# 1NC

## 1

### OFF

#### Technology has created an age of constant information and signifiers floating through our phones and computers as media. This creates a dyslexia – reduced attention spans, no time for true human interaction – this leads to information overload, which is too fast for our organic minds to keep up with – that causes depression and drug use. It’s no coincidence that the rise of tech in the 80s was complimented with a drug epidemic. These signifiers come prior to action, thus the role of the ballot is to disrupt semiocapitalism.

**Berardi 09** [Franco Berardi, Italian communist theorist and activist in the autonomist tradition, whose work mainly focuses on the role of the media and information technology within post-industrial capitalism Precarious Rhapsody, by Franco Bifo Berardi et al., AK Press, 2009. P. 40-42 // LEX JB]

* TW – mentions of suicide, not read, but it’s in the card if you chose to read it after the round

The acceleration of information exchange has produced and is producing an effect of a pathological type on the individual human mind and even more on the collective mind. Individuals are not in a position to consciously process the immense and always growing mass of information that enters their computers, their cell phones, their television screens, their electronic diaries and their heads. However, it seems indispensable to follow, recognize, evaluate, process all this information if you want to be efficient, competitive, victorious. The practice of multitasking, the opening of a window of hypertextual attention, the passage from one context to another for the complex evaluation of processes, tends to deform the sequential modality of mental processing. According to Christian Marazzi, who has concerned himself in various books with the relations between economics, language and affectivity, the latest generation of economic operators is affected by a real and proper form of dyslexia, incapable of reading a page from the beginning to the end according to sequential procedures, incapable of maintaining concentrated attention on the same object for a long time. And dyslexia spreads to cognitive and social behaviors, leading to rendering the pursuit of linear strategies nearly impossible. Some, like Davenport and Beck , speak of an attention economy. But when a cognitive faculty enters into and becomes part of economic discourse this means that it has become a scarce resource. The necessary time for paying attention to the fluxes of information to which we are exposed and which must be evaluated in order to be able to make decisions is lacking. The consequence is in front of our eyes: political and economic decisions no longer respond to a long term strategic rationality and simply follow immediate interests. On the other hand, we are always less available for giving our attention to others gratuitously. We no longer have the attention time for love, tenderness, nature, pleasure and compassion. Our attention is ever more besieged and therefore we assign it only to our careers, to competition and to economic decisions. And in any case our temporality cannot follow the insane speed of the hypercomplex digital machine. Human beings tend to become the ruthless executors of decisions taken without attention. The universe of transmitters, or cyberspace, now proceeds at a superhuman velocity and becomes untranslatable for the universe of receivers, or cybertime, that cannot go faster than what is allowed by the physical material from which our brain is made, the slowness of our body, the need for caresses and affection. Thus opens a pathological gap and mental illness spreads as testified by the statistics and above all our everyday experience. And just as pathology spreads, so too do drugs. The flourishing industry of psychopharmaceuticals beats records every year, the number of packets of Ritalin, Prozac, Zoloft and other psychotropics sold in the pharmacies continually increases, while dissociation, suffering, desperation, terror, the desire not to exist, to not have to fight continuously, to disappear grows alongside the will to kill and to kill oneself. When, towards the end of the 1970s, an acceleration of the productive and communicative rhythms in occidental metropolitan centers was imposed, a gigantic epidemic of drug addiction made its appearance. The world was leaving its human epoch to enter the era of machinic posthuman acceleration: many sensitive organisms of the human variety began to snort cocaine, a substance that permits the acceleration of the existential rhythm leading to transforming oneself into a machine. Many other sensitive organisms of the human kind injected heroin in their veins, a substance that deactivates the relation with the speed of the surrounding atmosphere. The epidemic of powders during the 1970s and the 1980s produced an existential and cultural devastation with which we still haven’t come to terms with. Then illegal drugs were replaced by those legal substances which the pharmaceutical industry in a white coat made available for its victims and this was the epoch of anti-depressants, of euphorics and of mood regulators. Today psychopathy reveals itself ever more clearly as a social epidemic and, more precisely, a socio-communicational one. If you want to survive you have to be competitive and if you want to be competitive you must be connected, receive and process continuously an immense and growing mass of data. This provokes a constant attentive stress, a reduction of the time available for affectivity. These two tendencies, inseparably linked, provoke an effect of devastation on the individual psyche: depression, panic, anxiety, the sense of solitude and existential misery. But these individual symptoms cannot be indefinitely isolated, as psychopathology has done up until now and as economic power wishes to do.

#### The topic’s call for unionization and strikes might have worked a century ago, but post digital infosphere, the solvency is impossible.

**Berardi 11** [Franco Berardi, Italian communist theorist and activist in the autonomist tradition, whose work mainly focuses on the role of the media and information technology within post-industrial capitalism “Chapter 4 Exhastion and Subjectivity.” After the Future, by Franco Bifo Berardi et al., AK Press, 2011. P. 107-108 // LEX JB]

The financial cycle is bleeding the social environment dry: sucking energies, resources, and the future. And giving nothing back. Recovery of the financial process of valorization of capital is totally separated from the cycle of material production and social demand. Financial capitalism has obtained autonomy from social life. Let’s consider the political side of the same problem: once upon a time when society was suffering the blows of recession, workers reacted with strikes, struggle and political organization, and forced state intervention in order to increase demand. Industrial growth needed mass consumption and social stability. What is impressive in the ongoing crisis, on the contrary, is the widespread passivity of the workers, their inability to unionize. The political trend in Europe is the meltdown of leftist parties and the labor movement. In the US, Obama is daily attacked by racist and populist mobs, but no progressive social movement is emerging. 1.2 million people have had their mortgages foreclosed upon and lost their houses following the sub-prime swindle, but no organized reaction has surfaced. People suffer and cry alone. In the old time of industrial capitalism, the working class could fight against a target that was precisely identified: the boss, the entrepreneur who was the owner of material things like the factory, and of the product of his laborers. Nowadays the boss has vanished. He is fragmented into billions of financial segments, and disseminated into millions of financial agents scattered all around the world. The workers themselves are part of recombinant financial capital. They are expecting future revenues from their pension fund investments. They own stock options in the enterprise exploiting their labor. They are hooked up, like a fly in a spider web, and if they move, they get strangled, but if they don’t move, the spider will suck their life from them. Society may rot, fall apart, agonize. It is not going to affect the political and economic stability of capitalism. What is called economic recovery is a new round of social devastation. So the recession is over, capitalism is recovering. Nonetheless, unemployment is rising and misery is spreading. This means that financial capitalism is autonomous from society. Capitalism doesn’t need workers: it just needs cellular fractals of labor, underpaid, precarious, de-personalised. Fragments of impersonal nervous energy, recombined by the network. The crisis is going to push forward technological change, and the substitution of human labor with machines. The employment rate is not going to rise in the future, and productivity will increase. A shrinking number of workers will be forced to produce more and more, and to work overtime. The real bubble is the work bubble. We have been working too much; we are still working too much. The human race does not need more goods, it needs a redistribution of existing goods, an intelligent application of technology and a worldwide cut in the lifetime dedicated to labor. Social energies have to be freed from labor dependence, and returned to the field of social affection, education, and therapy. We should take seriously the concept of autonomy. In the present condition autonomy means exodus from the domain of economic law: Out-onomy, abandonment of the field of economic exchange, self-organization of knowledge and of production in a sphere of social life which is no longer dependent on economic culture and expectations – barter, free exchange of time and of competence, food self reliance, occupation of territories in the cities, organization of self-defense.

#### Questions regarding ethics are irrelevant in the world of the infosphere. All information gets coopted by the inescapability of capitalism – it’s search is cruelly optimistic in a world of semiocapitalism because of how information interacts with us.

Berardi 11 [Franco Berardi, Italian communist theorist and activist in the autonomist tradition, whose work mainly focuses on the role of the media and information technology within post-industrial capitalism “0. Bifurications.” Precarious Rhapsody, by Franco Bifo Berardi et al., AK Press, 2011. P. 14-15 // LEX JB]

Because of this, I believe that it is necessary to identify the new forms of social consciousness beginning from generational belonging. And for this reason I will speak of two decisive successive shifts in a mutation that has led to the draining of humanistic categories and of the perspectives on which modern politics was based. These two passages are constituted in the subsumption of the human mind in formation within two successive technological configurations of the media-sphere. The first is that which I call video-electronic, meaning the technologies of televisual communication. It is a case of the passage that Marshall McLuhan speaks of in his fundamental 1964 study, Understanding Media. McLuhan looks at the transition from the alphabetic sphere to the video-electronic one and concludes that when the simultaneous succeeds the sequential, the capacity of mythological elaboration succeeds that of critical elaboration. The critical faculty presupposes a particular structuring of the message: the sequentiality of writing, the slowness of reading, and the possibility of judging in sequence the truth or falsity of statements. It is in these conditions that the critical discrimination that has characterized the cultural forms of modernity becomes possible. But in the sphere of video-electronic communication, critique becomes progressively substituted by a form of mythological thinking in which the capacity to distinguish between the truth and falsity of statements becomes not only irrelevant but impossible. This passage took place in the techno-sphere and media-sphere of the 1960s and 1970s and the generation that was born at the end of the 1970s began to manifest the first signs of impermeability to the values of politics and critique that had been fundamental for the preceding generations of the twentieth century. The more radical mutation was the diffusion of digital technologies and the formation of the global internet during the 1990s. Here, the functional modality of the human mind changes completely, not only because the conditions of communication become infinitely more complex, saturated and accelerated, but rather because the infantile mind begins to form itself in a media environment completely different from that of modern humanity.

#### Thus, the alternative is to symbolically take the system hostage through it’s own method of exhaustion. We do this through radical passivity and a method of the Wu Wei – only radical passivity can escape the infosphere

**Berardi 11** [Franco Berardi, Italian communist theorist and activist in the autonomist tradition, whose work mainly focuses on the role of the media and information technology within post-industrial capitalism “Chapter 4 Exhastion and Subjectivity.” After the Future, by Franco Bifo Berardi et al., AK Press, 2011. P. 107-108 // LEX JB]

* TW – mentions of suicide, not read, but it’s in the card if you chose to read it after the round

The process of collective subjectivation (i.e. social recomposition) implies the development of a common language-affection which is essentially happening in the temporal dimension. The semiocapitalist acceleration of time has destroyed the social possibility of sensitive elaboration of the semio-flow. The proliferation of simulacra in the info-sphere has saturated the space of attention and imagination. Advertising and stimulated hyper-expression (“just do it”), have submitted the energies of the social psyche to permanent mobilization. Exhaustion follows, and exhaustion is the only way of escape: Nothing, not even the system, can avoid the symbolic obligation, and it is in this trap that the only chance of a catastrophe for capital remains. The system turns on itself, as a scorpion does when encircled by the challenge of death. For it is summoned to answer, if it is not to lose face, to what can only be death. The system must itself commit suicide in response to the multiplied challenge of death and suicide. So hostages are taken. On the symbolic or sacrificial plane, from which every moral consideration of the innocence of the victims is ruled out the hostage is the substitute, the alter-ego of the terrorist, the hostage’s death for the terrorist. Hostage and terrorist may thereafter become confused in the same sacrificial act. (Baudrillard 1993a: 37) In these impressive pages Baudrillard outlines the end of the modern dialectics of revolution against power, of the labor movement against capitalist domination, and predicts the advent of a new form of action which will be marked by the sacrificial gift of death (and self-annihilation). After the destruction of the World Trade Center in the most important terrorist act ever, Baudrillard wrote a short text titled The Spirit of Terrorism where he goes back to his own predictions and recognizes the emergence of a catastrophic age. When the code becomes the enemy the only strategy can be catastrophic: all the counterphobic ravings about exorcizing evil: it is because it is there, everywhere, like an obscure object of desire. Without this deep-seated complicity, the event would not have had the resonance it has, and in their symbolic strategy the terrorists doubtless know that they can count on this unavowable complicity. (Baudrillard 2003: 6) This goes much further than hatred for the dominant global power by the disinherited and the exploited, those who fell on the wrong side of global order. This malignant desire is in the very heart of those who share this order’s benefits. An allergy to all definitive order, to all definitive power is happily universal, and the two towers of the World Trade Center embodied perfectly, in their very double-ness (literally twin-ness), this definitive order: No need, then, for a death drive or a destructive instinct, or even for perverse, unintended effects. Very logically – inexorably – the increase in the power heightens the will to destroy it. And it was party to its own destruction. When the two towers collapsed, you had the impression that they were responding to the suicide of the suicide-planes with their own suicides. It has been said that “Even God cannot declare war on Himself.” Well, He can. The West, in position of God (divine omnipotence and absolute moral legitimacy), has become suicidal, and declared war on itself. (Baudrillard 2003: 6-7) In Baudrillard’s catastrophic vision I see a new way of thinking subjectivity: a reversal of the energetic subjectivation that animates the revolutionary theories of the 20th century, and the opening of an implosive theory of subversion, based on depression and exhaustion. In the activist view exhaustion is seen as the inability of the social body to escape the vicious destiny that capitalism has prepared: deactivation of the social energies that once upon a time animated democracy and political struggle. But exhaustion could also become the beginning of a slow movement towards a “wu wei” civilization, based on the withdrawal, and frugal expectations of life and consumption. Radicalism could abandon the mode of activism, and adopt the mode of passivity. A radical passivity would definitely threaten the ethos of relentless productivity that neoliberal politics has imposed. The mother of all the bubbles, the work bubble, would finally deflate. We have been working too much during the last three or four centuries, and outrageously too much during the last thirty years. The current depression could be the beginning of a massive abandonment of competition, consumerist drive, and of dependence on work. Actually, if we think of the geopolitical struggle of the first decade – the struggle between Western domination and jihadist Islam – we recognize that the most powerful weapon has been suicide. 9/11 is the most impressive act of this suicidal war, but thousands of people have killed themselves in order to destroy American military hegemony. And they won, forcing the western world into the bunker of paranoid security, and defeating the hyper-technological armies of the West both in Iraq, and in Afghanistan. The suicidal implosion has not been confined to the Islamists. Suicide has became a form of political action everywhere. Against neoliberal politics, Indian farmers have killed themselves. Against exploitation hundreds of workers and employees have killed themselves in the French factories of Peugeot, and in the offices of France Telecom. In Italy, when the 2009 recession destroyed one million jobs, many workers, haunted by the fear of unemployment, climbed on the roofs of the factories, threatening to kill themselves. Is it possible to divert this implosive trend from the direction of death, murder, and suicide, towards a new kind of autonomy, social creativity and of life? I think that it is possible only if we start from exhaustion, if we emphasize the creative side of withdrawal. The exchange between life and money could be deserted, and exhaustion could give way to a huge wave of withdrawal from the sphere of economic exchange. A new refrain could emerge in that moment, and wipe out the law of economic growth. The self-organization of the general intellect could abandon the law of accumulation and growth, and start a new concatenation, where collective intelligence is only subjected to the common good. The global recession started officially in September 2008 and lasted officially until the summer of 2009. Since the summer of 2009 the official truth in the media, in political statements, in economic talk was: recovery. The stock exchange began to rise again and the banks started again paying huge bonuses to their managers and so on. Meanwhile, unemployment was exploding everywhere, salaries were falling, welfare was curtailed, 90 million more are expected to join the army of poverty in the next year. Is this recovery? Our conditional reflex (influenced by the Keynesian knowledge that recovery is the recovery of the “real economy”) answered: no, this is not recovery, capitalism cannot recover only by financial means. But we should reframe our vision. Finance is no longer a mere tool of capitalist growth. The financialization of capitalism has made finance the very ground of accumulation, as Christian Marazzi (2010) has explained in recent works such as The Violence of Financial Capitalism. In the sphere of semiocapitalism, financial signs are not only signifiers pointing to some referents. The distinction between sign and referent is over. The sign is the thing, the product, the process. The “real” economy and financial expectations are no longer distinct spheres. In the past, when riches were created in the sphere of industrial production, when finance was only a tool for the mobilization of capital to invest in the field of material production, recovery could not be limited to the financial sphere. It took also employment and demand. Industrial capitalism could not grow if society did not grow. Nowadays we must accept the idea that financial capitalism can recover and thrive without social recovery. Social life has become residual, redundant, irrelevant.

## Case

### 1NC – OV

#### Semio capitalism has foreclosed the possibility of voting having an impact – voters choose between names that will impose pre-packaged and inevitable decisions onto them.

Berardi 15 (Franco Bifo Berardi, 2015, Berardi was a member of the Italian Communist Youth Federation and expelled for factionalism, was/is involved In the political movement of Autonomia, has contributed to Semiotexte, Chimerees, Metropli, and Felix, currently collaborating on the magazine Derive Approdi, and teaches social history of communication at Accademia de belle Arti in Milan. “Heroes – Mass Murder and Suicide”)//Lex AKu

The parties of the left which, in the course of the twentieth century, have betrayed and dispersed the ideals and expectations of the working class in order to avoid disappearing altogether, are today desperately seeking to pick up the same thread with the new generations. But the heirs of Leninism and social democracy are no longer capable of interpreting the signs that come from the new social reality, and oscillate between a ‘reformist’ position of subordination to liberal hyper-capitalism and a ‘resistant’ position that re-proposes old ideologies in a defensive and residual form. Participation in political life has appeared to progressively diminish 9 // Bifurcations and there does not seem to be any remedy for this disaffection. The populations of Western countries do not renounce the exercise of the electoral right to vote. But voting is an ever decreasing sign of true political participation, because everyone realizes that rather than being able to decide between real alternatives, they are only able to pick the faces and names of those who will impose pre-packaged and inevitable decisions upon them. Since the time in 1981 when François Mitterand, six months after being elected President of the French Republic, abandoned the socialist program which had been presented to voters, recognizing in an explicit way the impossibility of governing without following the rules imposed by large economic forces, it has been evident that right and left are two words deprived of substantial signification. If political discourse has any sense, it indicates the ability of associated human beings to choose between alternatives. Inasmuch as these alternatives no longer exist because automatisms prevail, at this point politics no longer exists and political participation becomes a ritual without significance in which citizens participate only through conformism

### 1NC – Econ Turn

#### Increased strikes sabotage the economy – they cause major disruptions and lower income for workers.

Grabianowski 6 [Ed; Author and freelance writer. He’s worked as a contributing writer for io9, HowStuffWorks, and Sweethome. His fiction has appeared in Black Static, Fear Project, and other publications and anthologies, including Fear After Fear; “How Strikes Work,” HSW; 3/24/06; https://money.howstuffworks.com/strike.htm]//SJWen

Labor strikes can cause major disruptions to industry, commerce and the lives of many people who aren't even connected to the strike itself. The Professional Air Traffic Controllers Association strike in 1981 resulted in the firing of thousands of air traffic controllers, and the New York City transit strike in late 2005 affected millions of people. The history of strikes and labor unions is a key chapter in the story of the Industrial Revolution.

While the reasons behind strikes can be complex, they all boil down to two key elements: money and power. In this article, we'll find out how labor strikes have affected the balance of power between corporations and workers, what laws regulate strikes and learn about some important strikes in history.

It's difficult to say when the first real labor strike occurred. The word "strike" was first used in the 1700s, and probably comes from to notion of dealing a blow to the employer [ref]. In 1786, a group of printers in Philadelphia requested a raise and the company rejected it. They stopped working in protest and eventually received their raise. Other professionals followed suit in the next few decades. Everyone in a city who practiced the same profession agreed to set prices and wages at the same rate. Members would shun anyone who diverged from the agreement, refusing to work in the same shop and forcing employers to fire them. By the 1800s, formal trade societies and guilds began to emerge.

To have a strike today, you must have a union (though not necessarily an official union) -- an organization of workers that bargain collectively with an employer. Workers form unions because an individual worker is powerless compared to an employer, who can set low wages and long working hours as long as it adheres to labor laws. When workers combine to form a union, they collectively have enough power to negotiate with the employer. The main weapon the union has against the employer is the threat of a strike action.

At its most basic level, a strike occurs when all the workers in the union stop coming to work. With no workers, the business shuts down. The employer stops making money, though it is still spending money on taxes, rent, electricity and maintenance. The longer the strike lasts, the more money the employer loses. Of course, the workers aren't getting paid either, so they're losing money as well. Some unions build up "war chests" -- funds to pay striking workers. But it isn't usually very much, and it's often not enough for a prolonged strike.

Strikes help explain why unions are more powerful than individuals. Imagine if an employer refuses to give a raise to an individual worker. She then decides to stop coming to work in protest. The employer simply fires her for not coming to work. That one worker has no power to influence the employer. However, it can be very costly for an employer to fire every single worker when a union goes on strike (though it has happened).

#### Prolonged economic crisis causes global war.

Liu '18 [Qian; 11/13/18; Managing Director of Greater China for The Economist Group, previously director of the global economics unit and director of Access China for the Economist Intelligence Unit, PhD in economics from Uppsala University; "The next economic crisis could cause a global conflict. Here's why," <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2018/11/the-next-economic-crisis-could-cause-a-global-conflict-heres-why/>] // Re-Cut SJWen

The next economic crisis is closer than you think. But what you should really worry about is what comes after: in the current social, political, and technological landscape, a prolonged economic crisis, combined with rising income inequality, could well escalate into a major global military conflict. The 2008-09 global financial crisis almost bankrupted governments and caused systemic collapse. Policymakers managed to pull the global economy back from the brink, using massive monetary stimulus, including quantitative easing and near-zero (or even negative) interest rates. But monetary stimulus is like an adrenaline shot to jump-start an arrested heart; it can revive the patient, but it does nothing to cure the disease. Treating a sick economy requires structural reforms, which can cover everything from financial and labor markets to tax systems, fertility patterns, and education policies. Policymakers have utterly failed to pursue such reforms, despite promising to do so. Instead, they have remained preoccupied with politics. From Italy to Germany, forming and sustaining governments now seems to take more time than actual governing. And Greece, for example, has relied on money from international creditors to keep its head (barely) above water, rather than genuinely reforming its pension system or improving its business environment. The lack of structural reform has meant that the unprecedented excess liquidity that central banks injected into their economies was not allocated to its most efficient uses. Instead, it raised global asset prices to levels even higher than those prevailing before 2008. In the United States, housing prices are now 8% higher than they were at the peak of the property bubble in 2006, according to the property website Zillow. The price-to-earnings (CAPE) ratio, which measures whether stock-market prices are within a reasonable range, is now higher than it was both in 2008 and at the start of the Great Depression in 1929. As monetary tightening reveals the vulnerabilities in the real economy, the collapse of asset-price bubbles will trigger another economic crisis – one that could be even more severe than the last, because we have built up a tolerance to our strongest macroeconomic medications. A decade of regular adrenaline shots, in the form of ultra-low interest rates and unconventional monetary policies, has severely depleted their power to stabilize and stimulate the economy. If history is any guide, the consequences of this mistake could extend far beyond the economy. According to Harvard’s Benjamin Friedman, prolonged periods of economic distress have been characterized also by public antipathy toward minority groups or foreign countries – attitudes that can help to fuel unrest, terrorism, or even war. For example, during the Great Depression, US President Herbert Hoover signed the 1930 Smoot-Hawley Tariff Act, intended to protect American workers and farmers from foreign competition. In the subsequent five years, global trade shrank by two-thirds. Within a decade, World War II had begun. To be sure, WWII, like World War I, was caused by a multitude of factors; there is no standard path to war. But there is reason to believe that high levels of inequality can play a significant role in stoking conflict. According to research by the economist Thomas Piketty, a spike in income inequality is often followed by a great crisis. Income inequality then declines for a while, before rising again, until a new peak – and a new disaster. Though causality has yet to be proven, given the limited number of data points, this correlation should not be taken lightly, especially with wealth and income inequality at historically high levels. This is all the more worrying in view of the numerous other factors stoking social unrest and diplomatic tension, including technological disruption, a record-breaking migration crisis, anxiety over globalization, political polarization, and rising nationalism. All are symptoms of failed policies that could turn out to be trigger points for a future crisis. Voters have good reason to be frustrated, but the emotionally appealing populists to whom they are increasingly giving their support are offering ill-advised solutions that will only make matters worse. For example, despite the world’s unprecedented interconnectedness, multilateralism is increasingly being eschewed, as countries – most notably, Donald Trump’s US – pursue unilateral, isolationist policies. Meanwhile, proxy wars are raging in Syria and Yemen. Against this background, we must take seriously the possibility that the next economic crisis could lead to a large-scale military confrontation. By the logic of the political scientist Samuel Huntington , considering such a scenario could help us avoid it, because it would force us to take action. In this case, the key will be for policymakers to pursue the structural reforms that they have long promised, while replacing finger-pointing and antagonism with a sensible and respectful global dialogue. The alternative may well be global conflagration.

#### That negates –

#### [1] Destorys the subjet

### 1NC – Non-Unique

#### Workers don’t care about legality – strikes are on the rise absent the aff.

Notes 19 [Labor Notes; Media and organizing project that has been the voice of union activists who want to put the movement back in the labor movement since 1979; “Why Strikes Matter,” LN; 10/17/19; <https://labornotes.org/2019/10/why-strikes-matter>]//SJWen

“Why do you rob banks?” a reporter once asked Willie Sutton. “Because that’s where the money is,” the infamous thief replied. Why go on strike? Because that’s where our power is. Teachers in West Virginia showed it in 2018 when they walked out, in a strike that bubbled up from below, surprising even their statewide union leaders. No one seemed concerned that public sector strikes were unlawful in West Virginia. “What are they going to do, fire us all?” said Jay O’Neal, treasurer for the Kanawha County local. “Who would they get to replace us?” Already the state had 700 teaching vacancies, thanks to the rock-bottom pay the strikers were protesting. After 13 days out, the teachers declared victory and returned to their classrooms with a 5 percent raise. They had also backed off corporate education “reformers” on a host of other issues. The biggest lesson: “Our labor is ours first,” West Virginia teacher Nicole McCormick told the crowd at the Labor Notes Conference that spring. “It is up to us to give our labor, or to withhold it.” That’s the fundamental truth on which the labor movement was built. Strikes by unorganized workers led to the founding of unions. Strikes won the first union contracts. Strikes over the years won bigger paychecks, vacations, seniority rights, and the right to tell the foreman “that’s not my job.” Without strikes we would have no labor movement, no unions, no contracts, and a far worse working and living situation. In short, strikes are the strongest tool in workers’ toolbox—our power not just to ask, but to force our employers to concede something. DISCOVER YOUR POWER The key word is “force.” A strike is not just a symbolic protest. It works because we withhold something that the employer needs—its production, its good public image, its profits, and above all its control over us. As one union slogan has it, “this university works because we do”—or this company, or this city. A strike reveals something that employers would prefer we not notice: they need us. Workplaces are typically run as dictatorships. The discovery that your boss does not have absolute power over you—and that in fact, you and your co-workers can exert power over him—is a revelation. There’s no feeling like it. Going on strike changes you, personally and as a union. “Walking into work the first day back chanting ‘one day longer, one day stronger’ was the best morning I’ve ever had at Verizon,” said Pam Galpern, a field tech and mobilizer with Communication Workers Local 1101, after workers beat the corporate giant in a 45-day strike in 2016. “There was such a tremendous feeling of accomplishment. People were smiling and happy. It was like a complete 180-degree difference from before the strike,” when supervisors had been micromanaging and writing workers up for the smallest infractions. In a good strike, everyone has a meaningful role. Strikers develop new skills and a deeper sense that they own and run their union. New leaders emerge from the ranks and go on to become stewards. New friendships are formed; workers who didn’t know or trust one another before forge bonds of solidarity. A few stubborn co-workers finally see why the union matters and sign on as members. Allies from faith groups, neighborhood groups, or other unions adopt your cause. You and your co-workers lose some fear of the boss—and the boss gains some fear of you. In all these ways and more—not to mention the contract gains you may win—a strike can be a tremendous union-building activity.

#### Every empiric flows neg.

Greenhouse 18 [Steven; Editor at NYT, author of a book about history of labor unions; "Making Teachers’ Strikes Illegal Won’t Stop Them,” The New York Times; 5/9/18; <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/09/opinion/teacher-strikes-illegal-arizona-carolina.html>]//SJWen

In the five states where teachers have gone on strike this year, teachers complain about many of the same things: low salaries, an education funding squeeze and teacher shortages. They have something else in common. In four of the five — Arizona, Kentucky, Oklahoma and West Virginia — these strikes are illegal under state law. (Colorado, the fifth state where teachers walked out, allows them.)

While private-sector workers generally have a right to strike under federal law, state law governs whether teachers and other state and local government workers can strike. Three dozen states have laws prohibiting teachers from striking. Clearly, making teacher strikes illegal will not necessarily prevent them.

In the states where teachers walked out, many teachers felt they had to beg their state legislatures to approve raises and the funding to pay for them. But their pleas were largely ignored. Joseph McCartin, a labor historian at Georgetown University, says that when workers feel they are at a dead end in negotiating raises, militant outbursts — such as illegal walkouts — are inevitable. “When collective bargaining isn’t allowed or doesn’t work, that doesn’t mean collective action isn’t possible,” he said.

Labor’s most potent weapon is the strike, even when it’s illegal. Workers will often risk engaging in an illegal strike, even though it could mean getting fined, fired and conceivably jailed. In a legal strike, workers typically lose just a few days’ or weeks’ pay.

Explosions of worker militancy have been a recurring pattern throughout American history. West Virginia teachers, for example, said their walkout was inspired by their state’s coal miners, who were part of a historic miners’ strike during World War II.

Ten days after Pearl Harbor was attacked in 1941, President Franklin D. Roosevelt summoned labor and business leaders to a conference where unions pledged not to strike during the war. The National War Labor Board, which included labor representatives, dictated a nationwide formula that capped how large a raise unions could obtain in bargaining. But the raises often failed to keep up with inflation, angering millions of workers.

As a result, there were dozens of short wildcat strikes — strikes without union authorization — in defiance of Roosevelt and union leaders. The biggest confrontation came in 1943, when the United Mine Workers’ brilliant but bullheaded president, John L. Lewis, gave 500,000 coal miners a wink and a nod, tacit approval for a walkout.

Roosevelt implored the miners to return to work. “Every idle miner directly and individually is obstructing the war effort,” he said in a fireside chat. He had the federal government seize the mines and ordered miners back to work, but eager to restore labor peace, he figured out a way to meet most of their pay demands.

In 1962, President John F. Kennedy issued an executive order giving most federal employees the right to bargain collectively over some working conditions, but not wages, and he barred them from striking. For years, postal workers seethed about low pay, and their frustration boiled over after members of Congress received a 41 percent raise in 1969.

On March 18, 1970, letter carriers walked out in New York City, and within days, more than 150,000 of the nation’s 600,000 postal workers had joined the illegal strike. One letter carrier boasted that the strikers were “standing 10 feet tall, instead of groveling in the dust.”

During the 1970 postal workers’ strike, military personnel sorted mail at New York City’s main post office.

President Richard M. Nixon denounced the strike, but he didn’t seek to fire or jail the strikers. He mobilized 24,000 military personnel to deliver the mail — not very successfully — and reached a deal that ended the strike after eight days. The postal workers won an initial 6 percent raise, and when Nixon signed the Postal Reorganization Act that summer, they received an additional 8 percent.

H. R. Haldeman, Nixon’s chief of staff, acknowledged a big obstacle to punishing these unlawful strikers. “The mailman is a family friend, so you can’t hurt him,” Haldeman said.

State officials unhappy about the recent strikes have realized the same thing: They can’t really punish or replace the teachers. They’re too popular, there are too many to replace, and if state officials try to jail a few ringleaders, that might spur new strikes.

Not every illegal walkout ends well for workers. When air traffic controllers went on strike in 1981, President Ronald Reagan fired 11,345 controllers and rallied the public against their union, the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization, emphasizing that every controller had taken a no-strike pledge upon being hired. Reagan also lambasted the union for rejecting the 11 percent raise his administration was offering, about twice what other federal employees had received at the time.

With the end of the Arizona teachers’ walkout last Thursday, there are rumblings about which state might be next. In North Carolina, educators are angry that teacher salaries and per-pupil spending have not kept up with inflation. Even though teacher strikes are illegal in North Carolina, teachers there say they will walk out next Wednesday, the day that the state legislature opens. Lawmakers should take them seriously. Teachers have so far managed to win gains and skirt the law without any penalty because public opinion — and a lot of history — seems to be on their side.

### 1NC – Turns

#### The process of strike uses patients or beneficiaries of work as a means to an end

**Howard 20** [Danielle Howard,, Mar 2020, "What Should Physicians Consider Prior to Unionizing?," Journal of Ethics | American Medical Association, [https://journalofethics.ama-assn.org/article/what-should-physicians-consider-prior-unionizing/2020-03 //](https://journalofethics.ama-assn.org/article/what-should-physicians-consider-prior-unionizing/2020-03%20//) LEX JB]

* Written in the context of doctors, warrant can be used for all jobs

**The** possible **disadvantage to** patients highlights the crux **of** the moral issue of physician **strikes. In** Immanuel **Kant’s** *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*, one formulation of **the categorical imperative is to “Act in such a way as to treat humanity, whether in your own person or in that of anyone else, always as an end and never merely as a means**.”24 **When patient care is leveraged** by physicians during strikes, **patients serve as a means to the union’s ends**. Unless physicians act to improve *everyone’s*care, union action—if **it jeopardizes** the **care of some hospitalized patients**, for example—cannot be ethical. It is for this reason that, in the case of **physicians looking to form a new union**, the argument can be made that unionization should be used only as a last resort. Physician union **members must be prepared to utilize collective action and accept its risks to patient care, but every effort should be made to avoid actions that risk harm to patients.**