# 1AR

#### Strikes are an articulation of worker power over production – they halt the operation of capitalist society and refuse capitalist organization of labor

Tronti 1966

“Workers and Capital.” Tronti, Mario. 1966. <https://libcom.org/book/export/html/42233>

Mario Tronti was the principal theorist of the radical political movement of the 1960s known in Italy as *operaismo* and in the Anglophone world as Italian workerism, a current which went on to inform the development of autonomist Marxism. His “Copernican revolution”—the proposal that working class struggles against exploitation propel capitalist development, which can only be understood as a reaction that seeks to harness this antagonism—has inspired dissident leftists around the world. // Park City NL

Adam Smith says - and Marx comments on the accuracy of his observation -that the effective development of the productive power of labour begins when labour is transformed into wage labour, that is, when the conditions of labour confront it in the form of capital. One could go further and say that the effective development of the political power of labour really begins from the moment that labourers are transformed into workers, that is, when the whole of the conditions of society confront them as capital. We can see, then, that the political power of workers is intimately connected to the productive power of wage labour. This is in contrast to the power of capital, which is primarily a social power. **The power of workers resides in their potential command over production**, that is, over a particular aspect of society. Capitalist power, on the other hand, rests on a real domination over society in general. But the nature of **capital** is such that it **requires a society based on production**. Consequently production, this particular respect of society, becomes the aim of society in general**. Whoever controls** and dominates **it controls** and dominates **everything**. Even if factory and society were to become perfectly integrated at the economic level, nevertheless, at a political level, they would forever continue to be in contradiction. One of the highest and most developed points of the class struggle will be precisely the frontal clash between the factory, as working class and society, as capital. **When** the development of **capital's interests in the factory** **is blocked, then the functioning of society seizes up: the way is** then **open for overthrowing** and destroying **the very basis of capital's power**. Those, however, who have the contrary perspective, of taking over the running of the "general interests of society", are committing the error of reducing the factory to capital by means of reducing the working class, that is, a part of society, to society as a whole. Now we know that the productive Dower of labour makes a leap forward when it is put to use by the individual capitalist. By the same token, it makes a political leap forward when it is organised by social capital. It is possible that this political leap forward does not express itself in terms of organisation, whereupon an outsider may conclude that it has not happened. Yet it still exists as a material reality, and the fact of its spontaneous existence is sufficient for the workers to refuse to fight for old ideals - though it may not yet be sufficient for them to take upon themselves the task of initiating a new plan of struggle, based on new objectives. So, can we say that we are still living through the long historical period in which Marx saw the workers as a "class against capital", but not yet as a "class for itself"? Or shouldn't we perhaps say the opposite, even if it means confounding a bit the terms of Hegel's dialectic? Namely, that the workers become, from the first, "a class for itself" - that is, - from the first moments of direct confrontation with the individual employer - and that they are recognised as such by the first capitalists. And only afterwards,after a long-terrible, historical travail which is, perhaps, not yet completed, do the workers arrive at the point of being actively, subjectively, "a class against capital". A prerequisite of this process of transition is political organisation, the party, with its demand for total power. In the intervening period there is the refusal - collective, mass, expressed in passive forms - of the workers to expose themselves as "a class against capital" without that organisation of their own, without that total demand for power. The working class does what it is. But it is, at one and the same time, the articulation of capital, and its dissolution. Capitalist power seeks to use the workers' antagonistic will-to-struggle as a motor of its own development. The workerist party must take this same real mediation by the workers of capital's interests and organise it in an antagonistic form, as the tactical terrain of struggle and as a strategic potential for destruction. Here there is only one reference point - only one orientation - for the opposed world views of the two classes - namely the class of workers. Whether one's aim is to stabilise the development of the system or to destroy it forever, it is the working class that is decisive. Thus the society of capital and the workers' party find themselves existing as two opposite forms with one and the same content. And in the struggle for that content, the one form excludes the 'other. They can only exist together for the brief period of the revolutionary crisis. The working class cannot constitute itself as aparty within capitalist society without preventing capitalist society from functioning. As long as capitalist does continue to function the working class party cannot be said to exist. Remember: "the existence of a class of capitalists is based on the productive power of labour". Productive labour, then, exists not only in relation to capital, but also in relation to the capitalists as a class. It is in this latter relationship that it exists as the working class. The transition is probably a historical one: it is productive labour which produces capital; it is the fact of industrial workers being organised into a class that provokes the capitalists in general to constitute themselves as a class. Thus we see that - at an average level of development - workers are already a social class of producers: industrial producers of capital. At this same level of development the capitalists, themselves, constitute a social class not of entrepreneurs so much as organisers: the organisers of workers through the medium of industry. A history of industry cannot be conceived as anything other than a history of the capitalist organisation of productive labour, hence as a working class history of capital. The "industrial revolution" necessarily I springs to mind: This must be the starting point of our research if we are to trace the development of The contemporary form of capital's domination over workers, as it increasingly comes to be exercised through the objective mechanisms of industry, and also the development of capital's capacity to prevent these mechanisms being used by workers. This would lead us to see that the development of the relationship between living labour and the constant part of capital is not a neutral process. Rather, it is determined, and often violently so, by the emerging class relationship between the collective worker and the whole of capital, qua social relations of production. We would then see that it is the specific moments of the class struggle which have determined every technological change in the mechanisms of industry. Thus we would achieve two things: one, we would break free of the apparent neutrality of the man-machine relationship; and two, we would locate this relationship in the interaction, through history, of working class struggles and capitalist initiative. It is wrong to define present day society as "industrial civilisation". The "industry" of that definition is, in fact, merely a means.' The truth of modern society is that it is the civilisation of labour. Furthermore, a capitalist society can never be anything but this. And, in the course of its historical development, it can even take on the form of "socialism". So.... not industrial society (that is, the society of capital) but the society of industrial labour, and thus the society of workers' labour. It is capitalist society seen from this point of view that we must find the courage to fight. **What are workers doing when they struggle against their employers?** Are they not they, above all else, **saying "No" to the transformation of labour power into labour**? Are they not, more than anything, **refusing to receive work from the capitalist**? Couldn't we say, in fact, that stopping work does not signify a refusal to give capital the use of one's labour power, since it has already been given to capital once the contract for this particular commodity has been signed. Nor is it a refusal to allow capital the product of labour, since this is legally already capital's property, and, in any case, the worker does not know what to do with it. Rather, stopping work - **the strike**, as the classic form of workers' struggle - **implies a refusal of the command of capital as the organiser of production**: it is a way of saying "No" at a particular point in the process and a refusal of the concrete labour which is being' offered; it is a momentary.' blockage of the work-process and it appears as a recurring threat which derives its content from the process of value creation. The anarcho-syndicalist "general strike", which was supposed to provoke the collapse of capitalist society, is a romantic naivete from the word go. It already contains within it a demand which it appears to oppose - that is, the Lassallian demand for a "fair share of the fruits of labour" - in other words, a fairer "participation" in the profit of capital. In fact, these two perspectives combine in that incorrect "correction" which was imposed on Marx, and which has subsequently enjoyed such success within the practice of the official working class movement - the idea that it is "working people" who are The true "givers of labour", and that it is the concern of workpeople to defend the dignity of this thing which they provide, against all those who would seek to debase it. Untrue...The truth of the matter is that the person who provides labour is the capitalist. The worker is the provider of capital. In reality, he is the possessor of that unique, particular commodity which is the condition of all the other conditions of production. Because, as we have seen, all These other conditions of production are, from the start, capital in themselves - a dead capital which, in order to come to life and into play in the social relations of production, needs to subsume under itself labour power, as the subject and activity of capital. But, as we have also seen, this transition into social relati9ns of production cannot occur unless the class relation is introduced into it as its content. And the class relationship is imposed from the very 'first moment and by the very fact that the proletariat is constituted as a class in the face of the capitalist.

#### Worker recognition of the power of refusal is the starting point for political organizing – tactics combined with mass passivity bring capital to its knees. History proves – Bolshevik and Spanish revolutionaries came from the trade union movement and organized into militant revolutions.

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Thus **the masses of working class demands** simplify and **unify into** one. There must come a point where all will disappear, except one - **the demand for** power, **all power**, **to the workers**, This demand is the highest form of the refusal. It presupposes already a de facto reversal of the balance of domination between the two classes. In other words, it presupposes that from that moment it will be the capitalist class putting positive demands, making their requests, presenting their Bill of Rights (in the name, naturally, of the general interests of society). And it will be the workers who are rejecting the pleas that are put to them. There must also be a point here, where all the requests and demands will come explicitly from the capitalists, and only the "No" will be openly working class. These are not stories of some far-distant future. The tendency is already under way, and we must grasp it from the start in order to control it. When capital reaches a high level of development it no longer limits itself to guaranteeing collaboration of the workers - i.e. the active extraction of living labour within the dead mechanism of its stabilisation - some-thing which it so badly needs. At significant points it now makes a transition, to the point of expressing its objective needs through the subjective demands of the workers. It is true - and we have seen - that this has already happened, historically. The spectre of capitalist necessities of production being imposed as working class demands, in the struggle, is a recurrent theme in the history of capital, and it can only be explained as a permanent working class articulation of capitalist society. But whereas in the past this happened as an objective functioning of the system (which was thereby virtually self-regulating), today it happens, on the contrary, by conscious initiative of the capitalist class, via the modern instruments of its power apparatus. And in between there has been that decisive experience of working class struggle, which no longer limited itself to asking for power, but actually conquered it. It was with 1917 and the Russian Revolution that the working class articulation of capital was subjectively imposed on the capitalists. What previously had functioned of itself, controlled by nobody, as a blind economic law, from that moment had to be moved from above, politically promoted by those who held the power: it was the only way to control the objective process, the only way to defeat the subversive threat of its possible consequences. This is the origin of that major development in capital's subjective awareness, which led it to conceive and put into practice a plan of social control over all the moments of its cycle, all conceived within a direct capitalist use of working class articulation. Thus, once again, an experience of working class struggle spurs a major advance in the capitalist point of view - an advance which it would never have made of its own accord. The demands of the working class are henceforth recognised by the capitalist~ themselves as objective needs of the production of capital: and as such they are not only taken on board, but are actively solicited; no longer simply rejected, but now collectively negotiated. The mediation of the institutional level of the working class movement, 'particularly at the trade union level, takes on a decisive and irreplaceable' importance. The platform of demands that the trade union puts forward is already controlled by those on whom it is supposed to be imposed: by the bosses who are supposed to "take it or leave it". Through the trade union struggle, working class demands can be nothing more than the reflection of capital's necessities. And yet capital cannot pose this necessity directly, of itself -not even if it wanted to, not even when it reaches its highest point of class awareness. Rather, at this point it acquires quite the reverse awareness: that it must find ways to have its own needs put forward by its enemies, it must articulate its own movement via the organised movements of the workers. We might ask a question: **what happens when** the form of **working class organisation** takes on a content which is wholly alternative; when it **refuses to function as an articulation of capitalist society**; when it refuses to carry capital's needs via the demands of the working class? The answer is that, at that moment and from that moment, **the systems whole mechanism of development is blocked**. This is the new concept of the crisis of capitalism that we must start to circulate: no longer the economic crisis, the catastrophic collapse, a Zusammenbruch, however momentary, arising from the impossibility of the system's continued functioning. Rather**, a political crisis [is] imposed by the subjective movements of the organised workers, via the provocation of a chain of critical conjunctures, -within the sole strategy of the working class refusal to resolve the contradictions of capitalism**. A tactic of organisation within the structures of capitalist production, but outside of, free from, its political initiative. Of course, it remains necessary to block the economic mechanism and, at the decisive moment, render it incapable of functioning. But the only way to achieve this is via the political refusal of the working class to act as active partner in the whole social process, and furthermore, the refusal of even passive collaboration in capitalist development: in other words, the renunciation of precisely that form of mass struggle which today unifies the movements led by the workers in the advanced capitalist countries. We must say clearly that this form of struggle - for such it is - is no longer enough. Non-collaboration, passivity (even on a mass scale), the refusal (insofar as it is not political, not subjectively organised, not inserted into a strategy, not practiced in tactical terms), the advanced font of spontaneity which has been forced on the class struggle for decades - not only is all this no longer enough to provoke the crisis, but it has become, in fact, an element of stabilisation of capitalist development. It is now one of those same objective mechanisms whereby capitalist initiative now controls and makes use of the class relationship that motivates it. We must break this process before it becomes yet another heavy historical tradition for the working class movement to bear. A transition to another process is necessary - without, however, losing the basic positive elements of this one. Obviously **non-collaboration must be one of our starting points, and mass passivity at the level of production is the material fact from which we must begin**. But at a certain point all this must be reversed into its opposite. When it comes to the point of saying '1No", **the refusal must become political**; therefore active; therefore subjective; **therefore organised**. It must once again become antagonism -this time at a higher level. Without this it is impossible to think of opening up a revolutionary process. This is not a matter of instilling in the mass of workers the awareness that they must fight against capital that they must fight for something which will transcend capital and lead into a new dimension of human society. What is generally known as **'class consciousness is**, for us, nothing other than **the moment of organisation**, the function of the party, the problem of tactics - the channels which must carry the strategic plan through to a point of practical breakthrough. And at the level of pure strategy there is no doubt that **this point is provided by the very advanced moment in which this hypothesis of struggle becomes reality: the working class refusal to present demands to capital**, the total rejection of the whole trade union terrain, the refusal to limit the class relationship within a formal, legal, contractual form. And this is the same as forcing capital to present the objective needs of capitalist production directly, as such. It cuts out working class mediation of development. It blocks the working class articulation of the mechanism. In the final event, this means depriving capital of its content, of the class relationship which is its basis. For a period the class relationship must be exercised by the working class, through its party - just as up till now it has been exercised by the capitalist class, through its State.

#### Collective trade union movements organized into socialist parties succeed – Greece proves.

Dean 16

Dean, Jodi. Crowds and Party. United Kingdom, Verso, 2016. I don’t have a link just ask for the document.

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**The new cycle of struggles has demonstrated the political strength that comes from collectivity**. Common names, tactics and images are bringing the fragments together, making them legible as many fronts of one struggle against capitalism. Where the proliferation of issues and identities disperses and weakens us -- inciting the snark that glorifies itself as critique even as it undermines solidarity -- the crowd events of the last decade are forcing a new sense of collective power. They have pushed expectations of multiplicity into experiences of collectivity. The question that emerges from these experiences pose is how they might endure and extend, how the momentary discharge of equality crowds unleash might become the basis for a new process of political composition. **Syriza, Greece’s coalition of the** radical **left,** is perhaps the most inspiring example of the potential for such a process today. Formed through a series of splits and re-combinations in the Greek communist movement, the coalition is an electoral alliance with distinct and heterogeneous currents. [[1]](#endnote-1) Synaspismos, the largest party in Syriza, **folds responsiveness to social movements into its communist framework.** As Stathis Kouvelakis explains, ‘It is a party that’s at ease among feminist movements, youth mobilizations, alter-globalization, and antiracist movements and LGBT currents, while also continuing **to make a considerable intervention in the trade union movement**.’ What makes Syriza more than just a combination of multiple elements is its assertion of a fundamental antagonism. Its elements come together in a class struggle against the current system. For this reason, Kouvelakis refers to Syriza as a ‘synthesis’ party. The Greek legacy of intense party politics is a unique feature of its political culture. Nevertheless, **Syriza’s success stems** in part **from** innovations in **communist party organizing: commitment to social movements**, respect for movements’ autonomy, **support of local solidarity network**s, **and** enough **involvement in institutions** ‘to seem capable of transforming the balance of forces at the level of national political life.’ For some Lefts, particularly in the US and UK, it is this last feature that has been conspicuously absent. Hence, our actions fail to gain momentum. Crowds amass, but they don’t endure. In contrast, Syriza demonstrates a dynamic relation between crowd and party: the crowd that pushes the party to exceed expectations, the party that finds the courage of the people in the haste of the crowd. Two additional aspects of Syriza’s political opening are indispensable to rethinking the party today. The first concerns the limits of political victory confined to the level of the nation-state. The institutions not only of Europe but of global finance and governance restrict national governments’ range of maneuver. This poses challenges to the Left internationally suggesting, at a minimum, the necessity of strong left alliances and coordinated institutional strategies. More maximally it directs us toward the party as an infrastructure for such alliances and strategies. The second aspect of Syriza’s political opening instructive for the Left concerns political will. Kouvelakis writes, ‘The Podemos experience in Spain as well as Syriza in Greece shows that if the radical Left makes suitable proposals, then it can arrive at an understanding with these movements and provide a credible political “condensation” of their demands.’ The making of ‘suitable proposals’ depends on political will, a Left able to put aside its differences and think strategically about the pursuit of political power. The problem posing itself today concerns less the details of party organization (membership requirements, centralization versus networked structure, mechanisms for accountable leadership) than it does solidary political will. Can the Left’s wide array of associations come together in a way that will achieve a real political advance? The supposition of *Crowds and Party* is that we have no choice but to answer ‘yes.’ To help us get to yes, to make a party of communists seem compelling to more of us again, I offer an approach to the party inspired by the crowd. **Faithful to egalitarian rupture of the crowd event, the party holds open the gap through which the people appear as the political subject**. Readers anchored in the classics of revolutionary socialism might balk at what seems at first glance to be an abandonment of Marxist terms. They shouldn’t. The ‘people’ has a rich legacy in Marxism-Leninism-Maoism: the ‘people’ are the revolutionary alliance of the oppressed. Under conditions of communicative capitalism, crowds are the proletarianized many, those whose communicative engagements are expropriated from them in processes of accumulation and dispossession that benefit capital as a class. Readers inspired by radical democratic, anarchist and post-Marxist theories might balk at a return to the party. They shouldn’t. The party is a basic form of political struggle. If innovation is necessary for finding our way out of the current political impasse, then the party, too, can be a site for experimentation and change. Different in structure and program, Syriza and Podemos already demonstrate such experimentation. Typically, socialist and communist discussions of the party gel around the themes of reform or revolution, mass or vanguard, factory or state. These discussions are too limiting. Missing is the affective dimension of the party, the way that the perspective of the party operates through or across different organizational structures. The party knots together a set of unconscious processes that enable a communist political subjectivity. To think through these processes as the effects of collectivity back upon itself, I draw out the psychodynamics of the party. Providing a strength and direction we would otherwise lack, the party generates the practical optimism through which struggles endure. Many eschew the party as a form for political power, decision and organization. They fall back into the affirmation of individual autonomy, reasserting capitalist ideology. Discarding the party form, they jettison the possibility of building collective power. I seek to demonstrate how the power the party unleashes is the power we already have to change the world.

# 1AC

### Overview

1. **I get 1AR Theory – anything else justifies infinite 1NC abuse which outweighs on magnitude**
2. **PICs affirm because an exception to a rule doesn’t disprove it, just like penguins don’t disprove that birds can fly. PICs mean the resolution is generally true, but with an exception.**

### Theory

**Interpretation: Debaters must disclose round reports for all past debates on the NDCA LD wiki prior to the round.**

**Violation: All of their round reports say “see open source,” without any info on what they collapsed to.**

**Standards:**

1. **Strat skew – they can see my round reports and tailor their case to my past strategies, but I can’t do the same. That destroys my ability to strategically engage in the round because I don’t have enough information to form a strategy based on possible 2NRs. Skews fairness because they will always have better strategy knowing what I collapse to.**
2. **Critical thinking – if I know their past collapses, then I can think strategically to craft a 1AC. That’s good for education because strategic thinking is a useful skill.**

**Fairness is a voter because**

1. **The only way a judge can determine who’s better is if we enter the debate on an even playing field.**
2. **People quit if they lose to unfair arguments so fairness is a prereq to debate’s existence.**

**Education is voter because:**

1. **It’s the only portable benefit of debate.**
2. **It’s the only reason we get funding.**

**Disclosure is drop the debater: dropping the arg can’t rectify past abuse because their practice wasn’t an argument**

**No RVI’s:**

1. **they’re illogical – it doesn’t make sense to reward someone for not doing anything bad. People need to do good things to win.**
2. **RVI’s chill legitimate theory, justifying even more abuse.**

**Competing Interps:**

1. **Reasonability usually lacks a brightline and favors unnecessary judge intervention.**
2. **Reasonability lets them arbitrarily choose a brightline that favors their arguments – skews fairness.**

### Framework

**Empathy is the first question of ethics. In order to have a moral obligation to accept or reject the resolution, we must first have moral obligations towards the other. Before debating normative ethics, we must first find the procedure through which we give the other moral value. We must center policy that enables people to recognize the humanity of the other.**

#### The concept of the human is a relational subjectivity created in the context of a “we.” Our relations to one another determine whose lives are recognizable as fully human. Therefore, life is constituted via our political relationships derived from vulnerability, not just our biological functions.

Butler 1 (2004)

Butler, Judith. Researcher and Professor at UC Berkeley (2004) Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence. London: Verso, Print. (p.20)

I propose to **start**, and to end, **with the question of the human** (as if there were any other way for us to start or end!). We start here not because there is a human condition that is universally shared-this is surely not yet the case. The question that preoccupies me **in the light of recent global violence** is, **Who counts as human?** Whose lives count as lives? And, finally, What makes for' a grievable life? Despite our differences in location and history, my guess is that **it is possible to appeal to a "we," for all of us have some notion of what it is to have lost somebody. Loss has made a tenuous "we" of us all**. And **if we have lost, then it follows that we have had, that we have desired and loved, that we have struggled** and find the conditions for our desire. We have all lost in recent decades from AIDS, but there are other losses that amidst us, from illness and from global conflict; and there is the fact as well that women and minorities, including sexual minorities, are, as a community, subjected to violence, exposed to its possibility, ixf not its realization. **This means that each of us is constituted politically in part by virtue of the social vulnerability of our bodies-as a site of desire and physical vulnerability**, as a site of a publicity at once assertive and exposed. **Loss and vulnerability seem to follow from our being socially constituted bodies, attached to others, at risk of losing those attachments, exposed to others, at risk of violence by virtue of that exposure.**

**This means we must first evaluate the relational question of being vulnerable because it determines who counts under any other framework.**

#### A politics of grief is crucial to collective consciousness, class or otherwise, because it de-privitizes our phenomenological experience of politics and everyday life. This ensures we recognize others as human and address their struggles.

Butler 2

Butler, Judith. Researcher and Professor at UC Berkeley (2004) Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence. London: Verso, Print. (p.23)  
Many people think that **grief** is privatizing, that it returns us to a solitary situation and is, in that sense, depoliticizing. But I think it **furnishes a sense of political community** of a complex order, and it does this first of all **by bringing to the fore the relational ties that have implications for theorizing fundamental dependency and ethical responsibility.** **If my fate is not originally or finally separable from yours, then the "we" is traversed by a relationality that we cannot easily argue against**; or, rather, we can argue against it, but we would be denying something fundamental about the social conditions of our very formation. A consequential grammatical quandary follows. In the effort to explain these relations, I might be said to "have" them, but what does "having" imply? I might sit back and try to enumerate them to you. I might explain what this friendship means, what that lover meant or means to me. I would be constituting myself in such an instance as a detached narrator of my relations. Dramatizing my detachment, I might perhaps only be showing that the form of attachment I am demonstrating is trying to minimize its own relationality, is invoking it as an option, as something that does not touch on the question of what sustains me fundamentally What **grief displays**, in contrast, is **the thrall in which our relations with others hold us**, in ways that we cannot always recount or explain**, in ways that often interrupt the self-conscious account of ourselves we might try to provide**, in ways that challenge the very notion of ourselves as autonomous and in controL **I might try to tell a story here about what I am feeling, but it would have to be a story in which the very "I" who seeks to tell the story is stopped in the midst of the telling; the very "I" is called into question by its relation to the Other**, a relation that does not precisely reduce me to speechlessness, but does nevertheless clutter my speech with signs of its undoing. **I tell a story about the relations I choose, only to expose, somewhere along the way, the way I am gripped and undone by these very relations.** My narrative falters, as it must **Let's face it. We're undone by each other. And if we're not, we're missing something.**

#### My standard is consistency with a politics of vulnerability that determines our relations to one another and is therefore crucial to making decisions that prioritize human life and prevent violence. I control a key meta-ethical question of how we identify evil and suffering.

Butler 3

Butler, Judith. Researcher and Professor at UC Berkeley (2004) Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence. London: Verso, Print. (p.30-1)

Let us return to the issue of grief, to the moments in which one undergoes something outside one's control and finds that one is beside oneself, not at one with oneself. Perhaps we can say that grief contains the possibility of apprehending a mode of dispossession that is fundamental to who I am. This possibility does not dispute the fact of my autonomy, but it does qualify that claim through recourse to the fundamental sociality of embodied life, the ways in which we are, from the start and by virtue of being a bodily being, already given over, beyond ourselves, implicated in lives that are not our own. If I do not always know what seizes me on such occasions, and if I do not always know what it is in another person that I have lost, it may be that this sphere of dispossession is precisely the one that exposes my unknowingness, the unconscious imprint of my primary sociality. Can this insight lead to a normative reorientation for politics? Can this situation of mourning---one that is so dramatic for those in social movements who have undergone innumerable losses-supply a perspective by which to begin to apprehend the contemporary global situation? Mourning, fear, anxiety, rage. In the United States, we have been surrounded with violence, having perpetrated it and perpetrating it still, having suffered it, living in fear of it, planning more of it, if not an open future of infinite war in the name of a "war on terrorism." **Violence is surely a touch of the worst order, a way a primary human vulnerability to other humans is exposed in its most terrifying way, a way in which we are given over, without control, to the will of another, a way in which life itself can be expunged by the willful action of another.** To the extent that we commit violence, we are acting on another, putting the other at risk, causing the other damage, threatening to expunge the mher. In a way, we all live with this particular vulnerability, a vulnerability to the other that is part of bodily life, a vulnerability to a sudden address from elsewhere that we cannot preempt**. This vulnerability, however, becomes highly exacerbated under certain social and political conditions, especially those in which violence is a way of life** and the means to secure selfdefense are limited. Mindfulness of this vulnerability can become the basis of claims for non-military political solutions, just as denial of this vulnerability through a fantasy of mastery (an institutionalized fantasy of mastery) can fuel the instruments of war. **We cannot**, however, **will away this vulnerability**. **We must attend to it**, even abide by it, **as we begin to think about what politics might be implied by staying with the thought of corporeal vulnerability** itself….Is there something to be gained in the political domain by maintaining grief as part of the framework within which we think our international ties? If we stay with the sense of loss, are we left feeling only passive and powerless, as some might fear? Or are we, rather, returned to a sense of human vulnerability, to our collective responsibility for the physical lives of one another? Could the experience of a dislocation of First World safelY not condition the insight into the radically inequitable ways that corporeal vulnerability is distributed globally? **To foreclose that vulnerability**, to banish it, to make ourselves secure at the expense of every other human consideration **is to eradicate one of the most important resources from which we must take our bearings and find our way**. To grieve, and **to make grief itself into a resource for polities, is not to be resigned to inaction, but it may be understood as the slow process by which we develop a point of identification with suffering itself**. The disorientation of grief-"Who have I become?" or, indeed, "What is left of me?" "What is it in the Other that I have lost?"­ posits the "I" in the mode of unknowingness But **this can be a point of departure for a new understanding of the narcissistic preoccupation of melancholia which can be moved into a consideration of the vulnerability of others.** Then we might critically evaluate and oppose the conditions under which certain human lives are more vulnerable than others, and thus certain human lives are more grievable than others

**Prefer:**

#### 1. Rights discourse - a politics of vulnerability is a necessary approach to the question of rights because it prevents their de-politiczing affect. Grief ensures an affective attachment to one another as the ruled, as workers, and the collectively passionate in the face of inequality.

Butler 4

Butler, Judith. Researcher and Professor at UC Berkeley (2004) Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence. London: Verso, Print. (p.25)

I am arguing, if I am "arguing" at all, that we have an interesting political predicament; **most of the time when we hear about "rights," we understand them as pertaining to individuals. When we argue for protection against discrimination, we argue as a group or a class.** And in that language and in that context, **we have to present ourselves as bounded beings--dlistinct, recognizable, delineated, subjects before the law, a community defined by some shared features**. Indeed, we must be able to use that language to secure legal protections and entitlements. But perhaps **we make a mistake if we take the definitions of who we are, legally, to be adequate descriptions of what we are about.** **Although this language may well establish our legitimacy within a legal framework ensconced in liberal versions of human ontology, it does not do justice to passion and grief and rage, all of which tear us from ourselves, bind us to others, transport us, undo us, implicate us in lives that are not are own, irreversibly, if not fatally.**

#### 2. Subjectivity - vulnerability in the face of loss is a core component of subject formation. In order to recognize that one is part of a “we,” they must lose something that changes their supposedly isolated “I.” We do not need to know what we have lost to participate in a politics of grievability. Relationality is the starting point. An accurate notion of the subject is a prerequisite to ethics because we must tailor obligations to the obligated.

Butler 5

Butler, Judith. Researcher and Professor at UC Berkeley (2004) Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence. London: Verso, Print. (p.22)

Something takes hold of you: where does it come from? What sense does it make? What claims us at such moments, such that we are not the masters of ourselves? To what are we tied? And by what are we seized? Freud reminded us that **when we lose someone, we do not always know what it is in that person that has been lost**.· So when one loses, one is also faced with something enigmatic: something is hiding in the loss, something is lost within the recesses of loss. If mourning involves knowing what one has lost (and melancholia originally meant, to a certain extent, not knowing), then mourning would be maintained by its enigmatic dimension, by the experience of not knowing incited by losing what we cannot fully fathom. **When we lose certain people, or when we are dispossessed from a place, or a community, we may simply feel that we are undergoing something temporary, that mourning will be over and some restoration of prior order will be achieved. But maybe when we undergo what we do, something about who we are is revealed, something that delineates the ties we have to others, that shows us that these ties constitute what we are**, ties or bonds that compose us**. It is not as if an "I" exists independently over here and then simply loses a "you" over there, especially if the attachment to "you" is part of what composes who "I" am**. If I lose you, under these conditions, then I not only mourn the loss, but I become inscrutable to myself**. Who "am" I, without you?** When we lose some of these ties by which we are constituted, we do not know who we are or what to do. On one level, I think I have lost "you" only to discover that "I" have gone missing as well. At another level, perhaps what I have lost '"in" you, that for which I have no ready vocabulary, is a relationality that is composed neither exclusively of myself nor you, but is to be conceived

**3. Performativity – my opponent’s thoughts on ethics are changed when they hear the aff – that’s the only way they could come up with new arguments against it. That means by contesting my framework, they concede my relational theory of the subject.**

**4. Exportability – offense under my standard centers the nature of relationships. That’s more applicable to day to day life than foreign policy scenarios or adherence with an abstract moral code. Exportability matters because it determines what we actually learn from debate.**

### Contention

**I affirm resolved: A just government ought to recognize the unconditional right of workers to strike.**

#### Class violence is rampant and strikes are method of grieving that violence with other workers from across the world. When faced with oppression and exploitation, workers do not seek security or stability, they collectively grieve their loss. They enter mutually vulnerable relationships on the picket line.

Brown 10/17

Brown, Haynes. “John Deere workers on strike are part of a strengthening labor movement.” 17 October 2021. MSNBC. <https://www.msnbc.com/opinion/john-deere-workers-strike-are-part-strengthening-labor-movement-n1281685>

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All around America, workers have had enough. **After a year and a half of a pandemic, after decades of stagnant wages and exploding executive salaries, after industry after industry has used innovation as an excuse for exploitation, more than 100,000 workers are on strike or prepared to go on strike**. The men and women on the picket lines this “Striketober” — and those who are ready and willing to join them — represent the kind of cross-section of America that most politicians only dream of reaching. We’re talking about a **movement** that **stretches from the liberal bastion of Hollywood to the factory lines of the Midwest to the coal mines of Alabama**. And if we’re being honest about the working conditions in this country, the number of people demanding change should be much, much higher. As of Thursday, more than 10,000 John Deere workers at 14 locations in Iowa, Illinois and Kansas have walked off the job. Last week, the strikers voted 9-to-1 to reject a proposed contract from Deere, according to Labor Notes, a resounding dismissal that surprised United Auto Workers union leadership and company management. Deere is doing very, very well for itself this year, a fact that has fueled the workers’ dismay at being lowballed in contract negotiations. By the end of this fiscal year, the company projects that it will have earned around $5.7 billion in profits alone, blowing its previous best year out of the water. In that context, you can see why workers would be frustrated with inadequate wage increases and plans to end pensions for new employees. The Deere strike is currently the largest in the country. That title was set to be stripped from them Monday: 60,000 members of the International Association of Theatrical Stage Employees voted earlier this month to authorize what would have been an unprecedented strike. The willingness to walk off sets around the country came as conditions on those sets and behind the scenes on movie and television productions have only gotten worse over the last few years, union members told NBC News this month: "If we don’t address this, I can't work in this industry till I'm 62, there's no way," said Gina Scarnati, 44, a specialty costume manufacturer who has worked in the industry for a decade. "We shouldn’t be begging for lunch breaks in 2021. I am 100 percent not financially prepared to go on strike, but we need to course correct. Right now, it's an industry I regret even getting into." Making things worse has been discounts on labor provided to “new media” productions, like those from Netflix, Hulu, and Apple, despite a surge of new content from these companies. And the movies and shows on these platforms often mean a loss of future revenue that a traditional TV show might see as it moves from broadcast, to syndication, to digital purchase. The IATSE and Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers announced on Saturday night that they’d reached a deal that would keep productions filming come Monday. Though details of the agreement have yet to be distributed to members, IATSE International President Matt Loeb, in a statement, called the outcome “a Hollywood ending” for members. But the agreement still has to be ratified by union members — and as the UAW learned, that’s not a guarantee until all the votes are cast. Rep. Wasserman Schultz: “Striketober” is workers saying they’re “mad as hell and not gonna take it anymore” OCT. 16, 202107:00 Meanwhile, all eyes will be on Kaiser Permanente to see if nurses and other workers with the health care giant also go on strike next week. So far, 24,000 union members have voted to authorize a strike, demanding that Kaiser “scrap its plans for a two-tiered wage and benefits system, which would pay newer employees less than more tenured colleagues and offers them fewer health protections.” The Washington Post reported that another 50,000 Kaiser workers are asking for similar changes as their current contracts near their expiration date. All of this is happening at a time when the wind is at the labor movement’s back. Gallup found last month that unions have a 65 percent approval rating with Americans, a level of support unseen since 2003. Taken together with ongoing strikes at Kellogg’s factories in Michigan, Nebraska, Pennsylvania and Tennessee, another 1,000 coal miners on strike in Alabama and 2,000 nurses in Buffalo, New York demanding adequate staffing, we have the conditions of what one expert called a “strike wave.” "Strikes can be contagious for unions and workers," Kate Bronfenbrenner, the director of labor education research at Cornell University’s School of Industrial and Labor Relations told NBC News. "**There are shared issues that are pushing workers to go on strike — and workers are looking at each other and getting inspired**." It’s also all happening at a time when labor is in the driver’s seat for a change. Low-wage jobs remain unfilled even as Covid-related unemployment benefits have expired. This labor shortage has employers doing whatever they can to lure workers back into gigs that workers are no longer sure they even want. Yes, management at all of these industries is scrambling to find scabs to take the place of the picketing union members. Kellogg’s is already shipping in “contractors” to work the cereal processing lines; replacement workers provided by a staffing agency in Michigan are crossing the line in Buffalo and drawing the ire of the New York attorney general. And at Deere factories, salaried workers are being made to staff the tractor assembly lines, which seems like something you really don’t want unqualified workers doing. I encourage you to have empathy and act in solidarity. Which, I have to say, really gets at the heart of why these employees are all choosing now to make their demands. These are all skilled workers who work very, very long hours — even if the money is good, the cash only comes in if you put in the hours. And in many cases, the money just isn’t that good, especially not for the soul-crushing conditions that folks are working through. I how long some of these strikes will last. I don’t know if they’ll wind up disrupting you, the reader, and the life you lead. But if they do — if they mean that there are no Frosted Flakes on the shelf or that your favorite actor’s new movie is delayed — I encourage you to have empathy and act in solidarity. These aren’t unreasonable demands from these strikers. They just want to be paid fairly and treated with respect on the job. That said, if you’re also feeling rundown and believe management at your company isn’t listening, do remember that you aren’t alone. And can I suggest joining a union, or even organizing one? As it turns out, when enough voices join together, it’s kind of hard to ignore them. So why not add yours to the chorus?

#### Striking itself is an act of communal vulnerability: Emotional vulnerability to those you walk with and those who support you. Physical vulnerability to cars and security guards. Economic vulnerability when you don’t get paid. Strikers engage in a politics of vulnerability when they stand and support each other in the face of capitalist violence. They do not know if the results will be good or stable, but they embrace the loss as they take to the streets.

Morgan 16

Morgan, Allan. “Life On The Picket Line Isn’t Fun, But It Can Be Sweet” 2016. Movement of United Professionals. <https://moveuptogether.ca/the-latest/life-on-the-picket-line-isnt-fun-but-it-can-be-sweet/>

Morgan is a staffer at the British Columbia Nurses Union // Park City NL

**You walk a lot on the picket line**. Not a startling revelation to most I realize, but it is an odd way to spend your working day. As the management of BCNU de-camped to an unknown locale after the first day (having erected a huge fence around the entire building and brought in non-union security guards) **we walk mostly along the highway to make our plight known and to elicit honks from motorists.** NB – HONKS MATTER. You can walk alone, in groups, quickly, slowly, in wheel chairs, or any combination thereof. There are two shifts – morning and afternoon and about 120 of us in total doing the picketing (to surround with pointed sticks). **It makes for some amazing conversations**. Not so much the situation we are in – we are all of one mind about that – but **hearing people’s stories: how they got here, who they are, what they care most about, their spouses, their children, their parents. The fabric of their lives.The joy in finding where our stories are interwoven, and the curiosity to find out more when they are not. That is the gift of this walking, and the people I work with, and it is giving this walking line of people an incredible bonding experience. Solidarity**. It also allows you to try and erase the number of Timbits, doughnuts and cookies one ingests while there. I had no idea to what extent these morsels are the common currency of solidarity and support in the labour movement. They are the Lingua Franca of labour love, and since I have rarely met a baked good with it’s gluten intact that I haven’t loved, I am happy to use them as my fuel. Most importantly though these gifts by other unions, or retirees, or nurses or friends are not simply sugary snacks – **they are big doses of support, love, and solidarity and that fuel feeds our souls** and fires our determination.

1. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)