#### The role of the ballot is to determine who did the best debating. Evaluate the plan relative to opportunity costs – anything else is self-serving and arbitrary. Anything else erases the AC which means we can’t catch up which crushes competitive equity. Prior questions are regressive, unpredictable, and make generating offense impossible.

### Postwork K

#### The aff’s refusal to work is not a refusal of work – their endorsement of striking reinforces the belief that withholding labor puts people in a position of power. This reduces humans to labor capital, which causes work-dependency and inhibits alternatives.

Hoffmann, 20 (Maja, "Resolving the ‘jobs-environment-dilemma’? The case for critiques of work in sustainability research. Taylor & Francis, 4-1-2020, https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/23251042.2020.1790718)//usc-br/

The societal dependence on work

If work is associated with environmental pressures in at least four different ways, why do we have to maintain it at constant or increased levels? We hold that in industrial society four distinct levels of structural and cultural dependency on work may be discerned. These are to be understood as broad analytical categories which in reality comprise and cross individual and structural levels in various ways, and are all interdependent.

Personal dependence. A first aspect is individual or personal dependence on work: Work as regular, gainful employment constitutes one of the central social relations in modern ‘work society’ and is a central point of reference in people’s lives. As a principal source of income, waged work fulfils the existential function of providing livelihoods and social security. It is constructed to secure basic social rights, social integration, recognition, status, and personal identity (Frayne 2015b; Weeks 2011). This is probably why ‘social’ is so often equated with ‘work’.

State dependence. Secondly, dependence on work pertains to the modern welfare state: the revenues and economic growth generated through work contribute substantially to the financing of social security systems. Affording welfare is therefore a main argument for creating jobs. Wage labour is thus a dominating tool for redistribution; through wages, taxes on wages and on the consumption that production generates, almost all distribution takes place. Hence, what the job is, and what is being produced, is of secondary importance (Paulsen 2017). Work is moreover a convenient instrument of control that structures and disciplines society, and ‘renders populations at once productive and governable’ (Weeks 2011, 54; Gorz 1982; Lafargue 2014 [1883]). Specifically, the dominant neoliberal ideology, its condemnation of laziness and idealisation of ‘hardworking people’ has intensified the ‘moral fortification of work’. Accordingly, the neoliberal ‘workfare’ reforms have focused on job creation and the relentless activation for the labour market, effectively ‘enforcing work (…) as a key function of the state’ (Frayne 2015b, 16).

Economic dependence. Thirdly, besides the economic imperative for individuals to ‘earn a living’ and pay off debt, modern economies are dependent on work in terms of an industrious labour force, long working hours for increasing economic output under the imperatives of capital accumulation, growth and competition, and rising incomes for increasing purchasing power and demand. Creating or preserving jobs constitutes the standard argument for economic growth. In turn, work as one basic factor of production creates growth. However, the relation between growth and employment is conditioned, amongst other factors, primarily by constantly pursued labour productivity: for employment to rise or stay stable, the economy must grow at a sufficiently high rate to exceed productivity gains, in order to offset job losses and avoid ‘jobless growth’. Moreover, faltering expansion triggers a spiral of recession which not only affects economic stability but results in societal crises as a whole (Jackson 2009; Paech 2012). However, besides being unsustainable and insatiable, growth is also increasingly unlikely to continue at the rates required for economic stability (Kallis et al. 2018; IMF 2015). The individual and structural economic dependence on work and economic growth therefore implies profound vulnerability as livelihoods and political stability are fatefully exposed to global competition and the capitalist imperative of capital accumulation, and constrained by ‘systemically relevant’ job and growth creating companies, industries and global (financial) markets (Gronemeyer 2012; Paech 2012).

Cultural dependence. A fourth aspect concerns cultural dependence: The ‘work ethic’ is the specific morality described by Max Weber (1992[1905]) as constitutive of modern industrial culture, 2 and determining for all its subjects as shared ‘common senses’ about how work is valued and understood. It means an ingrained moral compulsion to gainful work and timesaving, manifested in the common ideals of productivity, achievement and entrepreneurship, in the feeling of guilt when time is ‘wasted’, in personal identification with one’s ‘calling’, in observations of busyness, even burnout as a ‘badge of honour’ (Paulsen 2014), and in descriptions of a culture that has lost the ‘capacity to relax in the old, uninhibited ways’ (Thompson 1967, 91). Even for those who do not share such attitudes towards work, in a work-centred culture it is normal to (seek) work. It is so commonsensical that it seems impractical to question it, and it continues to be normalised through socialisation and schooling. Consequently, people become limited in their imagination of alternatives, the prospect of losing one’s job usually causes heartfelt fear (Standing 2011). For a work society that ‘does no longer know of those other higher and more meaningful activities for the sake of which this freedom would deserve to be won’, there can be nothing worse than the cessation of work (Hannah Arendt, cited in Gorz 1989, 7–8).

The wage relation based on the commodity labour is, in other words, an essential functional feature of the industrial-capitalist system, and the exaltation of work remains its social ethic. For modern industrial society work is ‘both its chief means and its ultimate goal’ (Gorz 1989, 13; Weber 1992 [1905]; Weeks 2011); it is centred and structurally dependent on work, despite work’s environmentally adverse implications. This constellation constitutes the dilemma between work and the environment, and it is why we argue that work is absolutely central to present-day unsustainability and should accordingly be dealt with in sustainability research.

#### Work necessitates material throughput and waste that destroys the environment, even when the jobs are ‘green’

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An ecological critique of work

What is the problem with modern-day work from an environmental perspective? A number of quantitative studies have researched the correlation of working hours and environmental impacts in terms of ecological footprint, carbon footprint, greenhouse gas emissions, and energy consumption, both on micro/household and on macro/cross-national levels, and for both ‘developed’ and ‘developing’ countries (Fitzgerald, Jorgenson, and Clark 2015; Hayden and Shandra 2009; Knight, Rosa, and Schor 2013; Nässén and Larsson 2015; Rosnick and Weisbrot 2007). Based on these findings, and going beyond them, we develop a qualitative classification of ecological impacts of work broadly (not working hours only), distinguishing four analytically distinct factors (Hoffmann 2017).

Fundamentally, all productive activity is based on material and energy throughputs within wider ecological conditions, which necessarily involves interference with the ecosphere. The appropriation and exploitation of non-human animals, land, soil, water, biomass, raw materials, the atmosphere and all other elements of the biosphere always to some extent causes pollution, degradation, and destruction. Thus, work is inherently both productive and destructive. However, this biophysical basis alone need not make work unsustainable, and it has not always been so (Krausmann 2017).

Contributing to its unsustainability is, firstly, the Scale factor: the greater the amount of work, the more ‘inputs’ are required and the more ‘outputs’ generated, which means more throughput of resources and energy, and resulting ecological impacts. In other words, the more work, the larger the size of the economy, the more demands on the biosphere (Hayden and Shandra 2009; Knight, Rosa, and Schor 2013). Obviously, there are qualitative differences between different types of work and their respective environmental impacts. Moreover, besides the evident and direct impacts, indirect impacts matter also. The tertiary/service sector is therefore not exempt from this reasoning (Hayden and Shandra 2009; Knight, Rosa, and Schor 2013), not only due to its own (often ‘embodied’) materiality and energy requirements, but also because it administrates and supports industrial production processes in global supply chains (Fitzgerald, Jorgenson, and Clark 2015; Haberl et al. 2009; Paech 2012).

Additionally, modern work is subject to certain integrally connected and mutually reinforcing conditions inherent in industrial economic structures, which aggravate ecological impacts by further increasing the Scale factor. These include the systematic externalisation of costs, and the use of fossil fuels as crucial energy basis, which combined with modern industrial technology enable continuously rising labour productivity independently of physical, spatial or temporal constraints (Malm 2013). Taken together, this leads to constantly spurred economic growth with a corresponding growth in material and energetic throughputs, and the creation of massive amounts of waste. The latter is not an adverse side-effect of modern work, but part of its purpose under the imperatives of growth, profitability, and constant innovation, as evident in phenomena such as planned obsolescence or the ‘scrapping premium’, serving to stimulate growth and demand, and hence, job creation (Gronemeyer 2012). These conditions and effects tend to be neglected when ‘green jobs’ are promised to resolve the ecological crisis (Paus 2018), disregarding that the systematically and continuously advanced scale of work and production has grown far beyond sustainable limits (Haberl et al. 2009).

#### Unions are intrinsically invested in labor being good – they don’t strike to get rid of work; they strike to get people back to work. Lundström 14:

Lundström, Ragnar; Räthzel, Nora; Uzzell, David {Uzell is Professor (Emeritus) of Environmental Psychology at the University of Surrey with a BA Geography from the University of Liverpool, a PhD Psychology from the University of Surrey, and a MSc in Social Psychology from London School of Economics and Political Science, University of London. Lundstrom is Associate professor at [Department of Sociology](https://www.umu.se/sociologiska-institutionen/) at Umea University. Rathzel is an Affiliated as professor emerita at [Department of Sociology](https://www.umu.se/sociologiska-institutionen/) at Umea University.}, 14 - ("Disconnected spaces: introducing environmental perspectives into the trade union agenda top-down and bottom-up," Taylor & Francis, 12-11-2014, https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/23251042.2015.1041212?scroll=top&amp;needAccess=true)//marlborough-wr/

Even though there was support for environmental perspectives in LO at this time – after all, the National Congress commissioned the programme, an environmental unit was established at headquarters and a majority of the congress accepted the programme – this waned significantly when the economy was threatened. This reflects the influence of the ‘jobs vs. environment’ conflict on processes of integrating environmental perspectives into the union agenda (Räthzel and Uzzell [2011](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/23251042.2015.1041212)). Union policies are embedded in a mode of production marked by what Marx called the ‘metabolic rift’. The concept is one of the pillars upon which Foster develops ‘Marx’s Ecology’ (Foster [2000](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/23251042.2015.1041212), 155 f). It argues that the capitalist industrial system exploits the earth without restoring its constituents to it. More generally, Marx defined the labour process as metabolism (Stoffwechsel) between nature (external to humans) and human nature. When humans work on and with nature to produce the means of their survival, they also develop their knowledge and their capabilities, and transform their own human nature (Marx [1998](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/23251042.2015.1041212)). Polanyi later reduced the concept of the ‘metabolic rift’ to the commodification of land (Polanyi [1944](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/23251042.2015.1041212)), thus paving the way for a perspective that sees the solution in the control of the market, but disregards the relations of production as they are lived by workers in the production process. But to understand why trade unions have difficulties developing and especially holding on to environmental policies it is important to recognise that since nature has become a privately owned ‘means of production’ it has become workers’ Other. Unions have been reduced and have reduced themselves to care only for one part of the inseparable relationship between nature and labour. On the everyday level of policies this means that environmental strategies lose momentum in times of economic crises and when jobs are seen to be threatened. In this respect, unions are no different from political parties and governments. In spite of numerous publications by the ILO and Union organisations, which show that a move to a ‘green economy’ can create new jobs (Poschen [2012](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/23251042.2015.1041212); Rivera Alejo and Martín Murillo [2014](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/23251042.2015.1041212)), unions have been reluctant to exchange ‘a bird in the hand for two in the bush’ – even if the bird in the hand becomes elusive.

#### The alternative is rejecting the affirmative to embrace postwork – it questions the centrality of work and ontological attachments to productivity to enable emancipatory transformation of society to an ecologically sustainable form.

#### Your ballot symbolizes an answer to the question of whether work can be used as the solution to social ills. The plan doesn’t “happen,” and you are conditioned to valorize work – vote neg to interrogate these ideological assumptions.

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What is postwork?

How can a ‘postwork’ approach contribute to resolving these issues? The notions critique of work (Frayne 2015a, 2015b) or postwork (Weeks 2011) have emerged in recent years in social science research and popular culture, building on a long intellectual tradition of (autonomist and neo-)Marxist, anarchist, and feminist theory (Seyferth 2019; Weeks 2011). The critique of work targets work in a fundamental sense, not only its conditions or exploitation. It is aimed at the centrality of work in modern ‘work society’ as a pivotal point for the provision of livelihoods through monetary income, the granting of social security, social inclusion, and personal identity construction, on which grounds unemployed persons and unpaid activities are excluded from recognition, welfare provision and trade union support. Moreover, the crucial role of waged work in the functioning of the welfare state and the modern industrialised economy is part of this critique (Chamberlain 2018; Frayne 2015b; Paulsen 2017). Although commonly taken as naturally given, this kind of societal order and its institutions such as the wage relation, labour markets, unemployment, or abstract time are historically and culturally exceptional modes of human coexistence (Applebaum 1992; Graeber 2018; Gorz 1989; Polanyi 2001 [1944]; Thompson 1967). This critique of the structures and social relations of work society is accompanied by the critique of its cultural foundation, the work ethic; an ideological commitment to work and productivism as ends in themselves, moral obligations, and as intrinsically good, regardless of what is done and at what cost (Gorz 1982; Weber 1992 [1905]; Weeks 2001).

Postwork, however, is not only a critical stance. Criticising work and work society, aware of their historical contingency, implies the potential for an emancipatory transformation of industrial society. The focus is thereby not necessarily on abolishing work tout-court, but rather on pointing out and questioning its relentless centrality and asking what a more desirable, free and sustainable society might look like; a society in which work is no longer the pivotal point of social organisation and ideological orientation, including all questions and debates around this objective (Chamberlain 2018; Frayne 2015a; Weeks 2011).

As a relatively new and dynamically developing approach, postwork is, despite similar political claims, not uniform in its reasoning. Some, drawing on the classical ‘end-of-work’ argument (Frayne 2016), assume an imminent technology-induced massive rise in unemployment. This is welcomed as an opportunity to reduce and ultimately abolish work to liberate humankind (Srnicek and Williams 2015). Others emphasise the remarkable fact that throughout the past two centuries technological development has not challenged the centrality of work in modern lives, despite the prospect that technological change would allow for much shorter working hours (e.g., Keynes 1930). This has not materialised due to the requirements of a work-centred, work-dependent society. On the contrary, work has become more central to modern societies. These deeper structural and cultural aspects and dependencies seem to remain unaffected by technological trends (Paulsen 2017; Weeks 2011).

The ecological case for postwork

The perspective of postwork/critiques of work may enrich sustainability debates in many ways; here, our focus is again on ecological concerns. First, postwork offers a much needed change in focus in sustainability debates, away from narrow critiques of individual consumption and the overemphasis on ‘green jobs’, towards understanding work as one central cause of sustained societal unsustainability. Postwork directs the focus towards crucial overlooked issues, e.g. the ways in which work is ecologically harmful, or which problems arise due to the social and cultural significance of modern-day work, including existential dependencies on it. Postwork seeks to re-politicise work, recognising that its conception and societal organisation are social constructs and therefore political, and must accordingly be open to debate (Weeks 2011). This opens conceptual space and enables open-minded debates about the meaning, value and purpose of work: what kind of work is, for individuals, society and the biosphere as a whole, meaningful, pointless, or outright harmful (Graeber 2018)?

Such debates and enhanced understanding about the means and ends of work, and the range of problems associated with it, would be important in several regards. In ecological regard it facilitates the ecologically necessary, substantial reduction of work, production and consumption (Frey 2019; Haberl et al. 2009). Reducing work/working hours is one of the key premises of postwork, aiming at de-centring and de-normalising work, and releasing time, energy and creativity for purposes other than work (Coote 2013). From an ecological perspective, reducing the amount of work would reduce the dependency on a commodity-intensive mode of living, and allow space for more sustainable practices (Frayne 2016). Reducing work would also help mitigate all other work-induced environmental pressures described above, especially the ‘Scale factor’ (Knight, Rosa, and Schor 2013), i.e. the amount of resources and energy consumed, and waste, including emissions, created through work. A postwork approach facilitates debate on the politics of ecological work reduction which entails difficult questions: for example, which industries and fields of employment are to be phased out? Which fields will need to be favoured and upon what grounds? Which kinds of work in which sectors are socially important and should therefore be organised differently, especially when altering the energy basis of work due to climate change mitigation which implies decentralised, locally specific, intermittent and less concentrated energy sources (Malm 2013)? These questions are decisive for future (un-)sustainability, and yet serious attempts at a solution are presently forestalled by the unquestioned sanctity that work, ‘jobs’ or ‘full employment’ enjoy (Frayne 2015b).

Postwork is also conducive to rethinking the organisation of work. There are plausible arguments in favour of new institutions of democratic control over the economy, i.e. economic democracy (Johanisova and Wolf 2012). This is urgent and necessary to distribute a very tight remaining carbon budget fairly and wisely (IPCC 2018), to keep economic power in check, and to gain public sovereignty over fundamental economic decisions that are pivotal for (un-)sustainable trajectories (Gould, Pellow, and Schnaiberg 2004). An obstacle to this is one institution in particular which is rarely under close scrutiny: the labour market, a social construct linked to the advent of modern work in form of the commodity of labour (Applebaum 1992). It is an undemocratic mechanism, usually characterised by high levels of unfreedom and coercion (Anderson 2017; Graeber 2018; Paulsen 2015) that allocates waged work in a competitive mode as an artificially scarce, ‘fictitious’ commodity (Polanyi 2001 [1944]). 4 It does so according to availability of money and motives of gain on the part of employers, and appears therefore inappropriate for distributing labour according to sustainability criteria and related societal needs. As long as unsustainable and/or unnecessary jobs are profitable and/or (well-)paid, they will continue to exist (Gorz 1989), just as ‘green jobs’ must follow these same criteria in order to be created. An ecological postwork perspective allows to question this on ecological grounds, and it links to debates on different modes of organising socially necessary work, production and provisioning in a de-commodified, democratic and sustainable mode.

Finally, postwork is helpful for ecological reasons because it criticises the cultural glorification of ‘hard work’, merit and productivism, and the moral assumption that laziness and inaction are intrinsically bad, regardless the circumstances. Postwork is about a different mindset which problematises prevailing productivist attitudes and allows the idea that being lazy or unproductive can be something inherently valuable. Idleness is conducive to an ecological agenda as nothing is evidently more carbon-neutral and environment-sparing than being absolutely unproductive. As time-use studies indicate, leisure, recreation and socialising have very low ecological impacts, with rest and sleep having virtually none (Druckman et al. 2012). Apart from humans, the biosphere also needs idle time for regeneration. In this sense, laziness or ‘ecological leisure’, ideally sleep, can be regarded as supremely ecofriendly states of being that would help mitigate ecological pressures. Moreover, as postwork traces which changes in attitudes towards time, efficiency and laziness have brought modern work culture and modern time regimes into being in the first place and have dominated ever since (Thompson 1967; Weber 1992 [1905]), it provides crucial knowledge for understanding and potentially changing this historically peculiar construction. It can thereby take inspiration from longstanding traditions throughout human history, where leisure has usually been a high social ideal and regarded as vital for realising genuine freedom and quality of life (Applebaum 1992; Gorz 1989).

Conclusions: postwork politics and practices

We argued that modern-day work is a central cause for unsustainability, and should therefore be transformed to advance towards sustainability. We have contributed to this field of research, firstly, by developing a systematisation of the ecological harms associated with work – comprising the factors Scale, Time, Income, and Work-induced Mobility, Infrastructure, and Consumption – taking those studies one step further which investigate the ecological impacts of working hours quantitatively. One of the analytical advantages of this approach is that it avoids the mystification of work through indirect measures of economic activity (such as per capita GDP), as in the numerous analyses of the conflict between sustainability and economic growth in general. Our second substantial contribution consists in combining these ecological impacts of work with an analysis of the various structural dependencies on work in modern society, which spells out clearly what the recurring jobs-environment-dilemma actually implies, and why it is so difficult to overcome. While this dilemma is often vaguely referred to, this has been the first more detailed analysis of the different dimensions that essentially constitute it. Reviewing the literature in environmental sociology and sustainability research more generally, we also found the work-environment-dilemma and the role of work itself are not sufficiently addressed and remain major unresolved issues.

We proposed the field would benefit from taking up the long intellectual tradition of problematising modern-day work, through the approach of postwork or critiques of work. While the described problems of unsustainability and entrenched dependencies cannot easily be resolved, we discussed how postwork arguments can contribute to pointing out and understanding them, and to opening up new perspectives to advance sustainability debates. A third contribution is therefore to have introduced the concept of postwork/critiques of work into sustainability research and the work-environment debate, and to have conducted an initial analysis of the ways in which postwork may be helpful for tackling ecological problems. Besides being ecologically beneficial, it may also serve emancipatory purposes to ‘raise broader questions about the place of work in our lives and spark the imagination of a life no longer so subordinate to it’ (Weeks 2011, 33). In order to inspire such ‘postwork imagination’ (Weeks 2011, 35, 110) and show that postwork ideas are not as detached from reality as they may sound, in this last section we briefly outline examples of existing postwork politics and practices.

The most obvious example is the reduction of working hours during the 19th and 20th centuries. These reforms were essential to the early labour movement, and the notion that increasing productivity entails shorter working hours has never been nearly as ‘radical’ as today (Paulsen 2017). As concerns about climate change are rising, there is also renewed awareness about the ecological benefits of worktime reduction, besides a whole range of other social and economic advantages (Coote 2013; Frey 2019).

Worktime reduction is usually taken up positively in public debate. Carlsson (2015, 184) sees a ‘growing minority of people’ who engage in practices other than waged work to support themselves and make meaningful contributions to society. Frayne (2015b) describes the practical refusal of work by average people who wish to live more independently of the treadmill of work. Across society, the disaffection with work is no marginal phenomenon (Graeber 2018; Cederström and Fleming 2012; Paulsen 2014, 2015; Weeks 2011); many start to realise the ‘dissonance between the mythical sanctity of work on the one hand, and the troubling realities of people’s actual experiences on the other’ (Frayne 2015b, 228). Public debates are therefore increasingly receptive to issues such as industries’ responsibility for climate change, coercive ‘workfare’ policies, meaningless ‘bullshit jobs’, or ‘work-life-balance’, shorter hours, overwork and burnout; topics ‘that will not go away’ (Coote 2013, xix) and question the organisation of work society more fundamentally. 5

The debate about an unconditional basic income (UBI) will also remain. UBI would break the existential dependency of livelihoods on paid work and serve as a new kind of social contract to entitle people to social security regardless of paid economic activity. In addition to countless models in theory, examples of UBI schemes exist in practice, either currently implemented or planned as ‘experiments’ (Srnicek and Williams 2015).

The critique and refusal of work also takes place both within the sphere of wage labour and outside it. Within, the notions of absenteeism, tardiness, shirking, theft, or sabotage (Pouget 1913 [1898]; Seyferth 2019) have a long tradition, dating back to early struggles against work and industrialisation (Thompson 1967), and common until today (Paulsen 2014). The idea of such deliberate ‘workplace resistance’ is that the ability to resist meaningless work and the internalised norms of work society, and be idle and useless while at work, can be recognised and successfully practised (Campagna 2013; Scott 2012). Similarly, there is a growing interest in productive practices, social relations, and the commons outside the sphere of wage labour and market relations, for example in community-supported agriculture. This initiates ways of organising work and the economy to satisfy material needs otherwise than by means of commodity consumption (Chamberlain 2018; Helfrich and Bollier 2015).

For such modes of organising productive social relations in more varied ways, inspiration could be drawn from the forms of ‘work’ that are prevalent in the global South in the so-called informal sector and in non-industrial crafts and peasantry, neither of which resemble the cultural phenomenon of modern-day work with its origins in the colonial North (Comaroff and Comaroff 1987; Thompson 1967). This, however, contradicts the global development paradigm, under which industrialisation, ‘economic upgrading’, global (labour) market integration and ‘structural transformation’ are pursued. Modern work, especially industrial factory jobs and ideally in cities, is supposed to help ‘the poor’ to escape their misery (Banerjee and Duflo 2012; UNDP 2015). Many of these other forms of livelihood provisioning and associated ways of life are thus disregarded, denigrated or destroyed as underdeveloped, backward, poor, and lazy (Thompson 1967), and drawn into the formal system of waged work as cheap labour in capitalist markets and global supply chains – ‘improved living conditions’ as measured in formal pecuniary income (Rosling 2018; Comaroff and Comaroff 1987). There are indications that these transformations create structural poverty, highly vulnerable jobs and an imposed dependence on wage labour (while few viable wage labour structures exist) (Hickel 2017; Srnicek and Williams 2015). There is also clear evidence of numerous struggles against capitalist development and for traditional livelihood protection and environmental justice (Anguelovski 2015). These are aspects where a postwork orientation is relevant beyond the industrialised societies of the global North, as it puts a focus on the modern phenomenon ‘work’ itself and the conditions that led to its predominance, as it questions the common narrative that ‘jobs’ are an end in themselves and justify all kinds of problematic development, and as it allows to ask which alternative, postcolonial critiques and conceptualisations of ‘work’ exist and should be preserved.

To conclude, we clearly find traces of postwork organisation and politics in the present. However, these ideas are contested; they concern the roots of modern culture, society and industrial-capitalist economies. Waged work continues to be normalised, alternatives beyond niches appear quite impractical for generalisation. Powerful economic interests, including trade unions, seek to perpetuate the status-quo (Lundström, Räthzel, and Uzzell 2015). Job creation and (global) labour market integration (regardless of what kind) are central policy goals of all political parties, and presently popular progressive debates on a Green New Deal tend to exhibit a rather productivist stance.

There is one particular aspect that appears hopeful: the present socio-economic system is unsustainable in the literal sense that it is physically impossible to be sustained in the long run. It was Weber (1992[1905]) who predicted that the powerful cosmos of the modern economic order will be determining with overwhelming force until the last bit of fossil fuel is burnt – and exactly this needs to happen soon to avert catastrophic climate change. 6 This is the battlefield of sustainability, and lately there has been renewed urgency and momentum for more profound social change, where it might be realised that a different societal trajectory beyond work and productivism for their own sake is more sustainable and desirable for the future.

## Case

#### Conditional RTS is enough. Countries generally restrict the right to strike, even where Unions are effective and powerful.

Wass ’13 - Dr. Bernd Waas, Goethe University Frankfurt, Germany, 2012, Strike as a Fundamental Right of the Workers and its Risks of Conflicting with other Fundamental Rights of the Citizens, https://www.islssl.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/Strike-Waas.pdf

Limitations of the Right to Strike **A** positive **right to strike does not mean that it is** guaranteed **without restriction. The** freedoms and **rights of other persons must be respected.** Apart from that, **inherent limitations may exist as well.** This is the case in Germany, for instance. The right to strike is acknowledged because such a right is required for collective bargaining to take place. Bargaining without the right to strike would be no more than “collective begging”, to put it in the words of the Federal Labour Court. That the right to strike is based on the right to bargain collectively has an important consequence, namely, that the right to strike is guaranteed only insofar as the strike is related to that very purpose***. The need to ensure collective bargaining both justifies and limits the right to strike*.** In other words: **A strike is lawful in Germany if and only if its underlying objective is the reaching of a collective bargaining agreement**. This implies that the regulation demanded must be viable and fall within the competence of the “social partners” (as it affects “working and economic 12 conditions”). Similarly**, in the Czech Republic, a strike may only be called in a dispute over entering into a collective agreement. In Chile, too, the right to strike is strictly related to collective bargaining**. This right can only be exercised if negotiations between the parties fail. Outside the framework of collective bargaining, striking is regarded a violation of labour law, and possibly even a crime. In practice, however, a considerable number of strikes take place outside these boundaries. Though the constitutional background differs entirely from Germany, the law in the United States also requires a strike to be related to collective bargaining. Workers may only strike over so-called “mandatory subjects of bargaining” which are “wages, hours, and other terms and conditions of employment.” Though it is true that parties may lawfully bargain over other issues – so-called “permissive” bargaining subjects – neither is legally obliged to do so. In addition, neither party may insist upon – or strike over – such permissive topics. **A labour union may certainly not demand bargaining over – or strike over – an unlawful topic**. No relation to collective bargaining exists, on the other hand, in Slovenia. It suffices if the strike serves the workers’ economic or social interests. Consequently, the right to strike is neither limited to the conclusion of a collective agreement, nor is it required for the strike to be aimed at inducing the employer to concur to a collective agreement.

1. **Turn: More strikes lead to backlash bills that weaken unions – empirically proven and especially true for teachers. Partelow ‘19**

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In 2018 and 2019, after a decade of disinvestment in education that led to stagnant teacher salaries, policymakers have introduced [proposals in states](https://thehill.com/homenews/state-watch/426030-states-race-to-prevent-teacher-strikes-by-boosting-pay) across the country to begin reinvesting, spurred in part by teacher walkouts and activism nationwide. While it is wonderful to finally see broad support for raising teacher salaries and investing in public schools, a predictable backlash has also emerged. Legislators in some states that were hotbeds of teacher activism are [introducing bills](http://nymag.com/intelligencer/2019/01/teacher-walkouts-gop-lawmakers-push-retaliatory-bills.html) to explicitly prohibit walkouts or punish teachers who participate, often with a sprinkling of additional anti-union provisions. **Weakening unions and refusing to invest in education** are long-standing conservative tenets, and these bills are evidence that we should expect conservative policymakers to return to them as soon as they believe them to be politically viable. The consequences of a decade of education funding cuts came into sharp relief last spring, after teachers staged walkouts in [half a dozen states](https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/16/us/teacher-walkout-north-carolina.html). The [decade of disinvestment](https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/education-k-12/reports/2018/09/20/457750/fixing-chronic-disinvestment-k-12-schools/) in education had its roots in the Great Recession, when many states were forced to drastically cut their K-12 education funding. But as the recovery got underway, many governors — particularly in red states — made intentional policy choices to cut taxes for wealthy residents and corporations rather than allow education funding to rebound to pre-recession levels as revenue increased. As a [result](https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/education-k-12/reports/2018/09/20/457750/fixing-chronic-disinvestment-k-12-schools/%5b), teacher wages stagnated, school budgets were strapped, and expenses such as building repairs and learning materials were deferred year after year. By 2018, reports of [crumbling schools](https://www.motherjones.com/politics/2018/01/its-not-just-freezing-classrooms-in-baltimore-americas-schools-are-physically-falling-apart/), students learning from [decades-old textbooks](https://www.cnn.com/2018/04/03/us/oklahoma-teachers-textbooks-trnd/index.html), high teacher turnover, and staff [shortages](https://tucson.com/news/local/we-continue-to-worsen-nearly-arizona-teaching-jobs-remain-vacant/article_1c8d665a-a422-5c7b-95b9-98afe0cb0c6f.html) in these states became common. Teachers had reached their [boiling point](https://morningconsult.com/opinions/americas-teachers-are-at-their-boiling-point/). The teacher walkouts have been very effective. Though they were a last resort, they finally got lawmakers’ attention in states that had seen the most chronic and severe cuts to education. In the states where teachers walked out, governors who hadn’t historically supported [education funding](https://www.americanprogressaction.org/issues/education/news/2018/10/09/171813/little-late-many-gubernatorial-candidates-education-funding/) agreed to enact significant [pay raises](https://www.latimes.com/nation/la-na-teacher-funding-20180306-story.html) and increases in education funding. For example, in Arizona, Republican Gov. Doug Ducey was forced to sign off on a teacher pay bill he had [previously opposed](https://tucson.com/news/local/gov-ducey-teachers-aren-t-going-to-get-percent-pay/article_75a9b7dc-930b-5374-be12-61fb840e4ced.html) that provided a [20 percent raise](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-education-arizona/arizona-governor-signs-bill-to-boost-teachers-wages-amid-strike-idUSKBN1I40N8) to the state’s teachers — some of the lowest-paid in the nation — and invested an additional $100 million in schools in the state. And now, in several states with low teacher pay that have so far avoided major protests, some governors have proposed salary increases. Remarkably, much of this movement is happening in [deep-red states](https://thehill.com/homenews/state-watch/426030-states-race-to-prevent-teacher-strikes-by-boosting-pay) with historically low education spending. In South Carolina, Gov. Henry McMaster wants to give teachers a 5 percent pay raise; in Texas, Lt. Gov. Dan Patrick has proposed a $5,000 increase; and in Georgia, Gov. Brian Kemp has proposed a $3,000 increase. In all three of these states, teachers are [paid less](http://www.nea.org/assets/docs/180413-Rankings_And_Estimates_Report_2018.pdf) than the national average. It’s likely that last year’s walkouts nudged these governors to consider teacher pay in a way that they wouldn’t have otherwise. Though it goes against traditional conservative principles, supporting these raises is smart politics for these governors. There is widespread public [support for increasing teacher pay](https://www.apnews.com/883e9d387709112a11ee8901c223294e), particularly in the states where walkouts occurred. But even as some conservative policymakers agree to raise teacher salaries, as the 2019 legislative sessions have begun, others in Arizona, Oklahoma, and West Virginia have introduced bills that would [make walkouts illegal](http://nymag.com/intelligencer/2019/01/teacher-walkouts-gop-lawmakers-push-retaliatory-bills.html) and penalize teachers with fines, loss of their teaching licenses, or even [jail time](https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2018/4/23/17270422/colorado-teachers-strike-jail-bill). Some of the bills also contain provisions designed specifically to weaken teachers unions, such as a requirement that teachers must [opt in to dues each year](https://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2019/01/28/us/ap-us-education-bill-west-virginia.html), which sponsors hope will reduce membership by adding an extra step to the process. Legislators in walkout states have also introduced stand-alone proposals designed to **make union membership more difficult** and, therefore, less likely, such as a prohibition on districts [withholding union dues](https://newsok.com/article/5593286/bill-is-revenge-for-teacher-walkout-unions-say) from teachers’ paychecks. These backlash bills hint at a much more familiar conservative education agenda of slashing funding and working to weaken teachers unions. After all, it is this agenda that led to stagnant teacher salaries, deplorable conditions in many school buildings, and consequences for students whose schools were chronically underfunded in the first place. Supporting increases to teacher pay and greater investment in schools is the right thing to do for America’s students. Unfortunately, this wave of backlash makes clear that for some policymakers, it’s all about politics — and as soon as they have the chance, they’ll once again slash education funding and attack hardworking teachers.