s negation, she writes, “For the possibility of regarding something as a potential object of a decision precedes the question of who decides or what should guide one’s decision. **Being able to perceive a space for action in which the practical question is possible is a precondition of being able to raise and answer this question oneself**” (2014:201 [emphases added]). **The practical work of appropriation requires possibility;** to be able to perceive “is a precondition” of autonomy. In this way, a sense of possibility is a condition for the work of appropriating the world **in an unalienated manner.** Further, she insists that **autonomy depends on “having meaningful options at one’s disposal**” (204 [emphasis added]). Rosa, for his part, describes a world that has “become cold and grey, harsh and nonresponding, experienced by a subject that inwardly feels deaf, mute, cold, and empty” (2018:44). There is a “loss of the world.” In such a condition, Rosa claims, “we end up turning the business of increasing our scope and horizon of the available, attainable, and accessible, and collecting resources into an end in itself, into an endless, escalatory cycle which permanently erodes its own basis and thus leads nowhere” (45). Here, clamoring after possibility – the available, accessible, and attainable – undermines itself. One loses the possibility to connect to the world. While Jaeggi locates alienation in the failure **to** appropriate the world, Rosa locates alienation in this loss of resonance. Although both describe deficient relations with oneself and the world, Rosa stresses a crisis of meaning while Jaeggi stresses a crisis of action. Yet both accounts describe obstructed, diminished, or ossified senses of future possibility. If we understand alienation as futurelessness, must we remain indifferent to action, or what Jaeggi calls “active appropriation of the world” (2014:206)? If, per our account, alienation refers to the manner in which one conceives of and relates to the future as possibility, must our notion of alienation remain aloof from activity? Or does the crucial moment of alienation or disalienation lie in the appropriation of the world, as Jaeggi would have it? **Jaeggi’s pragmatic emphasis on active appropriation would benefit, we argue, from a phenomenological emphasis on possibility. Appropriation must be possible, not just practiced, and this condition of possibility defines the actions that Jaeggi calls appropriating, or those practical actions that express meaningful, self-determining, and coherent relations with oneself and the world** (p. 202). If that is the case, then these meaningful, self-determining, and coherent relations with oneself and the world depend on the possibility that we also could not act. If appropriation becomes compulsory, it is itself alienated and alienating: one who is forced to act will not, by definition, relate to that act as possible.4 In other words, one must have the sense that not acting is a possibility.

#### [D] Over-identification – Employers reduce employees to mere laborers with a price tag, alienating them and violating the structure of the will, recognizing strikes is necessary to recognize workers are more than just workers.

Gilabert 17 [Pablo Gilabert (2017) “Kantian Dignity and Marxian Socialism” https://philarchive.org/archive/GILKDA-2] SHS KS

Capitalists exploit workers by using their superior bargaining power (resulting from their private control of the means of production) to extract from them more than they might (and ought to) give if they were not so vulnerable. The Kantian dignitarian account explains what’s wrong with this. One of the most evident ways in which capitalism is an affront to dignitarian ideals is that it enshrines instrumental treatment of others as a typical aspect of production and exchange. As the competitive economic agents that they are, capitalists seek profit, and show concern for the freedom and well-being of their workers only if, and to the extent that, doing so would add to their profit margin. Workers have price, not dignity, for them. This has a systemic dimension as well, as capitalists normally throw their significant weight behind political agents and processes that sustain institutional schemes that cement their privileged position by making capitalist relations of production the law of the land. Capitalist exploitation is a social pattern of reduction of some human beings to mere instruments for the self-regarding benefit of others.