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#### Link: The Aff attempts to argue for workers’ rights by arguing for an unconditional right to strike. But creating a right to strike will further entrench the capitalist ownership of workers’ labor, reinforcing oppressive class structures.

**Gourevitch 18** Alex Gourevitch, July 2018, “A Radical Defense of the Right to Strike,” (Alex Gourevitch is an 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.) https://jacobinmag.com/2018/07/right-to-strike-freedom-civil-liberties-oppression

C[lass-based oppression](https://www.jacobinmag.com/2016/03/working-class-capitalism-socialists-strike-power/) is inextricable from liberal capitalism. While meaningful variation exists across capitalist societies, one of the fundamental unifying facts is this: the majority of able-bodied people are forced to work for members of a relatively small group, who dominate control over productive assets and who, thereby, enjoy control over the activities and products of those workers. There are [workers](https://www.jacobinmag.com/2018/07/turning-to-the-working-class), and then there are owners and their managers. Workers are pushed into the labor market because they have no reasonable alternative to looking for a job. They cannot produce the goods they need for themselves, nor can they rely on the charity of others, nor can they count on adequate state benefits. Depending on how we measure income and wealth, about 60 to 80 percent of Americans [fall into this category](https://thenewpress.com/books/after-new-economy) for most of their adult lives. This structural compulsion is not symmetric. A significant minority of the population has enough wealth — whether inherited or accumulated or both — that they can avoid entering the labor market. They might happen to work, but they are not forced to do so. The oppression, then, stems not from the fact that some are forced to work. After all, if socially necessary work were shared equally, then it might be fair to force each to do their share. The oppression stems from the fact that the forcing is unequal —that only some are made to work for others, producing whatever employers pay them to produce. This structural inequality feeds into a second, interpersonal dimension of oppression. Workers are forced to join workplaces typically characterized by large swathes of uncontrolled managerial power and authority. This oppression is interpersonal because it is power that specific individuals (employers and their managers) have to get other specific individuals (employees) to do what they want. We can distinguish between three overlapping forms that this interpersonal, workplace oppression takes: subordination, delegation, and dependence. Subordination: Employers have what are sometimes called “[managerial prerogatives](https://books.google.com/books/about/Managerial_Prerogative_and_the_Question.html?id=NQLEBAAAQBAJ)” — legislative and judicial grants of authority to owners and their managers to make decisions about investment, hiring and firing, plant location, work process, and the like. Managers may change working speeds and assigned tasks, the hours of work, or, as Amazon currently does, force employees to spend up to an hour going through security lines after work [without paying them](https://www.oyez.org/cases/2014/13-433). They can fire workers for [Facebook comments](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/10/17/facebook-firings_n_1003789.html), [their sexual orientation](https://www.sgvtribune.com/2011/10/08/fired-gay-water-polo-coach-and-supporters-protest-at-charter-oak-board-meeting/), [for being too sexually appealing](http://www.slate.com/blogs/xx_factor/2013/07/29/borgata_babes_lawsuit_new_legal_cases_assess_discrimination_based_on_sex.html), or for not being appealing enough. They can [give](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/71431/the-big-squeeze-by-steven-greenhouse/9781400096527/) workers more tasks than can be performed in the allotted time, lock employees in the workplace overnight, [require employees to labor](http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/money_co/2011/09/amazon-warehouse-employees-overheated-ahead-of-holiday-season.html) in extreme heat and [other physically hazardous conditions](https://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/31/us/osha-emphasizes-safety-health-risks-fester.html), or [punitively isolate](https://www.dissentmagazine.org/article/caring-on-stolen-time-a-nursing-home-diary) workers from other coworkers. They can [pressure](https://www.jacobinmag.com/2018/03/labor-law-corporations-workers-political-influence) employees to take unwanted political action, or, in the case of nurses, force employees to [work for twenty-two different doctors](https://socialistworker.org/2018/07/03/nurses-are-set-to-strike-uvm). What unifies these seemingly disparate examples is that, in all cases, managers [are exercising](https://www.jacobinmag.com/2017/06/private-government-interview-elizabeth-anderson) legally permitted prerogatives. The law does not require that workers have any formal say in how those powers are exercised. In fact, in nearly every liberal capitalist country (including social democracies like Sweden), employees are defined, in law, as “subordinates.” This is subordination in the strict sense: workers are subject to the will of the employer. Delegation: There are additional discretionary legal powers that managers enjoy not by legal statute or precedent but because workers have delegated these powers in the contract. For instance, workers might sign a contract [that allows managers to require employees](https://www.aclu.org/issues/criminal-law-reform/drug-testing?redirect=workplace-drug-testing) to submit to random drug testing or unannounced searches. In the United States, 18 percent of current employees and 37 percent of workers in their lifetime [work under noncompete agreements](http://equitablegrowth.org/why-its-time-to-rethink-non-compete-agreements/). These clauses give managers the legal power to forbid employees from working for competitors, in some cases reducing these workers to near indentured service. The [contract](https://www.jacobinmag.com/2016/04/verizon-wireless-strike-bernie-sanders-cwa/) that the Communications Workers of America had with Verizon until 2015 included a right for managers to force employers to perform from ten to fifteen hours of overtime per week and to take some other day instead of Saturday as an off-day. While workers have granted these prerogatives to employers voluntarily, in many cases it’s only technically voluntary because of the compulsion to work. This is especially true if workers can only find jobs in sectors where these kinds of contracts proliferate. Which leads to the third face of oppression: the *distributive effects*of class inequality. The normal workings of liberal capitalism elevate a relatively small group of owners and highly paid managers to the pinnacle of society, where they accumulate most of the wealth and income. Meanwhile, most workers do not earn enough to both meet their needs and to save such that they can employ themselves or start their own businesses. The few that do rise displace others or take the structurally limited number of opportunities available. The rest remain workers. *Dependence*: Finally, managers might have the material power to force employees to submit to commands or even to accept violations of their rights because of the worker’s dependence on the employer. A [headline example](https://jacobinmag.com/2018/06/heres-how-much-money-americas-biggest-corporations-have-stolen-from-their-own-workers) is [wage theft](https://www.epi.org/blog/wage-theft-by-employers-is-costing-u-s-workers-billions-of-dollars-a-year/), which affects [American workers](https://www.nelp.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/WinningWageJusticeSummaryofResearchonWageTheft.pdf) to the tune of $8 to $14 billion per year. Employers [regularly break](http://www.jwj.org/free-and-fair-how-labor-law-fails-u-s-democratic-election-standards) labor law, by disciplining, threatening, or firing workers who wish to organize, strike, or otherwise exercise supposedly protected labor rights. In other cases, workers have been [refused bathroom breaks](https://www.oxfamamerica.org/livesontheline/) and resorted to wearing diapers, [denied legally required lunch breaks](https://www.sfgate.com/business/article/Employers-must-pay-if-they-deny-lunch-breaks-2474407.php) or [pressured to work through them](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/08/14/indiana-att-technicians-class-action-lawsuit-lunch-breaks_n_1777166.html), [forced to keep working](https://www.nytimes.com/2012/07/08/business/media/ads-for-mcdonalds-and-las-vegas-aimed-at-harried-workers.html) after their shift, or denied the right to read or turn on air conditioning during break. In [particularly egregious examples](https://www.buzzfeed.com/jessicagarrison/the-new-american-slavery-invited-to-the-us-foreign-workers-f#.nmJN7Yg27), employers have forced their workers to stay home rather than go out on weekends or to switch churches and alter religious practices on pain of being fired and deported. There are also the many cases of systematic [sexual harassment](https://www.jacobinmag.com/2018/03/metoo-workplace-discrimination-sexual-harassment-feminism), in those wide regions of the economy where something more than a public shaming is needed to control bosses. In all these instances, employers are not exercising legal powers to command. Instead they are taking advantage of the material power that comes with threatening to fire or otherwise discipline workers. This material power to get workers to do things that employers want is in part a function of the class structure of society, both in the broad sense of workers being unequally dependent on owners, and in the narrower sense of workers being legally subordinate to employers. The oppression lies not just in the existence of these powers, nor in some capitalist bad apples, but in how these powers are typically used. Managers tend to use these powers “rationally,” to exploit workers and extract profits. Each of these different faces of oppression — structural, interpersonal, and distributive — is a distinct injustice. Together they form the interrelated and mutually reinforcing elements of class domination that are typical of capitalist societies. Defenders of liberal capitalism insist that it provides the fairest way of distributing work and the rewards of social production. They often speak in the idiom of freedom. Yet liberal capitalism fundamentally constrains workers’ liberty, generating the exploitation of one class by another. It is this oppression that explains why workers have a right to strike and why that right is best understood as a right to resist oppression. 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.

#### They also advocate for strike action by trade unions, which are paradoxical to the socialist movement and preserves the capitalist regime.

**Eidlin 20** Barry Eidlin, January 26 2020, “Why Unions Are Good—But Not Good Enough,” (Barry Eidlin is an assistant professor of sociology at McGill University and the author of Labor and the Class Idea in the United States and Canada.) https://www.jacobinmag.com/2020/01/marxism-trade-unions-socialism-revolutionary-organizing

Labor unions have long occupied a paradoxical position within Marxist theory. They are an essential expression of the working class taking shape as a collective actor and an essential vehicle for working-class action. When we speak of “the working class” or “working-class activity,” we are often analyzing the actions of workers either organized into unions or trying to organize themselves into unions. At the same time, unions are an imperfect and incomplete vehicle for the working class to achieve one of Marxist theory’s central goals: overthrowing capitalism. Unions by their very existence affirm and reinforce capitalist class society. As organizations which primarily negotiate wages, benefits, and working conditions with employers, unions only exist in relation to capitalists. This makes them almost by definition reformist institutions, designed to mitigate and manage the employment relationship, not transform it. Many unions have adapted to this conservative, managerial role. Others have played key roles in challenging capital’s power. Some have even played insurgent roles at one moment and managerial roles at others. When unions have organized workplace insurgencies, this has sometimes translated into political pressure that expanded democracy and led to large-scale policy reforms. In the few revolutionary historical moments that we can identify, worker organization, whether called unions or something else, has been essential. Thus, labor unions and movements have long been a central focus of Marxist debate. At its core, the debate centers around the role of unions in class formation, the creation of the revolutionary working-class agent. The debate focuses on four key questions. First, to what degree do unions simply reflect existing relations of production and class struggle, or actively shape those relations? Second, if unions actively shape class struggle, why and under what conditions do they enhance or inhibit it? Third, how do unions shape class identities, and how does this affect unions’ scope of action? Fourth, what is the relation between unions and politics? This question is comprised of two sub-questions: to what degree do unions help or hinder struggles in the workplace becoming broader political struggles? And how should unions relate to political parties, the more conventional vehicle for advancing political demands? The following is a chapter from [The Oxford Handbook of Karl Marx](https://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780190695545.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780190695545) (Oxford University Press, 2019). It assesses Marxist debates surrounding trade unions, oriented by the four questions mentioned previously. It proceeds historically, first examining how Marx and Engels conceived of the roles and limitations of trade unions, then tracing how others within Marxism have pursued these debates as class relations and politics have changed over time. While the chapter includes some history of labor unions and movements themselves, the central focus is on how Marxist theorists thought of and related to those movements. Marx and Engels wrote extensively about the unions of their time, although never systematically. The majority of their writings on unions responded to concrete labor struggles of their time. From their earliest works, they grasped unions’ necessity and limitations in creating a working-class agent capable of advancing class struggle against the bourgeoisie. This [departed](https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/wusa.12021) from previous variants of socialism, often based in idealized views of rebuilding a rapidly eroding community of artisanal producers, which did not emphasize class organization or class struggle. Writing in The Condition of the Working Class in England about emerging forms of unionism, Engels observed that even though workers’ primary struggles were over material issues such as wages, they pointed to a deeper social and political conflict: What gives these Unions and the strikes arising from them their real importance is this, that they are the first attempt of the workers to abolish competition. They im­ ply the recognition of the fact that the supremacy of the bourgeoisie is based wholly upon the competition of the workers among themselves; i.e., upon their want of cohesion. And precisely because the Unions direct themselves against the vital nerve of the present social order, however one-sidedly, in however narrow a way, are they so dangerous to this social order. At the same time, Engels saw that, even as union struggles “[kept alive] the opposition of the workers to the … omnipotence of the bourgeoisie,” so too did they “[compel] the admission that something more is needed than Trades Unions and strikes to break the power of the ruling class.” Here Engels articulates the crux of the problem. First, unions are essential for working-class formation, creating a collective actor both opposed to the bourgeoisie and capable of challenging it for power. Second, they are an insufficient vehicle for creating and mobilizing that collective actor. Marx and Engels understood that unions are essential to working-class formation because, under capitalism, the system of “free labor,” where individual workers sell their labor power to an employer for a wage, fragments relations between workers and makes them compete with each other. As described in the Communist Manifesto, the bourgeoisie “has left no other nexus between man and man than naked self-interest, than callous ‘cash payment,’” leaving workers “exposed to all the vicissitudes of competition, to all the fluctuations of the market.” While workers organized based on other collective identities, such as race, ethnicity, or religion, only unions could unite them as workers against the source of their exploitation — the bourgeoisie. Unions serve “as organized agencies for superseding the very system of wage labor and capital rule.” But just as unions could allow the proletariat to take shape and challenge the bourgeoisie for power, Marx and Engels also saw that they were a partial, imperfect vehicle for doing so for two reasons. First, unions’ fundamentally defensive role, protecting workers against employers’ efforts to drive a competitive race to the bottom, meant that they [limited themselves](https://www.amazon.com/Wage-Labour-Capital-Value-Price-Profit/dp/0717804704) “to a guerrilla war against the effects of the existing system, instead of simultaneously trying to change it.” Thus, even militant trade unions found themselves struggling for “a fair day’s work for a fair day’s wage” without challenging the bourgeoisie’s fundamental power, particularly the wage labor system. And some layers of the trade union officialdom were content to fight for privileges for their small segment of the working class, leaving most workers behind. Second, unions’ focus on wages and workplace issues tended to reinforce a division between economic and political struggles. This division was explicit with the more conservative “old” unions in Britain, which “bar[red] all political action on principle and in their charters.”

Neoliberalism makes extinction inevitable.

Clark and Clausen 08 – Clark: assistant professor of sociology and sustainability studies at the University of Utah; Clausen: Professor of Sociology at Fort Lewis College in Durango, Colorado. [Brett and Rebecca. “The Oceanic Crisis: Capitalism and the Degradation of Marine Ecosystem”. <http://monthlyreview.org/2008/07/01/the-oceanic-crisis-capitalism-and-the-degradation-of-marine-ecosystem>.]//jwang

Turning the Ocean into a Watery Grave

The world is at a crossroads in regard to the ecological crisis. Ecological degradation under global capitalism extends to the entire biosphere. Oceans that were teeming with abundance are being decimated by the continual intrusion of exploitive economic operations. At the same time that scientists are documenting the complexity and interdependency of marine species, we are witnessing an oceanic crisis as natural conditions, ecological processes, and nutrient cycles are being undermined through overfishing and transformed due to global warming. The expansion of the accumulation system, along with technological advances in fishing, have intensified the exploitation of the world ocean; facilitated the enormous capture of fishes (both target and bycatch); extended the spatial reach of fishing operations; broadened the species deemed valuable on the market; and disrupted metabolic and reproductive processes of the ocean. The quick-fix solution of aquaculture enhances capital’s control over production without resolving ecological contradictions. It is wise to recognize, as Paul Burkett has stated, that “short of human extinction, there is no sense in which capitalism can be relied upon to permanently ‘break down’ under the weight of its depletion and degradation of natural wealth.”44 Capital is driven by the competition for the accumulation of wealth, and short-term profits provide the immediate pulse of capitalism. It cannot operate under conditions that require reinvestment in the reproduction of nature, which may entail time scales of a hundred or more years. Such requirements stand opposed to the immediate interests of profit. The qualitative relation between humans and nature is subsumed under the drive to accumulate capital on an ever-larger scale. Marx lamented that to capital, “Time is everything, man is nothing; he is at the most, time’s carcase. Quality no longer matters. Quantity alone decides everything.”45 Productive relations are concerned with production time, labor costs, and the circulation of capital—not the diminishing conditions of existence. Capital subjects natural cycles and processes (via controlled feeding and the use of growth hormones) to its economic cycle. The maintenance of natural conditions is not a concern. The bounty of nature is taken for granted and appropriated as a free gift. As a result, the system is inherently caught in a fundamental crisis arising from the transformation and destruction of nature. István Mészáros elaborates this point, stating: For today it is impossible to think of anything at all concerning the elementary conditions of social metabolic reproduction which is not lethally threatened by the way in which capital relates to them—the only way in which it can. This is true not only of humanity’s energy requirements, or of the management of the planet’s mineral resources and chemical potentials, but of every facet of the global agriculture, including the devastation caused by large scale de-forestation, and even the most irresponsible way of dealing with the element without which no human being can survive: water itself….In the absence of miraculous solutions, capital’s arbitrarily self-asserting attitude to the objective determinations of causality and time in the end inevitably brings a bitter harvest, at the expense of humanity [and nature itself].46 An analysis of the oceanic crisis confirms the destructive qualities of private for-profit operations. Dire conditions are being generated as the resiliency of marine ecosystems in general is being undermined. To make matters worse, sewage from feedlots and fertilizer runoff from farms are transported by rivers to gulfs and bays, overloading marine ecosystems with excess nutrients, which contribute to an expansion of algal production. This leads to oxygen-poor water and the formation of hypoxic zones—otherwise known as “dead zones” because crabs and fishes suffocate within these areas. It also compromises natural processes that remove nutrients from the waterways. Around 150 dead zones have been identified around the world. A dead zone is the end result of unsustainable practices of food production on land. At the same time, it contributes to the loss of marine life in the seas, furthering the ecological crisis of the world ocean. Coupled with industrialized capitalist fisheries and aquaculture, the oceans are experiencing ecological degradation and constant pressures of extraction that are severely depleting the populations of fishes and other marine life. The severity of the situation is that if current practices and rates of fish capture continue marine ecosystems and fisheries around the world could collapse by the year 2050.47 To advert turning the seas into a watery grave, what is needed is nothing less than a worldwide revolution in our relation to nature, and thus of global society itself.

#### Impact: The competitive nature and social control of capitalism creates an endless cycle of oppression for workers and is the root of oppression in other areas of society.

**O’Shea 16** Louise O’Shea, September 16 2016, “Why capitalism causes oppression,” (We're a revolutionary Marxist group based in Australia. We organise activism, public forums, and study groups. ) https://redflag.org.au/node/5494

Attempting to explain and understand the many forms of oppression that exist in society without reference to the nature of the capitalist system is a sure path to answers that don’t answer and explanations that don’t explain. Individual prejudice, lack of education or ill-advised public policy cannot adequately account for complex social phenomena. Nor can the circular argument that discrete power structures exist to perpetuate oppression and prejudice for its own sake, without any necessary connection to each other or to other social structures. Likewise, the argument that oppression is no more than a racket to protect the privileges of large and highly differentiated social groups such as men, whites or straight people is both analytically far-fetched and lacking in historical credibility, however much it might resonate with individual subjective experience. These explanations cannot point a path towards liberation, and as such only end up reinforcing the status quo. By contrast, Marxists argue that all forms of oppression have roots in the economic organisation of capitalist society, and the structures of power and control that accompany and reinforce it. This approach is frequently derided as “reducing” oppression to class relations or downplaying its importance. But far from simplifying the problem, a Marxist approach best acknowledges its complexity, taking into account both the deep-rooted nature of oppression and the complex interaction of economics, social conditions and ideology that perpetuate it. The competitive drive to accumulate wealth through the exploitation of human labour is the starting point for understanding capitalism and oppression. **Exploitation** Human beings are the most important resource on the planet for the capitalist class. They are more important than all the oil, coal, military weaponry, gold and steel put together. Without people working, nothing is produced. Even the most high-tech robot has to be designed, produced, serviced, powered and, presumably, switched on at some point by a person working somewhere. This is also the case with oil, gas and gold, which are only of value if there are human beings available to extract them from the ground, and others to build transport networks, engines and other infrastructure that make them useful. So the vast wealth accumulated by powerful capitalists, multinational corporations and governments depends entirely on the existence of compliant producers willing to work to create wealth for someone else, while receiving only a small proportion for themselves in the form of wages. It depends, in other words, on the exploitation of the majority by a minority. But because workers are not just lumps of coal or bundles of copper wires, they do not necessarily accept their subordinate position. Social conditions that naturalise and reinforce this inequality must therefore be imposed. Workers must be “pressed down on” as the word oppression implies. This starts with the workplace, where workers are subject to the tyranny of a boss or manager whose primary concern is productivity and the bottom line – even those who profess to care about work-life balance. Workers enjoy no democratic rights at work, neither to elect their managers nor to decide the hours or nature of their work. Rather, working hours and pay are highly regulated and policed, through law, the courts and human resource departments. This lack of control underpins the sense that workers’ lives really become their own, and they become themselves, only outside of work hours. But oppression doesn’t end outside of working hours. The social conditions workers are subject to – from health care, housing and education to culture and recreation – act to reinforce class inequality. They tend to be underfunded and inferior to those of the wealthy and privileged. Schools teach obedience and respect for authority, while competition is ingrained and naturalised through competitive assessment and competition for employment and housing. Working class communities are targeted for harassment by the police and other government agencies. On this social reality is built an ideology – promoted by the mass media, politicians and authorities – to justify it: that social advance reflects merit and hard work, that those who are rich or successful therefore are naturally superior to the rest of us and that any inability on the part of workers to meet society’s expectations must be a result of personal failing, not structural discrimination. It creates the conditions in which stereotypes about the natural inferiority of workers can be accepted and perpetuated, such as the trope of the backward, lazy masses who, without bosses, would have no incentive or inclination to work, or who, without police to harass them, would be on a never-ending crime spree. **Divide and rule** The economic relationship between bosses and workers creates a social tension that gives rise to a variety of other forms of oppression. The interests of bosses – to pay workers as little as possible in order to maximise their profits and outdo their competitors – and of workers – who want a larger proportion of the wealth they produce and better conditions – are directly counterposed. The capitalists have an interest in eroding workers’ wages. They do this through a variety of legal and industrial mechanisms, but also importantly by fomenting divisions and sectionalism within the working class, which help to both drive down wages and undermine the collective strength workers are able to draw on to improve their conditions. Oppression is central to this. Whether it is recently arrived migrants, women, international students or young workers, sections of the working class that are distinctive or somehow vulnerable are subject to discrimination, low pay, undesirable jobs and sometimes exclusion from the workforce as a means to forge division and maximise the bosses’ bottom lines. International students being employed on wages as low as $7 an hour in 7-11 stores are only the most recent example of bosses taking advantage of such racist divisions. Similarly, the practice of bosses bringing workers in on special visas in order to undermine union organisation and cut their wages bill, pits local workers against foreign ones and weakens the working class as a whole. Historically, women have also been used and specially exploited in this way. Insofar as the mass of workers focus their discontent towards particular sections of workers, those who are actually responsible for unemployment, poor working conditions or inadequate services – the bosses – escape scrutiny. This is an important function of oppression. **A complex system** Capitalism is more than a collection of workplaces and a balance sheet. It is a complex social system in which wealth accumulation is the prerogative that underpins not just the experience of working life but also the conditions that characterise every aspect of society, including access to services, the enjoyment of culture and even our personal lives. This is evident everywhere. Remote Aboriginal communities that don’t generate wealth or contribute to economic growth are treated as a burden – deprived of services and infrastructure and continually under threat of forced closure. The right to maintain traditional culture simply does not rate in a society in which land is seen purely as a commodity, to be used for mining, farming or tourism and little else. Social groups that don’t contribute to capital accumulation, such as the elderly, people with disabilities, injured workers or traditional Aboriginal communities, are neglected or forced to rely on minimal services or charity. The wellbeing of people is a secondary concern for capitalism, and oppression the necessary corollary. And those who transgress or refuse to respect the institutions of capitalism are subject to particularly vicious oppression. Refugees, for example, are horribly brutalised for the “crime” of failing to respect the arbitrary national borders within which governments and the capitalist class are organised. The underlying message is that borders matter more than people, and refusal to comply invites and justifies the harshest punishment. This in turn legitimises state repression against various other oppressed groups that refuse to submit to the dictates of the powerful, including workers and non-refugee immigrant groups. And it promotes racist attitudes towards people from outside the country, by bolstering nationalism and encouraging the view that vulnerable people from other countries represent a threat. This encourages workers to hate the most powerless rather than the most powerful, and strengthens the authoritarian hand of the capitalist class to impose its will on society and entrench its political dominance. **Imperialism, racism and war** The competitive nature of the system, whereby companies that don’t continually grow and expand their operations at an adequate rate are forced out of business, leads to yet other forms of oppression. It frequently leads to military conflict and war, as capitalist interests compete for control of markets, trade routes and natural resources both inside and outside their national borders. This can’t be done without the oppression of people who stand in the way: whether it is people unlucky enough to live in a country targeted for war, people who live in an area of lucrative natural resources or people forced to accept poverty wages because their social conditions are desperate and borders prevent them from leaving. Today, Muslims bear the brunt of this oppression, as it has been predominantly Muslim countries that have been invaded and destroyed as part of the “war on terror”. The motivation of the West has been to gain control of an area of geostrategic importance for energy supplies and trade, and to ensure competing imperialist blocs remain beholden to US interests for their energy supplies. To win support for this adventure domestically, Western governments have relied on whipping up hysteria about terrorism, and vilifying and demonising Muslims. And they have used this campaign as cover to usher in a host of repressive authoritarian measures that can be used to intimidate and control the whole population, Muslims and non-Muslims alike. Previous wars and colonial occupations brought with them similar racist measures and ideology, from that towards Germans in World War I to the white invasion of Australia in 1788. Prior to the “war on terror”, Muslims were a relatively low profile social group, with Asians bearing the brunt of mainstream racist bile. The ease with which the media, politicians and ideologues can shift the focus reflects both the evolving imperialist ambitions of the Western powers, but also the relatively shallow nature of racist sentiment, and therefore the strong potential that exists for it to be overcome. **Gender and sex** The high level of social control that characterises capitalism extends into the most personal areas of life. Exploitation would not function effectively if workers were free to move around, to live without financial responsibilities and carry out their personal lives according to their own whims. Rather, bosses have an interest in workers remaining reliably in paid employment for decades on end, being socialised to accept working life and the authority of managers and providing new generations to replace them when they retire. The nuclear family is the social institution that best ensures this. That’s why family values, and the gender roles and sexual mores that accompany them, are such a pervasive and enduring part of modern capitalism. The family is a contradictory institution. On the one hand, it provides a sense of meaning and personal fulfilment in a society that offers very little otherwise. But it is also a source of misery and oppression for many, in particular women and LGBTI people. Indeed, the gender roles, inequalities and expectations that accord with the family structure, and the unequal position women occupy in the workforce that reinforces them, are the basis of women’s oppression in capitalist society. This results in a situation in which women bear the primary responsibility for child care and domestic labour as well as facing severe economic disadvantage in the workplace and throughout life. Indeed, in Australia today, 40 years after the achievement of formal equality, women can expect to earn over their lifetime about half of what their male counterparts will. The oppression of LGBTI people is also rooted in the family, the normalisation of which serves to stigmatise sexual practices and gender expression that fall outside of the officially sanctioned heterosexual “norm”. Gendered division and an assumption of heterosexuality are structured into almost every aspect of our lives, from children’s toys to the sorts of life milestones we are expected to reach. The lack of control people accordingly feel over even their most intimate concerns helps reinforce the broader lack of control and authoritarian nature of the system. And while it is the case that modern capitalism is gradually adapting to non-traditional forms of the family, this is within strict limits. Acceptance extends to household forms that perform the same basic social and economic function as the nuclear family – that is, which ensure workers are healthy and have an incentive to hold down a job and return to work each day, and that new generations are raised to accept the status quo. Real sexual freedom thus remains incompatible with capitalism.

#### RoB: Vote for the debater who best tears down capitalist structures. We win under both util and kant. Under kant we are tearing down a system which is designed to inherently restrict the freedoms of all workers, which is not universalizable. Under util we are both preventing short-term suffering impacts and eliminating those impacts for future generations. We also prevent extinction because capitalism destroys kills the environment. Prefer our extinction impact because the probability is 100%, compared to theirs which requires an extreme and never-before-seen rise in military action.

#### Alternative: Vote Neg to support the formation of a party of a united working class to spearhead the global movement against capitalism.

**Alaniz et al 20** Maryam Alaniz, Olivia Wood, Nina DeMeo, Carmin Maffea, Ezra Brain, Madeleine Freeman, June 26 2020, “Socialism Is The Future. Our Generation Will Win It,” (Maryam Alaniz is a socialist journalist, activist, and PhD student living in NYC. She mostly writes about the international situation and social movements. Follow her on Twitter: @MaryamAlaniz) https://www.leftvoice.org/socialism-is-the-future-our-generation-will-win-it/

We want to see these demands realized and to do so must unite with the strongest force, the working class, which has the power to crush capitalism and see through the demands we have so ardently been fighting for like the abolition of police and an end to racism.  We cannot put our organizing efforts into the Democratic Party. The Democratic Party is called the graveyard of social movements for a reason, and many past generations of leaders have led their social movements there to die. Our generation cannot fall into that trap. The Democratic Party has nothing to offer us. Nowhere is this clearer than in Bernie Sanders disappointing capitulation to the Democratic establishment. Sanders’ campaign was a political awakening for many of us. Many of us donated to, voted for, and campaigned for him because he seemed to promise something different — the possibility of a better world for young people. But, after five years of building a so-called “political revolution,” what happened? Sanders dropped out, threw all of his support behind Joe Biden, and is now [shaming those of us who don’t support him](https://www.leftvoice.org/not-me-biden). Our generation is called irresponsible for refusing to vote for an accused sexual assaulter who has a long history of racism and imperialism, and who helped create the mass incarceration and student debt crises that are crippling our futures. This seeming betrayal from Sanders is disappointing but, unfortunately, to be expected. He has shown us what George McGovern, Jesse Jackson, and all others who tried to reform the Democratic Party have shown us: that it is impossible to make a bourgeois party into a party of the working class. Time and time again, all attempts at reforming the Democrats have ended in co-optation and defeat. Once again, we are being preached to about the necessity of voting for the lesser evil of the Democrats. But now, in this moment of uprisings, we can see that this notion is ridiculous. It was Democrats who let the men who murdered George Floyd get away scot-free until protests forced their arrest. In many states, it was Democratic governors who called in the National Guard, and it was Democratic mayors who supported them. Thousands of us have been beaten, gassed, shot with rubber bullets, and imprisoned in cities that are run by Democrats. They are not the lesser evil, but rather another wing of the same evil. We need a party of our own.  Judging by these historical lessons, working class youth can come to the conclusion that Sanders, AOC, and all other members of the progressive wing of the Democratic Party aren’t on our side. They do not want to build a socialist party of the working class. Instead, they are happy to serve the party that chose Joe Biden, a disgusting example of the depravity of capitalism and the complicity of the Democrats in that system, as their presidential candidate. We are in an incredibly dynamic political moment. Class struggle is returning worldwide, and for the first time in years, the U.S. is the global center of this struggle. We are winning greater and greater concessions from the state, but we cannot squander this moment or let it go to waste. We cannot simply jump from social movement to social movement, trying to address this and that issue in society. The way to liberate Black people, queer people, women, and all other specially oppressed communities is to destroy the system of capitalism, which we can only do by uniting with the working class and weaponizing their strategic position. Social movements, by themselves, will not be enough. You cannot cure an illness by *only*treating its symptoms. We know this isn’t an easy task. We’ve seen many activists of previous movements burn out trying to fight against this system. And we’ve seen the leaderships of these movements betray their bases and sell themselves out to the Democratic Party. We’ve also seen other youth-led movements, like the climate movement, claim to be apolitical. The current moment is a dynamic one, and we could be at the beginning of an epoch of uprisings and revolutions. But it is our responsibility to develop this moment and to continue the fight, even after the bourgeoisie offers us concessions. We can’t settle for crumbs any longer. The fight against capitalism can’t happen on a local scale, nor can it happen at the ballot box or through mutual aid networks alone. To be able to defend ourselves against the state and fight for more, we need a political organization that is made up of and led by the working class. Working class youth must be a central part of this organization — as immigrants, as students, as people of color, as disabled people, as women, and as queer and trans\* folks. Young workers are a vital part of the fight against capitalism because we can bring renewed energy and more forces into the ranks of labor. But a strong and fighting labor movement isn’t enough, on its own. We need to organize ourselves into a party around a shared program and strategy for socialism and against capitalism — to clarify our goals and the way we achieve them. We need a party to help organize the working class against the capitalist state and all the exploitation and oppression that it represents. Our generation can help break the spell and join with our members of the working class to build a party of our own. We need a party that doesn’t put the question of revolution off for another day, but rather seizes upon every capitalist injustice and fights against it using our strongest weapon — the united forces of the working class. A party that can coordinate protests in the streets and strikes in the workplace to learn how to fight and win; a party that is grounded in the working class and united by a common strategy for socialist revolution — against capitalism and oppression in all forms. We need a party because we want to win.  Our generation has shown amazing bravery and combativeness in this current moment, with Black youth leading the struggle on the streets. Young workers are standing up and demanding more than the scraps that the capitalist system has given us. We have shown an unyielding commitment to fighting for the most oppressed, be they Black people, queer people, women, or undocumented immigrants. We have shown that we are willing to fight social ills, and now we must extend that fight to take on capitalism itself. Because a better world is possible. A world free of exploitation and oppression, a world where we don’t make every decision about our futures with the looming specter of economic and climate collapse on the horizon. We can be on the vanguard of building a socialist future. We have shown, time and time again, that we are willing to fight. Let us take that fight to the system that exploits, oppresses, and murders us. We know the wall is rotten, and we know a shove will bring it down. The task now is organizing a strong enough force to make that final shove.