## 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.**

## AC

#### 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.**

#### On Xu 17: 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.

Graphical user interface, application

Description automatically generated

## T-US

#### Interpretation: The affirmative debater must not specify a government that is not just and spec workers

#### Violation: They specify the United States and tech workers.

#### 1] The US a] commits eminent domain abuse, which violates property and b] does it against minorities and the poor which is not impartial, Somin 17:

Ilya Somin, [Contributor, The Volokh Conspiracy which is is a blog co-founded in 2002 by law professor Eugene Volokh,[3] covering legal and political issues[4][5][6] from an ideological orientation it describes as "generally libertarian, conservative, centrist, or some mixture of these."], May 26, 2017 at 10:40 a.m. EDT, “The American experience with eminent domain – and its possible lessons for others” <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/volokh-conspiracy/wp/2017/05/26/the-american-experience-with-eminent-domain-and-its-possible-lessons-for-others/> //LHP AV

This week, the Volokh Conspiracy hosted a guest-blogging symposium with posts by contributors to my new book Eminent Domain: A Comparative Perspective (co-edited with Iljoong Kim and Hojun Lee). My last post about the book includes links to a free version of the Introduction to the volume, and to posts by other contributors. In addition to co-editing the volume, I also wrote the chapter on eminent domain in the United States. In this post, I summarize key elements of the American experience with condemnation, building on my chapter in the book and my earlier work on the history of takings in the US. **The United States has the reputation of** being a nation with a strong **commitment to property rights** and constitutional limits on government power. In some ways, that reputation is well deserved. **But**, in some other key respects, it **is** **undercut by our painful history of eminent domain abuse.** The Fifth Amendment and nearly all state constitutions mandate that government may only take private property for a “public use.” Almost from the very beginning, there has been conflict between advocates of the “narrow” and “broad” interpretations of this rule. The former allows takings only for publicly owned projects (such as a public road), or private ones that have a legal duty to serve the entire public, such as a public utility. Under the broad view, virtually anything that might benefit the public in some way qualifies as a public use. The narrow view predominated throughout most of the first century or more of American constitutional history. But the broad view eventually triumphed in the mid-twentieth century, culminating in cases like Berman v. Parker (1954). As a result**, state and federal courts upheld large-scale “blight” and “economic development” takings that forcibly displaced hundreds of thousands of people, most of them poor, politically weak, or members of racial and ethnic minorities**. Often, these takings also destroyed more economic value than they created**, wiping out homes and small businesses, and destroying neighborhood “social capital.”** **Such abuses persist to the present day**, though on a considerably smaller scale than at the height of “urban renewal” takings in the 1950s and 1960s. The Supreme Court reaffirmed the broad view in its controversial 2005 decision in Kelo v. City of New London, which ruled that it is permissible to take property from one private owner and give it to another simply because it might lead to greater “economic development” in the area. But Kelo was a close 5-4 decision that turned out to be enormously controversial, generating a massive political backlash. In the aftermath, many states enacted eminent domain reform laws limiting takings, and several state supreme courts ruled that economic development takings violate their state constitutions. Although a win for the broad view, Kelo ended up destroying the seeming consensus behind it. In the wake of Kelo, the narrow view commands greater legitimacy than at any time in decades, and the debate over the proper scope of the eminent domain power continues with no end in sight. In recent years, controversy has erupted over takings for pipelines. An unusual coalition of property rights advocates on the right and environmentalists on the left has won a series of legislative and judicial victories seeking to limit pipeline takings. The alliance recalls the similarly cross-ideological reaction against Kelo, which also brought together some strange bedfellows. The debate over public use is far from the only controversy surrounding eminent domain in the US. **Another longstanding problem is the tendency to undercompensate owners of condemned property.** The Supreme Court has long held that owners must get “fair market value” compensation. **This, unfortunately, fails to account for the “subjective value” that many attach to their land over and above its market value. For example, a person who has lived in the same neighborhood for many years may value the social ties she has formed there; a small business may have a network of clients that would be hard to replicate elsewhere.** Even worse, studies show that owners often don’t even get the fair market value compensation that the law requires. That is particularly likely for owners who are relatively poor and lacking in political clout. Donald Trump’s claim that owners of condemned property stand to make “a fortune” is – to put it mildly – belied by the evidence.

#### 2] The oppressive structure of the United States is maintained by the narrative of justice and triumph.

Ioanide, Paula. "The Alchemy of Race and Affect:“White Innocence” and Public Secrets in the Post–Civil Rights Era." *Kalfou* 1.1 (2014).

I had to do a lot of revisionist thinking after I confronted this evidence. This is when I realized that there were two operative languages in America: the language of narrative and the language of affect. The first, constituted by dominant discourses, representations, ideologies, and fantasies, was used to craft the consciousness and belief systems of liberal and conservative Americans alike. Employing the language of narrative, **Americans spoke of themselves using the terms of triumph**, fairness, exceptionalism, merit, rugged individualism, and the ethic of hard work. **They repeated the false history they were taught in high school**, **professed** the pleasantries of liberty, equality, **justice**, and God’s love for all, **played out the melodramas** and happy endings of Hollywood, and clung to the historicism of liberal democracy. **The discourses of cultural pathology, criminality, welfare dependence, big government, family non-normativity, and sexual deviance—all of which were always deeply racialized and gendered— provided easy justifications for the aberrations, divisions, inequalities, hierarchies, and conflicts in what was otherwise understood as the greatest nation in the world**. **This language of narrative through which Americans most often defined themselves masked the structures that ultimately determine people’s fates and rendered invisible the relationships between past racial injustices and present social relations of power, opportunity, and life chances**. **In denying individual and collective responsibility for the bitter fruits of American history, the language of narrative required the “dumbing down” of society, since keeping people ignorant of historical consciousness necessitates vacuous forms of know- ledge as well as alienated and instrumentalist social bonds**. But it also unwit- tingly produced spiritual emptiness, since a society that denies the unjust out- comes of its past and present actions cannot stand on ethical grounds. I suspect this is what was behind the hollow tones and loveless touches of the people at my church and school.

#### Vote neg –

#### 1] Precision –

#### A] stasis point – the topic is the only reasonable focal point for debate – anything else destroys the possibility of debate because we will be two ships passing

#### B] internal link turn – violating semantics justifies the aff talking about whatever with zero neg prep or prediction which is the most unfair and uneducational

#### C] Jurisdiction – you can’t vote for them because the ballot and the tournament invitation say to vote for the better debater in the context of the resolution

#### 2] Limits – there are almost 200 national governments in the world which is an unmanageable burden, especially for a 3 week camp. Only imposing restrictions via the word just can ensure debates are limited and full of clash supercharged by the fact they chose tech workers

#### 3] TVA – use ideal theory instead. That’s better – a] promotes in-depth philosophical clash over labor law that’s constitutive to LD b] solves your offense because you can indicate you would solve these problems in an ideal world too – no reason you need the US or tech workersin particular

THEY HAVE TWO VIOLATIONS, GOV and WORKERS

Extempt paradign issues