## Dean Shell – 1.33

#### Unions themselves are weapons of the neoliberal regime, one that does not directly oppose a hierarchal system but forms its institutions within it. They merely exist on the premise of reformation, not abolition of the general structure that shifts from their own fugitivity. EIDLIN

Eidlin, Barry. “Why Unions Are Good - but Not Good Enough.” Jacobin, 1 June 2020, https://www.jacobinmag.com/2020/01/marxism-trade-unions-socialism-revolutionary-organizing.

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 im­ply 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.” But even with more progressive formations, such as the early nineteenth century’s Chartists, or the late nineteenth century’s “new” unions, Marx and Engels saw that the transition from workplace struggles to politics was not automatic. For one, it varied across national contexts. Engels observed that French workers were much more likely to mobilize politically, while English workers “fight, not against the Government, but directly against the bourgeoisie.” But beyond national variation, they saw a recurring pattern of division, separating economic and political struggles by organization. Reflecting on the early to mid-nineteenth century English working-class movement, Engels noted a threefold divide between “socially-based” Chartists, “politically-based” Socialists, and conservative, craft-based trade unions. While the Chartists were “purely a working-men’s [sic] cause freed from all bourgeois elements,” they remained “theoretically the more backward, the less developed.” Socialists may have been more theoretically sophisticated, but their bourgeois origins made it difficult to “amalgamate completely with the working class.” Although young Engels thought an alliance of Chartism and socialism was underway, the alliance proved elusive. By the 1870s, Marx opined that politically, the English working class was “nothing more than the tail of the great Liberal Party, i.e., henchmen of the capitalists.” Likewise, Engels had soured on the English working class. Both saw promise in the militant worker protest in the United States at the time, seeing the seeds of a nascent labor party. But that too fell short. Thus, unions failed in Marx and Engels’s central task: the formation of “a political organization of the working class as a whole.” Marx and Engels’s sober analyses of unions’ concrete difficulties in moving from economic to political struggles stood at odds with many of their theoretical pronouncements, where this transition seemed inevitable. While they noted in the Manifesto that the “organization of the proletarians into a class, and, consequently, into a political party, is continually being upset again by the competition between the workers themselves,” they also asserted that “it ever rises up again, stronger, firmer, mightier.” In The Poverty of Philosophy, Marx asserted that “in the struggle . . . this mass [of people transformed by economic conditions into workers] becomes united, and constitutes itself as a class for itself.” If they were attuned to the challenges of class formation, and the contradictory roles unions could play in that process, they never drew out the theoretical implications of their concrete analyses. Nonetheless, in Marx and Engels’s work we can detect in embryonic form many of the core questions that would orient subsequent Marxist debates about trade unions’ role in class formation and class struggle. Marx and Engels saw that unions were inherently products of their historical period, limited by existing relations of production. At the same time, as organizational expressions of the working class, unions could play a key role in reshaping relations of production. As for enhancing or inhibiting class struggle, they saw that unions’ focus on concrete, practical workplace questions such as wages and working hours was a necessary step in developing the proletariat’s fighting capacity, but also constrained workers within a capitalist framework, limiting their ability to fight for broader demands such as abolition of the wage system. Similarly, different types of union organization could create different class identities, from craft unions’ narrow exclusion to the “new” unions’ broader inclusivity. As for the relation between unions and politics, they understood unions’ necessary but limited role in mobilizing the working class around political demands. Still, these core insights remained fragmentary. Later theorists would flesh them out.

#### Disorganized politics are that of short, temporary progress. Lack of political will shifts interests from the largest issues at hand and we shift from the status quo of infinite violence, DEAN 1

Dean, Jodi. *Comrade: An essay on political belonging*. Verso, 2019.

Some on the left are skeptical of such political belonging. **Seeing discipline only as constraint and not as a decision to build collective capacity, they substitute the fantasy that politics can be individual for the actuality of political struggle and movement. This substitution evades the fact that comradeship is a choice**—both for the one joining and for the party joined, as I explore below. It also ignores the liberating quality of discipline: When we have comrades, we are freed from the obligation to be and know and do everything on our own; there is a larger collective with a line, program, and set of tasks and goals. We are also freed from our impulses **(enjoined by communicative capitalism) to criticize and comment on the outrage of the moment.** **And we are freed from the cynicism that parades as maturity because of the practical optimism that faithful work engenders. Discipline provides the support that frees us to make mistakes, learn, and grow. When we err—and each of us will—our comrades will be there to catch us, dust us off, and set us right. We aren’t abandoned to go it alone.** **Disorganized leftists too often remain entranced by the illusion of everyday people spontaneously creating new forms of life that will usher in a glorious future.** This illusion fails to acknowledge the deprivationsand decapacitations that forty years of neoliberalism have inflicted. **If it were true** that austerity, debt, the collapse of institutional infrastructures, and capital flight **could enable the spontaneous emergence of egalitarian forms of life, we would not see the enormous economic inequalities, intensification of racialized violence, declines in life expectancy, slow death, undrinkable water, contaminated soil, militarized policing and surveillance, and desolate urban and suburban neighborhoods that are now commonplace**. **Exhaustion of resources includes the exhaustion of human resources. Lots of times people want to do something but they don’t know what to do or how to do it. They may be isolated in nonunionized workplaces, overburdened by multiple flextime positions, stretched thin caring for friends and family. Disciplined organization—the discipline of comrades committed to common struggle for an emancipatory egalitarian future—can help here. Sometimes we want and need someone to tell us what to do because we are too tired and overextended to figure it out for ourselves. Sometimes when we are given a task as a comrade, we feel like our small efforts have larger meaning and purpose, maybe even world-historical significance in the age-old fight of the people against oppression. Sometimes just knowing that we have comrades who share our commitments, our joys, and our efforts to learn from defeats makes political work possible where it was not before**. **Some leftists** agree with everything I’ve said thus far, yet they **add buts**. But won’t we end up disappointed and betrayed? **But won’t it all ultimately fail** (as it has so many times)? **But what about the harms comrades have inflicted on each other in the name of comradeship**? **But what about the persistence of sexism and racism**, bigotry and bias? **But what happens when we are no  longer on the same side**, when we cannot say “we” or acknowledge a side? **These questions press consideration of the end of comradeship**. **Frankly speaking, the critical tendency to reject an idea because of a slew of possible future failures is widespread in left milieus. An intellectual façade masks a failure of political will that would be unconvincing in any other context—don’t meet that person for coffee in case you fall in love and later have an expensive and hateful divorce; don’t speak at that meeting in case you lose your train of thought and end up sounding stupid; don’t take up sport or exercise because you might get injured and you’ll never be very good at it anyway; don’t live because you will inevitably die. Worries about the end foreclose possibilities of beginning. Yes, relationships end. Failures happen. But failure is nothing to fear—it’s something to learn from, a next step.** This chapter endeavors to learn from the end of comradeship. It considers four types of ending: expulsion, resignation, drift, and the end of the world. These four types are not always distinct. At times, one blends into the other. Yet they open up the ways that the loss of comradeship has differing causes and effects, results and outcomes. They remind us that **the fact of an end should not forestall beginning.**

#### The alternative is a politics of the comrade, oriented toward a shared communist horizon. Rejection of capitalism requires building an egalitarian organized social life. Recognition in comradery breaks from the capitalist hierarchy by binding together with a system against us. Dean 2

Dean, Jodi. *Comrade: An essay on political belonging*. Verso, 2019.

The term ***comrade* indexes a political relation, a set of expectations for action toward a common goal**. **It highlights the sameness of those on the same side—no matter their differences, comrades stand together**. As Obama’s joke implies, when you share a politics, you don’t generally distance yourself from your comrades. **Comradeship binds action**, **and in** this binding, **this solidarity, it** collectivizes and **directs action in light of a shared vision for the future**. **For communists, this is the egalitarian future of a society emancipated from the determinations of private property and capitalism and reorganized according to the free association, common benefit, and collective decisions of the producers.** But the term comrade predates its use by communists and socialists. In romance languages, comrade first appears in the sixteenth century to designate one who shares a room with another. Juan A. Herrero Brasas cites a Spanish historical-linguistic dictionary’s definition of the term: “*Camarada* is someone who is so close to another man that he eats and sleeps in the same house with him.”[2](javascript:void(0)) In French, the term was originally feminine, *camarade*, and referred to a barracks or room shared by soldiers.[3](javascript:void(0)) Etymologically, comrade derives from *camera*, the Latin word for room, chamber, and vault. The technical connotation of *vault* indexes a generic function, the structure that produces a particular space and holds it open.[4](javascript:void(0)) A chamber or room is a repeatable structure that takes its form by producing an inside separate from an outside and providing a supported cover for those underneath it. Sharing a room, sharing a space, generates a closeness, an intensity of feeling and expectation of solidarity that differentiates those on one side from those on the other. Comradeship is a political relation of supported cover. Interested in comrade as a mode of address, carrier of expectations, and figure of belonging in the communist and socialist traditions, I emphasize **the comrade as a generic figure for the political relation between those on the same side of a political struggle. Comrades are those who tie themselves together instrumentally, for a common purpose: *If we want to win—and we have to win—we must act together*.** As Angela Davis describes her decision to join the Communist Party:I wanted an anchor, a base, a mooring. I needed comrades with whom I could share a common ideology. I was tired of ephemeral ad-hoc groups that fell apart when faced with the slightest difficulty; tired of men who measured their sexual height by women’s intellectual genuflection. It wasn’t that I was fearless, but I knew that to win, we had to fight and the fight that would win was the one collectively waged by the masses of our people and working people in general. I knew that this fight had to be led by a group, a party with more permanence in its membership and structure and substance in its ideology.[5](javascript:void(0)) **Comrades are those you can count on. You share enough of a common ideology,** enough of a commitment to common principles and goals, **to do more than one-off actions. Together you can fight the long fight. As comrades, our actions are voluntary, but they are not always of our own choosing**. **Comrades have to be able to count on each other even when we don’t like each other and even when we disagree. We do what needs to be done because we owe it to our comrades.** In *The Romance of American Communism*, Vivian Gornick reports the words of a former member of the Communist Party USA, or CPUSA, who hated the daily grind of selling papers and canvassing expected of party cadre, but nevertheless, according to her, “I did it. I did it because if I didn’t do it, I couldn’t face my comrades the next day. And we all did it for the same reason: we were accountable to each other.”[6](javascript:void(0)) Put in psychoanalytic terms, the comrade functions as an ego ideal: the point from which party members assess themselves as doing important, meaningful work.[7](javascript:void(0))Being accountable to another entails seeing your actions through their eyes. Are you letting them down or are you doing work that they respect and admire?In *Crowds and Party*, I present the good comrade as an ideal ego, that is to say, as how party members imagine themselves.[8](javascript:void(0)) They may imagine themselves as thrilling orators, brilliant polemicists, skilled organizers, or courageous militants. In contrast with my discussion there, in the current book, I draw out how **the comrade** **also functions as an ego ideal, the perspective that party members—and often fellow travelers—take toward themselves**. This perspective is the effect of belonging on the same side as it works back on those who have committed themselves to common struggle. The comrade is a symbolic as well as an imaginary figure and it is the symbolic dimension of ego ideal I focus on here. My thinking about the comrade as a generic figure for those on the same side flows out of my work on communism as the horizon of left politics and my work on the party as the political form necessary for this politics.[9](javascript:void(0)) **To see our political horizon as communist is to highlight the emancipatory egalitarian struggle of the proletarianized against capitalist exploitation—that is, against the determination of life by market forces; by value; by the division of labor (on the basis of sex and race); by imperialism (theorized by Lenin in terms of the dominance of monopoly and finance capital); and by neocolonialism (theorized by Nkrumah as the last stage of imperialism).** **Today we see this horizon in struggles such as those led by women of color against police violence, white supremacy, and the murder and incarceration of black, brown, and working-class people. We see it in the infrastructure battles around pipelines, climate justice, and barely habitable cities with undrinkable water and contaminated soil. We see it in the array of social reproduction struggles against debt, foreclosure, and privatization, and for free, quality public housing, childcare, education, transportation, healthcare, and other basic services. We see it in the ongoing fight of LGBTQ people against harassment, discrimination, and oppression.** It is readily apparent today that **the communist horizon is the horizon of political struggle** not for the nation but **for the world**; it is an international horizon. This is evident in the antagonism between the rights of immigrants and refugees and intensified nationalisms; in the necessity of a global response to planetary warming; and in anti-imperialist, decolonization, and peace movements. In these examples, **communism is a force of negativity, the negation of the global capitalist present.** **Communism is also the name for the positive alternative to capitalism’s permanent and expanding exploitation, crisis, and immiseration, the name of a system of production based on meeting social needs**—*from each according to ability to each according to need*, to paraphrase Marx’s famous slogan—in a way that is collectively determined and carried out by the producers. This positive dimension of communism attends to social relations, to how people treat each other, animals, things, and the world around them**. Building communism entails more than resistance and riot. It requires the emancipated egalitarian organization of collective life.** With respect to the party, intellectuals on the contemporary left tend to extract the party from the aspirations and accomplishments it enabled. Communist philosophers who disagree on a slew of theoretical questions, such as Antonio Negri and Alain Badiou, converge on the organizational question—no party! **The party has been rejected as authoritarian**, as outmoded, as ill-fitting a society of networks. **Every other mode of political association may be revised, renewed, rethought, or reimagined except for the party of communists**. **This rejection of the party** as a form for left politics is a mistake. It **ignores the effects of association on those engaged in common struggle.** **It fails to learn from the everyday experiences of generations of activists**, organizers, and revolutionaries. **It relies on a narrow, fantasied notion of the party as a totalitarian machine.** It neglects the courage, enthusiasm, and achievements of millions of party members for over a century. **Rejection of the party form has been left dogmatism** for the last thirty years **and has gotten us nowhere**. Fortunately, the movements of the squares in Greece and Spain, as well as lessons from the successes and limits of the Occupy movement, have pushed against this left dogmatism. They have reenergized interest in the party as a political form that can scale; a form that is flexible, adaptive, and expansive enough to endure beyond the joyous and disruptive moments of crowds in the streets. A theory of the comrade contributes to this renewal by drawing out the ways that shared commitment to a common struggle generates new strengths and new capacities. Over and against the reduction of party relations to the relations between the leaders and the led, comrade attends to the effects of political belonging on those on the same side of a political struggle. **As we fight together for a world free of exploitation, oppression, and bigotry, we have to be able to trust and count on each other. Comrade names this relation. The comrade relation remakes the place from which one sees, what it is possible to see, and what possibilities can appear**. It enables the revaluation of work and time, what one does, and for whom one does it. Is one’s work done for the people or for the bosses? Is it voluntary or done because one has to work? Does one work for personal provisions or for a collective good? We should recall Marx’s lyrical description of communism in which work becomes “life’s prime want.” We get a glimpse of that in comradeship: **one *wants* to do political work**. **You don’t want to let down your comrades**; you see the value of your work through their eyes, your new collective eyes. **Work, determined not by markets but by shared commitments, becomes fulfilling**. French communist philosopher and militant Bernard Aspe discusses the problem of contemporary capitalism as a loss of “common time”; that is, the loss of an experience of time generated and enjoyed through our collective being-together.[10](javascript:void(0)) From holidays, to meals, to breaks, whatever common time we have is synchronized and enclosed in forms for capitalist appropriation. Communicative capitalism’s apps and trackers amplify this process such that the time of consumption can be measured in much the same way that Taylorism measured the time of production: How long did a viewer spend on a particular web page? Did a person watch a whole ad or click off of it after five seconds? In contrast, the common action that is the actuality of communist movement induces a collective change in capacities. Breaking from capitalism’s 24-7 injunctions to produce and consume for the bosses and owners, the discipline of common struggle expands possibilities for action and intensifies the sense of its necessity. The comrade is a figure for the relation through which this transformation of work and time occurs. **How do we imagine political work? Under conditions where political change seems completely out of reach, we might imagine political work as self-transformation**. At the very least, we can work on ourselves. In the intensely mediated networks of communicative capitalism, we might see our social media engagements as a kind of activism where Twitter and Facebook function as important sites of struggle. Perhaps we understand writing as important political work and hammer out opinion pieces, letters to the editors, and manifestoes. When we imagine political work, we often take electoral politics as our frame of reference, focusing on voting, lawn signs, bumper stickers, and campaign buttons. Or we think of activists as those who arrange phone banks, canvass door-to-door, and set up rallies. In yet another political imaginary, we might envision political work as study, whether done alone or with others. We might imagine political work as cultural production, the building of new communities, spaces, and ways of seeing. Our imaginary might have a militant, or even militarist, inflection: political work is carried out through marches, occupations, strikes, and blockades; through civil disobedience, direct action, and covert operations. Even with the recognition of the wide array of political activities, the ways people use them to respond to specific situations and capacities, and how they combine to enhance each other, we might still imagine radical political work as punching a Nazi in the face.Throughout these various actions and activities, how are the relations among those fighting on the same side imagined? How do the activists and organizers, militants and revolutionaries relate to one another? During the weeks and months when the Occupy movement was at its peak, relations with others were often infused with a joyous sense of being together, with an enthusiasm for the collective co-creation of new patterns of action and ways of living.[11](javascript:void(0)) But the feeling didn’t last. **The pressures of organizing diverse people and politics under conditions of police repression and real material need wore down even the most committed activists.** Since then, on social media and across the broader left, **relations among the politically engaged have again become tense and conflicted, often along lines of race and gender. Dispersed and disorganized, we’re uncertain of whom to trust and what to expect. We encounter contradictory injunctions to self-care and call out. Suspicion undermines support. Exhaustion displaces enthusiasm**. **Attention to comradeship, to the ways that shared expectations make political work not just possible but also gratifying, may help redirect our energies back to our common struggle.** As former CPUSA member David Ross explained to Gornick:I knew that I could never feel passionately about the new movements as I had about the old, I realized that the CP has provided me with a sense of comradeship I would never have again, and that without that comradeship I could *never* be political.[12](javascript:void(0))For Ross, the Communist Party is what made Marxism. The party gave Marxism life, political purpose. This life-giving capacity came from comradeship. Ross continues: “The idea of politics as simply a diffused consciousness linked only to personal integrity was—*is*—anathema to me.” His description of politics as “a diffused consciousness linked only to personal integrity” fits today’s left milieus. Perhaps, then, his remedy—comradeship—will as well. Various people have told me their stories of feeling a rush of warmth when they were first welcomed into their party as a comrade. I’ve had this feeling myself. In his memoir *Incognegro: A Memoir of Exile and Apartheid*, the theorist Frank Wilderson, a former member of uMkhonto weSizwe, or MK, the armed wing of the African National Congress (ANC), describes his first meeting with Chris Hani, the leader of the South African Communist Party and the chief of staff of MK. Wilderson writes, “I beamed like a schoolboy when he called me ‘comrade.’”[13](javascript:void(0)) Wilderson chides himself for what he calls a “childish need for recognition.”[14](javascript:void(0)) Perhaps because he still puts Hani on a pedestal, he feels exposed in his enjoyment of the egalitarian disruption of comradeship. Wilderson hasn’t yet internalized the idea that he and Hani are political equals. “**Comrade” holds out an equalizing promise, and when that promise is fulfilled, we confront our own continuing yet unwanted attachments to hierarchy, prestige, inadequacy. Accepting equality takes courage.** Wilderson’s joy in hearing Hani call him “comrade” contrasts sharply with another instance Wilderson recounts where comrade was the term of address**. In 1994, shortly before Wilderson was forced to leave South Africa, he encountered Nelson Mandela** at an event hosted by *Tribute*magazine. **After Mandela’s public remarks, Wilderson asked a question in which he addressed Mandela as “comrade.”** “Not Mr. Mandela. Not sir, like the fawning advertising mogul who asked the first question. **Comrade Mandela. It stitched him back into the militant garb he’d shed since the day he left prison.”**[15](javascript:void(0)) **Wilderson’s recollection shows how comrade’s equalizing insistence can be aggressive, an imposition of discipline. This is part of its power. Addressing another as “comrade” reminds them that something is expected of them. Discipline and joy are two sides of the same coin**, two aspects of comradeship as a mode of political belonging. As a form of address, figure of political relation, and carrier of expectations, **comrade disrupts capitalist society’s hierarchical identifications of sex, race, and class.** **It insists on the equalizing sameness of those on the same side of a political struggle and renders that equalizing sameness productive of new modes of work and belonging**. In this respect, **comrade is a carrier of utopian longings** in the sense theorized by Kathi Weeks. Weeks presents **the utopian form** as **carrying out two functions**: “One function is to alter our connection to the present, while the other is to shift our relationship to the future; one is productive of estrangement, the other of hope.”[16](javascript:void(0)) **The first function mobilizes the negativity of disidentification and disinvestment**. **Present relations** **become** strange, **less binding on our sense of possibility**. **The second function redirects “our attention and energies toward an open future** … providing a vision or glimmer of a better world.”[17](javascript:void(0)) **The power of comrade is in how it negates old relations and promises new ones—the promise itself ushers them in,** welcoming the new comrade into relations irreducible to their broader setting.

#### The role of the ballot is to embrace fidelity to the political truth, for comrades to embrace themselves in partnership toward a collective goal. DEAN 3

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The idea that comrades are those who belong to the same side of a political struggle leads to the fourth thesis: **The relation between comrades is mediated by fidelity to a truth; practices of comradeship materialize this fidelity. The “same side” points to the truth comrades are faithful to—the political truth that unites them**—**and the fidelity with which they work to realize this truth in the world.** “Belonging” invites attention to the expectations, practices, and affects that being on the same side generates. The notions of truth and fidelity at work here come from Alain Badiou. In brief, **Badiou rejects the idea of truth as a proposition or judgment, arguing instead that truth is a process. The process begins with the eruption of something new, an event.** **Because an event changes the situation, breaks the confines of the given, it is undecidable in terms of the given; it is something entirely new**. Badiou argues that this undecidability “induces the appearance of a *subject* of the event.”[60](javascript:void(0)) **This subject isn’t the cause of the event. It’s an effect of or response to the event,** “the decision to *say* that the event has taken place.” Grammar might seduce us into rendering this subject as “I.” **We should** avoid this temptation and **recognize the subject** **as** designating an inflection point, **a response that extends the event.** **The decision that a truth has appeared, that an event has occurred, incites a process of verification**, the “infinite procedure of verification of the true,” **in** **what Badiou calls an “exercise of fidelity**.”[61](javascript:void(0)) **Fidelity is a working out and working through of the truth, an engagement with truth that extends out into and changes the world. We should recognize here the unavoidably collective dimension of fidelity: in the political field, verification is a struggle of the many.** Peter Hallward draws out some implications of Badiou’s conception of truth. First, it is subjective. Those faithful to an evental truth involve themselves in working it out, exploring its consequences.[62](javascript:void(0)) Second, fidelity is not blind faith; it is rigorous engagement unconcerned with individual personality and incorporated into the body of truth that it generates. Hallward writes:Fidelity is, by definition, ex-centric, directed outward, beyond the limits of a merely personal integrity. To be faithful to an evental implication always means to abandon oneself, rigorously, to the unfolding of its consequences. **Fidelity implies that, if there is truth, it can be only cruelly indifferent to the private as such.** **Every truth involves a kind of anti-privatization, a subjective collectivization. In truth, “I” matter only insofar as I am subsumed by the impersonal vector of truth—say, the political organization, or the scientific research program.**[**63**](javascript:void(0)) **The truth process builds a new body**. This body of truth is a collective formed to “work for the consequences of the new” and this work, this collective, disciplines and subsumes the faithful.[64](javascript:void(0))Third, collectivity does not imply uniformity. The infinite procedure of verification incorporates multiple experiments, enactments, and effects.Badiou writes, “An organization lies at the intersection between an Idea and an event. However, this intersection only exists as process, whose immediate subject is the political militant.”[65](javascript:void(0)) We should amend this statement by replacing *militant* with *comrade*. Comrade highlights the “discipline of the event,” the way that political fidelity cannot be exercised by a solitary individual—hence, the Marxist-Leninist emphasis on the unity of theory and practice, the barren incapacity of each alone. Comrade also affirms the self-abandonment accompanying fidelity to a truth: its vector, its unfolding, is indifferent to my personal experiences and inclinations. For communists, the process of truth has a body and that body is the party, in both its historical and formal sense. Already in *Theory of the Subject*, Badiou recognizes the necessity of a political body, the party as the “subject-support of all politics.”[66](javascript:void(0)) He writes:The party is the body of politics, in the strict sense. The fact that there is a body by no means guarantees that there is a subject … But for there to be a subject, for a subject to be found, there must be the support of a body.[67](javascript:void(0)) **As a figure of political belonging, the comrade is a faithful response to the evental rupture of crowds and movements, to the egalitarian discharge that erupts from the force of the many where they don’t belong, to the movement of the people as the subject of politics.**[**68**](javascript:void(0)) **Comrades demonstrate fidelity through political work; through concerted, disciplined engagement. Their practical political work extends the truth of the emancipatory egalitarian struggle of the oppressed into the world.** Amending Badiou (by drawing from his earlier work), we can say that the comrade is not a faithful subject but a political relation faithful to the divided people as the subject of emancipatory egalitarian politics.[69](javascript:void(0)) **For us to see the revolutionary people as the subject in the struggles of the oppressed, for their subject to be found, we must be comrades.** In *Ninotchka*, Nina Ivanova Yakushova can’t tell who her comrades are by looking at them. The party has told her who to look for, but she has to ask. After Iranoff identifies himself, Yakushova tells him her name and the name and position of the party comrade who authorized her visit. Iranoff introduces Buljanoff and Kopalski. Yakushova addresses each as comrade. But it’s not the address that makes them all comrades. They are comrades because they are members of the same party. **The party is the organized body of truth that mediates their relationship. This mediation makes clear what is expected of comrades—disciplined, faithful work.** Iranoff, Buljanoff, and Kopalski have not been doing the work expected of comrades, which is why Moscow sent Yakushova to oversee them in Paris. That Kopalski says they would have greeted her with flowers demonstrates their *embourgeoisment*, the degeneration of their sense of comradeship. But they are all there for work. Gendered identity and hierarchy don’t mediate relations between comrades. The practices of fidelity to a political truth, the work done toward building that truth in the world, do. The solidarity of comrades in political struggle arises out of the intertwining of truth, practice, and party. It’s not reducible to any of these alone. **Comrades are not simply those who believe in the same truth—as in, for example, the idea of communism. Their fidelity to a certain truth is manifested in practical work.** Work for the realization of a political truth brings people into comradely relation. **But carrying out similar tasks in fidelity to the same truth isn’t sufficient for comradeship. The work must be in common; no one is a comrade on their own. Practices of comradeship are coordinated, organized. The party is the organization out of which comradeship emerges and that comrade relations produce. It concentrates comradeship even as comradeship exceeds it.**

## Police PIC, 1:30

**Counterplan: A just government ought to recognize the unconditional right of workers to strike except for police officers.**

Note: The counterplan proves a general condition of unconditionality as bad, thus proving the right should be conditional. The PIC is neg ground, aff has to prove why all strikes are good.

**Police Strikes are used to combat racial progress and attempts to limit police power. Making them legal and easier only make progress much harder.**

Andrew **Grim 2020** What is the ‘blue flu’ and how has it increased police power? https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2020/07/01/what-is-blue-flu-how-has-it-increased-police-power/

But the result of such protests matter deeply as we consider police reform today. Historically, **blue flu strikes have helped expand police power, ultimately limiting the ability of city governments to reform, constrain or conduct oversight over the police**. They **allow the police to leverage public fear of crime to extract concessions from municipalities.** This became clear in Detroit more than 50 years ago. In June 1967, tensions arose between Detroit Mayor Jerome Cavanagh and the Detroit Police Officers Association (DPOA), which represented the city’s 3,300 patrol officers. The two were at odds primarily over police demands for a pay increase. Cavanagh showed no signs of caving to the DPOA’s demands and had, in fact, proposed to cut the police department’s budget. On June 15, the DPOA escalated the dispute with a walkout: 323 officers called in sick. The number grew over the next several days as the blue flu spread, reaching a height of 800 absences on June 17. In tandem with the walkout, the DPOA launched a fearmongering media campaign to win over the public. They took out ads in local newspapers warning Detroit residents, “How does it feel to be held up? Stick around and find out!” This campaign took place at a time of rising urban crime rates and uprisings, and only a month before the 1967 Detroit riot, making it especially potent. The DPOA understood this climate and used it to its advantage. **With locals already afraid of crime and displeased at Cavanagh’s failure to rein it in, they would be more likely to demand the return of the police than to demand retribution against officer**s for an illegal strike. The DPOA’s strategy paid off. The walkout left Detroit Police Commissioner Ray Girardin feeling “practically helpless.” “I couldn’t force them to work,” he later told The Washington Post. Rather than risk public ire by allowing the blue flu to continue, Cavanagh relented. Ultimately, the DPOA got the raises it sought, making Detroit officers the highest paid in the nation. This was far from the end of the fight between Cavanagh and the DPOA. In the ensuing months and years, **they continued to tussle over wages, pensions, the budget, the integration of squad cars and the hiring of black officers.** The threat of another blue flu loomed over all these disputes, helping the union to win many of them. And Detroit was not an outlier. Throughout the 1960s, ’70s and ’80s, the blue flu was a [ubiquitous and highly effective](https://www.akpress.org/our-enemies-in-blue.html) tactic in Baltimore, Memphis, New Orleans, Chicago, Newark, New York and many other cities. In most cases, as author Kristian Williams writes, “When faced with a walkout or slowdown, the authorities usually decided that the pragmatic need to get the cops back to work trumped the city government’s long term interest in diminishing the rank and file’s power.” But each time a city relented to this pressure, they ceded more and more power to police unions, which would turn to the strategy repeatedly to defend officers’ interests — **particularly when it came to efforts to address systemic racism in police policies and practices.** In 1970, black residents of Pittsburgh’s North Side neighborhood raised an outcry over the “hostile sadistic treatment” they experienced at the hands of white police officers. They lobbied Mayor Peter F. Flaherty to assign more black officers to their neighborhood. The mayor agreed, transferring several white officers out of the North Side and replacing them with black officers. While residents cheered this decision, white officers and the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP), which represented them, were furious. They slammed the transfer as “discrimination” against whites. About 425 of the Pittsburgh Police Department’s 1,600 police officers called out sick in protest. Notably, black police officers broke with their white colleagues and refused to join the walkout. They praised the transfer as a “long overdue action” and viewed the walkout as a betrayal of officers’ oath to protect the public. Nonetheless, the tactic paid off. After several days, Flaherty caved to the “open revolt” of white officers, agreeing to halt the transfers and instead submit the dispute to binding arbitration between the city and the police union. Black officers, though, continued to speak out against their union’s support of racist practices, and many of them later resigned from the union in protest. Similar scenarios played out in Detroit, Chicago and other cities in the 1960s and ’70s, as **white officers continually staged walkouts to preserve the segregated status quo in their departments**. These blue flu **strikes amounted to an authoritarian power grab by police officers bent on avoiding oversight, rejecting reforms and shoring up their own authority**. In the aftermath of the 1967 Detroit walkout, a police commissioner’s aide strongly criticized the police union’s strong-arm tactics, saying “it smacks of a police state.” The clash left one newspaper editor wondering, “Who’s the Boss of the Detroit Police?” But in the “law and order” climate of the late 1960s, such criticism did not resonate enough to stir a groundswell of public opinion against the blue flu. And police unions dismissed critics by arguing that officers had “no alternative” but to engage in walkouts to get city officials to make concessions. Crucially, the very effectiveness of the blue flu may be premised on a myth**. While police unions use public fear of crime skyrocketing without police on duty**, in many cases, **the absence of police did not lead to a rise in crime**. In New York City in 1971, [for example](https://untappedcities.com/2020/06/12/the-week-without-police-what-we-can-learn-from-the-1971-police-strike/), 20,000 officers called out sick for five days over a pay dispute without any apparent increase in crime. The most striking aspect of the walkout, as one observer noted, “might be just how unimportant it seemed.” Today, municipalities are under immense pressure from activists who have taken to the streets to protest the police killings of black men and women. Some have already responded by enacting new policies and cutting police budgets. As it continues, more blue flus are likely to follow as officers seek to wrest back control of the public debate on policing and reassert their independence.

**Those strikes cement a police culture which leads to endless amounts of racist violence and the bolstering of the prison industrial complex.**

**Chaney and Ray 13**, Cassandra (Has a PhD and is a professor at LSU. Also has a strong focus in the structure of Black families) , and Ray V. Robertson (Also has a PhD and is a criminal justice professor at LSU). "Racism and police brutality in America." *Journal of African American Studies* 17.4 (2013): 480-505. SM//do I really need a card for this

Racism and Discrimination According to Marger (2012), “racism is an ideology, or belief system, designed to justify and rationalize racial and ethnic inequality” (p. 25) and “discrimination, most basically, is behavior aimed at denying members of particular ethnic groups’ equal access to societal rewards” (p. 57). Defining both of these concepts from the onset is important for they provide the lens through which our focus on the racist and discriminatory practices of law enforcement can occur. Since the time that Africans [African Americans] were forcibly brought to America, they have been the victims of racist and discriminatory practices that have been spurred and/or substantiated by those who create and enforce the law. For example, The Watts Riots of 1965, the widespread assaults against Blacks in Harlem during the 1920s (King 2011), law enforcement violence against Black women (i.e., Malaika Brooks, Jaisha Akins, Frankie Perkins, Dr. Mae Jemison, Linda Billups, Clementine Applewhite) and other ethnic women of color (Ritchie 2006), the beating of Rodney King, and the deaths of Amadou Diallo in the 1990s and Trayvon Martin more recently are just a few public examples of the historical and contemporaneous ways in which Blacks in America have been assaulted by members of the police system (King 2011; Loyd 2012; Murch 2012; Rafail et al. 2012). In Punishing Race (2011), law professor Michael Tonry’s research findings point to the fact that Whites tend to excuse police brutality against Blacks because of the racial animus that they hold against Blacks. Thus, to Whites, Blacks are viewed as deserving of harsh treatment in the criminal justice system (Peffley and Hurwitz 2013). At first glance, such an assertion may seem to be unfathomable, buy that there is an extensive body of literature which suggests that Black males are viewed as the “prototypical criminal,” and this notion is buttressed in the media, by the general public, and via disparate sentencing outcomes (Blair et al. 2004; Eberhardt et al. 2006; Gabiddon 2010; Maddox and Gray 2004; Oliver and Fonash 2002; Staples 2011). For instance, Blair et al. (2004) revealed that Black males with more Afrocentric features (e.g., dark skin, broad noses, full lips) may receive longer sentences than Blacks with less Afrocentric features, i.e., lighter skin and straighter hair (Eberhardt et al. 2006). Shaun Gabiddon in Criminological Theories on Race and Crime (2010) discussed the concept of “Negrophobia” which was more extensively examined by Armour (1997). Negrophobia can be surmised as an irrational of Blacks, which includes a fear of being victimized by Black, that can result in Whites shooting or harming an AfricanAmerican based on criminal/racial stereotypes (Armour 1997). The aforementioned racialized stereotypical assumptions can be deleterious because they can be used by Whites to justify shooting a Black person on the slightest of pretense (Gabiddon 2010). Finally, African-American males represent a group that has been much maligned in the larger society (Tonry 2011). Further, as victims of the burgeoning prison industrial complex, mass incarceration, and enduring racism, the barriers to truly independent Black male agency are ubiquitous and firmly entrenched (Alexander 2010; Chaney 2009; Baker 1996; Blackmon 2008; Dottolo and Stewart 2008; Karenga 2010; Martin et al. 2001; Smith and Hattery 2009). Thus, racism and discrimination heightens the psychological distress experienced by Blacks (Robertson 2011; Pieterse et al. 2012), as well as their decreased mortality in the USA (Muennig and Murphy 2011). Police Brutality Against Black Males According to Walker (2011), police brutality is defined as “the use of excessive physical force or verbal assault and psychological intimidation” (p. 579). Although one recent study suggests that the NYPD has become better behaved due to greater race and gender diversity (Kane and White 2009), Blacks are more likely to be the victims of police brutality. A growing body of scholarly research related to police brutality has revealed that Blacks are more likely than Whites to make complaints regarding police brutality (Smith and Holmes 2003), to be accosted while operating [driving] a motorized vehicle (“Driving While Black”), and to underreport how often they are stopped due to higher social desirability factors (TomaskovicDevey et al. 2006). Interestingly, data obtained from the General Social Survey (GSS), a representative sample conducted biennially by the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago for the years 1994 through 2004, provide further proof regarding the acceptance of force against Blacks. In particular, the GSS found Whites to be significantly (29.5 %) more accepting of police use of force when a citizen was attempting to escape custody than Blacks when analyzed using the chi-squared statistical test (p The average Southern policeman is a promoted poor White with a legal sanction to use a weapon. His social heritage has taught him to despise the Negroes, and he has had little education which could have changed him….The result is that probably no group of Whites in America have a lower opinion of the Negro people and are more fixed in their views than Southern policeman. (Myrdal 1944, pp. 540–541) Myrdal (1944) was writing on results from a massive study that he undertook in the late 1930s. He was writing at a time that even the most conservative among us would have to admit was not a colorblind society (if one even believes in such things). But current research does corroborate his observations that less educated police officers tend to be the most aggressive and have the most formal complaints filed against them when compared to their more educated counterparts (Hassell and Archbold 2010; Jefferis et al. 2011). Tonry (2011) delineates some interesting findings from the 2001 Race, Crime, and Public Opinion Survey that can be applied to understanding why the larger society tolerates police misconduct when it comes to Black males. The survey, which involved approximately 978 non-Hispanic Whites and 1,010 Blacks, revealed a divergence in attitudes between Blacks and Whites concerning the criminal justice system (Tonry 2011). For instance, 38 % of Whites and 89 % of Blacks viewed the criminal justice system as biased against Blacks (Tonry 2011). Additionally, 8 % of Blacks and 56 % of Whites saw the criminal justice system as treating Blacks fairly (Tonry 2011). Perhaps most revealing when it comes to facilitating an environment ripe for police brutality against Black males, 68 % of Whites and only 18 % of Whites expressed confidence in law enforcement (Tonry 2011). Is a society wherein the dominant group overwhelming approves of police performance willing to do anything substantive to curtail police brutality against Black males? Police brutality is not a new phenomenon. The Department of Justice (DOJ) office of Civil Rights (OCR) has investigated more than a dozen police departments in major cities across the USA on allegations of either racial discrimination or police brutality (Gabbidon and Greene 2013). To make the aforementioned even more clear, according to Gabbidon and Greene (2013), “In 2010, the OCR was investigating 17 police departments across the country and monitoring five settlements regarding four police agencies” (pp. 119–120). Plant and Peruche (2005) provide some useful information into why police officers view Black males as potential perpetrators and could lead to acts of brutality. In their research, the authors suggest that since Black people in general, and Black males in particular, are caricatured as aggressive and criminal, police are more likely to view Black men as a threat which justifies the disproportionate use of deadly force. Therefore, it is not beyond the realm of possibility that police officers’ decisions to act aggressively may, to some extent, be influenced by race (Jefferis et al. 2011). The media’s portrayals of Black men are often less than sanguine. Bryson’s (1998) work in this area provides empirical evidence that the mass media that has been instrumental in portraying Black men as studs, super detectives, or imitation White men and has a general negative effect on how these men are regarded by others. Such characterizations can be so visceral in nature that “prototypes” of criminal suspects are more likely to be African-American (Oliver et al. 2004). Not surprisingly, the more Afrocentric the African-American’s facial features, the more prone he or she is expected to be deviant (Eberhardt et al. 2006). Interestingly, it is probable that less than flattering depictions of Black males on television and in news stories are activating pre-existing stereotypes possessed by Whites as opposed to facilitating their creation. According to Oliver et al. (2004), “it is important to keep in mind that media consumption is an active process, with viewers’ existing attitudes and beliefs playing a larger role in how images are attended to, interpreted, and remembered” (p. 89). Moreover, it is reductionist to presuppose that individual is powerless in constructing a palatable version of reality and is solely under the control of the media and exercises no agency. Lastly, Peffley and Hurwitz (2013) describe what can be perceived as one of the more deleterious results of negative media caricatures of Black males. More specifically, the authors posit that most Whites believe that Blacks are disproportionately inclined to engage in criminal behavior and are the deserving on harsh treatment by the criminal justice system. On the other hand, such an observation is curious because most urban areas are moderate to highly segregated residentially which would preclude the frequent and significant interaction needed to make such scathing indictments (Bonilla-Silva 2009). Consequently, the aforementioned racial animus has the effect of increased White support for capital punishment if questions regarding its legitimacy around if capital punishment is too frequently applied to Blacks (Peffley and Hurwitz 2013; Tonry 2011). Ultimately, erroneous (negative) portrayals of crime and community, community race and class identities, and concerns over neighborhood change all contribute to place-specific framing of “the crime problem.” These frames, in turn, shape both intergroup dynamics and support for criminal justice policy (Leverentz 2012).

## AC

#### WATSON 21

Watson, Travis. “Union Construction's Racial Equity and Inclusion Charade (SSIR).” The Racism of Labor Union Construction and Boston's 'White Way', 14 June 2021, https://ssir.org/articles/entry/union\_constructions\_racial\_equity\_and\_inclusion\_charade?scrlybrkr=ad2304d3.

The Catch 22 | White union construction workers often stymie prospective Black workers’ attempts to join a union by trapping them in a Catch-22: requiring the worker to have a job prior to being admitted into a union, but also requiring union membership before getting a construction job. Former United Community Construction Workers activist Omar Cannon recalls Black workers being told by white union officers that they “had to be in the union to get a job.” However, the problem, [Cannon explains](https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctv941wxz.23?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents), is that “you had to get a job to get in the union.” Former Army veteran and construction worker Gilbert Banks has told a [similar story](https://www.google.com/books/edition/Black_Power_at_Work/16RmDwAAQBAJ?hl=en&gbpv=0) about treatment by foremen and unions: “They’d say, ‘Have you got a (union membership) book?’ I’d say, ‘No.’ ‘Well,’ they said, ‘Go get a book and we’ll give you a job.’ And I’d go to the union and ask them for a book. They’d say, ‘Listen, if you get the job, we’ll give you a book.’ There was no way of fighting it.” This no-win situation is not a coincidence. This Catch-22 is a form of structural racism intended to exclude people not already on the inside. Stonewalling | Another strategy white union members use to frustrate Black workers into giving up their effort to join a union is intentionally refusing communication, ignoring, and silencing them. Stonewalling effectively blocks Black workers from jobs and from unions, even when those workers have superlative skills, training, and experience. For example, former member of the Congress of Racial Equity (CORE) and construction activist [Oliver Leeds recalls](https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7591/j.ctt7v804) how his work as an Army engineer wasn’t enough to even get considered for work and union acceptance: “I was in the Corps of Engineers. And you know what we do? We worked to win the war. We built anything that could be built: bridges, tunnels, houses, officers’ quarters, Myers quarter, roads, and airstrips. We loaded and unloaded ships. We did anything in the way that involved work, construction work. You know, when I got back to the United States, after the war, I couldn’t get a job in construction, that there was no union that would let me in? And there was damn little that I couldn’t do in the way of construction work. They’ll take you and turn you into construction workers in the army, in a segregated army, and then when you get back into civilian life, you can’t get a construction job.” These first two strategies—the Catch 22 and stonewalling—cloak the structural racism operating within unions by displacing the consequence onto the Black person: that they gave up, or that they got frustrated, rather than seeing the mechanisms at work that produced this outcome. Biased Gatekeepers | Many construction unions place unemployed members “on the bench” while they wait to be sent to work by dispatchers, the union members who distribute the jobs. Dispatchers play a central role in access to jobs and, therefore, to union entry. However, by intentionally refusing to send Black workers to jobs, racially biased dispatchers play a pivotal role in keeping unions white. In Boston, former construction worker Earl Quick [recalls](https://www.newspapers.com/newspage/437214073/) receiving his union book but never being assigned work. “White guys would come in and go right into the business agent’s office and they’d get work and me and the rest of the Black guys would just sit there,” he explains. “I never did work in Boston.” [According to](https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7591/j.ctt7v804) the former Northwest American Friends Service Committee Director Arthur Dye, “Some [Black] workers appeared at the hiring hall day after day for several months and were never dispatched. If they began to ask questions why they were not dispatched they would be sent out to jobs … a hundred miles or so away, only to find out that when they arrived at their destination there wasn’t a job. Or they would be dispatched to a job where there was considerable possibility for physical intimidation.” Because this is a well-known practice, Black workers have often [applied directly to employers](https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7591/j.ctt7v804), going around the union hiring halls. But in most cases, employers are required by union policy to hire only workers referred by union hiring hall dispatchers. And even when employers [intentionally](https://www.reviewjournal.com/local/local-las-vegas/vegas-discrimination-lawsuit-could-be-headed-to-arbitration/) seek to diversify their employees and union contractors, dispatchers can thwart this effort. For example, when Robert Lucas, the president of the refrigeration contractor Lewis Refrigeration, who is a white man, [called Local Union 32](https://hcommons.org/deposits/objects/hc:16486/datastreams/CONTENT/content) and specifically asked for a Black plumber to be dispatched to his job, the dispatcher reportedly laughed and dismissed his request. Discriminatory Testing | Some construction unions require that applicants pass a test for admittance. To keep their membership as white as possible, some local unions went so far as to pass white applicants regardless of how they scored, while failing nearly every Black applicant. Journalist Gary McMillan reported in the [Boston Globe](https://www.newspapers.com/newspage/437214073/), that “in 1980, a federal court in Boston found that the oral section of the exam given by the Ironworkers was so subjective and so open to abuse that it had almost no bearing on ability to do the job. For some reason, the court also found, whites almost always passed the test but Blacks almost always failed.” This blatant discriminatory testing enables the construction industry to remain an “old-boys club,” and barring entry to people of color keeps their ranks as white as possible going forward. Without equal access to unions, Black workers have been deprived of apprenticeship, mentorship, and other networking opportunities that are crucial to their professional advancement and success. Explicit Racism | Some white construction workers take a more overtly racist and aggressive approach to keeping Black membership as low as possible. This strategy has been tactically employed through the use of racist language and putting Black workers in dangerous situations. In Seattle, Donald Kelly, a white apprentice in Local 86 [recalls hearing](https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7591/j.ctt7v804), “We have no Negro apprentices, and we will never have no Negro apprentices … No Black [expletives] will ever work out of this union as long as I am business agent.” In Boston, Earl Quick had union men [drop bolts on him and call him the N-word.](https://www.newspapers.com/newspage/437214073/) As McMillan enumerated, “almost every Black construction worker interviewed by the [Boston Globe in 1983](https://www.newspapers.com/newspage/437214073/) … has had ‘accidents’ on the job: boards or bolts dropped from above, a steel beam swing very close to his head, live wires left at his feet as he walked by.” But these incidents of overt racism and aggression aren’t just relics of the past. Last year, places like Toronto, Las Vegas, and Portland, Oregon, have had incidents of [nooses](https://www.archpaper.com/2020/06/nooses-found-at-construction-sites-in-las-vegas-toronto-and-elsewhere/) being left at construction sites. And this year, in Boston, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers International Vice President Mike Monahan referred to Black people as “[colored.](https://www.wgbh.org/news/local-news/2021/03/18/boston-planning-agency-vice-chair-criticized-for-racist-language)” And, in response to my critique about the lack of diversity in union

#### VALENTE

Valente, Samantha. “#MeToo inside the Labor Movement.” New Labor Forum, 28 Feb. 2019, https://newlaborforum.cuny.edu/2019/01/24/metoo-inside-the-labor-movement/. // LHP HL

The #MeToo movement represents an opportunity for the labor movement to authentically connect to the experiences of women in all workplaces, and show that a union card means protection from sexual harassment, whether the harasser is the boss or a coworker. To seize that opportunity, the labor movement must confront hard truths and contradictions. Unions have played a mixed role in the long path to reckoning. Sexual harassment violates the fundamental principles of fairness and equity for which unions have fought so hard. Yet, with some notable exceptions, the labor movement has been a bystander or even complicit, especially in male-dominated industries where harassment is most pervasive. In handling grievances, unions frequently sided with union men who were accused of harassment; unions stood on the sidelines when women unionists brought legal claims that would set the boundaries of acceptable behavior in the workplace; and union leaders and members created and fed a hyper-masculine culture—in the union hall and on the shop floor—where harassment was accepted and, too often, condoned. [[1]](https://newlaborforum.cuny.edu/2019/01/24/metoo-inside-the-labor-movement/" \l "_edn1)As former National Labor Relations Board Chairperson Wilma Liebman, a union lawyer, explained to Politico, sexual harassment “has been an ongoing problem for unions, especially those that were initially heavily male. It’s been a hard issue to deal with.”[[2]](https://newlaborforum.cuny.edu/2019/01/24/metoo-inside-the-labor-movement/" \l "_edn2)

#### Link Turn - Climate strike pushes no policy, actually causes harms – SMALL 2

Small, Diane. “Why the Climate Strike Is a Useless Act.” Eluxe Magazine, 3 Apr. 2020, https://eluxemagazine.com/culture/articles/why-the-climate-strike-is-a-useless-act/. // LHP HL

Protests can play an important role in our society – but only when the objective is clear. Stop the War protests mean just that, for example. But the ‘climate strike’ has no clear, realistic goals whatsoever. It’s easy to complain, but it’s much harder to come up with – let alone demand – serious, viable solutions. Green energy is a noble goal, but so far, it’s not viable for fuelling most countries – far from it. And even when it works, it often comes with its own issues: for example, China’s ‘green energy’ [Three Gorges Hydroelectric Dam](https://www.internationalrivers.org/campaigns/three-gorges-dam) displaced 1.2 million people, killed countless numbers of animals and plants, and flooded pristine forests. The Climate Strike is a caprice; a feel-good event that seems to be at least partly designed to give [totally un-eco-friendly companies like Vivienne Westwood](https://eluxemagazine.com/magazine/vivienne-westwood-is-not-eco-friendly/) a bit of a greenwashing boost, while acting as something of an excuse for workers and students to bunk off and join a huge street party. They may feel that they’re doing something positive for the environment, but in the end, they will accomplish nothing. There’s no doubt the planet needs saving, but gathering a bunch of impassioned protestors (many of whom are too young to vote, even) with zero feasible demands for change is a waste of energy. If people really want to ‘strike’ in an effective way, real sacrifice is necessary. We must lower our energy use. Reduce our consumption. Boycott some of the biggest corporations on the planet. But it seems too few are willing to make those sacrifices.

#### No Link - Climate change policies aren’t feasible – SMALL 1

Small, Diane. “Why the Climate Strike Is a Useless Act.” Eluxe Magazine, 3 Apr. 2020, https://eluxemagazine.com/culture/articles/why-the-climate-strike-is-a-useless-act/. // LHP HL

Let’s consider a more realistic example: Germany. The country is deeply committed to [renewable energy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Renewable_energy), and the country has been called “[the world’s first major renewable energy economy](https://www.renewableenergyworld.com/2009/04/03/germany-the-worlds-first-major-renewable-energy-economy/#gref)“. However, even this ecological powerhouse only used around [35% green energy in 2018](https://www.forbes.com/sites/michaelshellenberger/2019/05/06/the-reason-renewables-cant-power-modern-civilization-is-because-they-were-never-meant-to/#52bf5b70ea2b), and as much of Germany’s renewable electricity [comes](https://www.cleanenergywire.org/factsheets/germanys-energy-consumption-and-power-mix-charts) from biomass, which scientists [view](https://www.forbes.com/sites/michaelshellenberger/2019/03/07/with-ethanol-and-biomass-no-longer-viewed-as-green-will-other-renewables-soon-follow/#b819dd97fb98) as polluting and environmentally degrading, as it does from from solar. The country has also run into [numerous technological, economic and political problems](https://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/german-failure-on-the-road-to-a-renewable-future-a-1266586.html) that are stifling its progress in this arena, and [Der Spiegel](https://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/german-failure-on-the-road-to-a-renewable-future-a-1266586.html) cites a recent estimate that it would cost Germany €3.4 trillion ($3.8 trillion) – or seven times more than it spent from 2000 to 2025 – to increase solar and wind three to five-fold by 2050. That’s a pretty hefty spend for one of the richest countries in the world – one that would be impossible to achieve for poorer nations. Do the climate strikers realise that only the teeniest, tiniest of countries can run on green energy? And that even those with the best intentions to do so are having serious difficulties? No strike of any magnitude will change that.

#### No Link - Climate strikers don’t have enough leverage.

**Dolsak and Prakash 19** [Nives and Aseem; We write on environmental issues, climate politics and NGOs; “Climate Strikes: What They Accomplish And How They Could Have More Impact,” 9/14/19; Forbes; <https://www.forbes.com/sites/prakashdolsak/2019/09/14/climate-strikes-what-they-accomplish-and-how-they-could-have-more-impact/?sh=2244a9bd5eed>] Justin

But strikers must have the **leverage to accomplish their goals**

Strikers represent the demand for climate action. But **who** will **supply these policies and** what **leverage** do strikers have over these **policymakers**? This is where climate strikes could **run into a problem.**

Strikers have leverage when their absence from work **disrupts activities that are valuable to policymakers**. If railway workers go on strike, trains cannot run and the public is upset. When airline pilots go on strike, people cannot fly, and airlines lose revenue. By some accounts, the 48-hour strike of British Airways pilots (regarding a pay dispute) in September 2019 will cost the company about £100 million.

What leverage do the climate strikers have? Assuming most of the strikers are students, what costs might their strikes impose on the **actors that need to change their climate policies** (namely, governments and fossil fuel firms)?

Student strikes probably **do not** disrupt the government **or** fossil fuel firms. The **main bearer** of these costs are the **conscientious teachers** who need to figure out how they are going to **make up for the lost teaching time.**

#### No impact – even if they get access to the impact don’t vote on it - Extinction from warming requires 12 degrees, far greater than their internal link, and intervening actors will solve before then

Sebastian Farquhar 17, leads the Global Priorities Project (GPP) at the Centre for Effective Altruism, et al., 2017, “Existential Risk: Diplomacy and Governance,” https://www.fhi.ox.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/Existential-Risks-2017-01-23.pdf

The most likely levels of global warming are very unlikely to cause human extinction.15 The existential risks of climate change instead stem from tail risk climate change – the low probability of extreme levels of warming – and interaction with other sources of risk. It is impossible to say with confidence at what point global warming would become severe enough to pose an existential threat. Research has suggested that warming of 11-12°C would render most of the planet uninhabitable,16 and would completely devastate agriculture.17 This would pose an extreme threat to human civilisation as we know it.18 Warming of around 7°C or more could potentially produce conflict and instability on such a scale that the indirect effects could be an existential risk, although it is extremely uncertain how likely such scenarios are.19 Moreover, the timescales over which such changes might happen could mean that humanity is able to adapt enough to avoid extinction in even very extreme scenarios. The probability of these levels of warming depends on eventual greenhouse gas concentrations. According to some experts, unless strong action is taken soon by major emitters, it is likely that we will pursue a medium-high emissions pathway.20 If we do, the chance of extreme warming is highly uncertain but appears non-negligible. Current concentrations of greenhouse gases are higher than they have been for hundreds of thousands of years,21 which means that there are significant unknown unknowns about how the climate system will respond. Particularly concerning is the risk of positive feedback loops, such as the release of vast amounts of methane from melting of the arctic permafrost, which would cause rapid and disastrous warming.22 The economists Gernot Wagner and Martin Weitzman have used IPCC figures (which do not include modelling of feedback loops such as those from melting permafrost) to estimate that if we continue to pursue a medium-high emissions pathway, the probability of eventual warming of 6°C is around 10%,23 and of 10°C is around 3%.24 These estimates are of course highly uncertain. It is likely that the world will take action against climate change once it begins to impose large costs on human society, long before there is warming of 10°C. Unfortunately, there is significant inertia in the climate system: there is a 25 to 50 year lag between CO2 emissions and eventual warming,25 and it is expected that 40% of the peak concentration of CO2 will remain in the atmosphere 1,000 years after the peak is reached.26 Consequently, it is impossible to reduce temperatures quickly by reducing CO2 emissions. If the world does start to face costly warming, the international community will therefore face strong incentives to find other ways to reduce global temperatures.