# 1nc

### T

#### Interpretation – “A” is an indefinite article – you have to prove the res true in vacuum, not one instance

CCC ND (Capital Community College Foundation; No Date Given; <http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/determiners/determiners.htm#articles>; *“Articles, Determiners, and Quantifiers”*; accessed 7/22/20; Capital Community College Foundation, a nonprofit 501 c-3 organization that supports scholarships, faculty development, and curriculum innovation) RC/HB

The three articles — a, an, the — are a kind of adjective. The is called the definite article because it usually precedes a specific or previously mentioned noun; a and an are called indefinite articles because they are used to refer to something in a less specific manner (an unspecified count noun). These words are also listed among the noun markers or determiners because they are almost invariably followed by a noun (or something else acting as a noun) The is used with specific nouns. The is required when the noun it refers to represents something that is one of a kind: The moon circles the earth. The is required when the noun it refers to represents something in the abstract: The United States has encouraged the use of the private automobile as opposed to the use of public transit. The is required when the noun it refers to represents something named earlier in the text. (See below..). We use a before singular count-nouns that begin with consonants (a cow, a barn, a sheep); we use an before singular count-nouns that begin with vowels or vowel-like sounds (an apple, an urban blight, an open door). Words that begin with an h sound often require an a (as in a horse, a history book, a hotel), but if an h-word begins with an actual vowel sound, use an an (as in an hour, an honor). We would say a useful device and a union matter because the u of those words actually sounds like yoo (as opposed, say, to the u of an ugly incident). The same is true of a European and a Euro (because of that consonantal "Yoo" sound). We would say a once-in-a-lifetime experience or a one-time hero because the words once and one begin with a w sound (as if they were spelled wuntz and won). Merriam-Webster's Dictionary says that we can use an before an h- word that begins with an unstressed syllable. Thus, we might say an hisTORical moment, but we would say a HIStory book. Many writers would call that an affectation and prefer that we say a historical, but apparently, this choice is a matter of personal taste. For help on using articles with abbreviations and acronyms (a or an FBI agent?), see the section on Abbreviations. First and subsequent reference: When we first refer to something in written text, we often use an indefinite article to modify it. A newspaper has an obligation to seek out and tell the truth. In a subsequent reference to this newspaper, however, we will use the definite article: There are situations, however, when the newspaper must determine whether the public's safety is jeopardized by knowing the truth. Another example: "I'd like a glass of orange juice, please," John said. "I put the glass of juice on the counter already," Sheila replied. Exception: When a modifier appears between the article and the noun, the subsequent article will continue to be indefinite: "I'd like a big glass of orange juice, please," John said. "I put a big glass of juice on the counter already," Sheila replied. Generic reference: We can refer to something in a generic way by using any of the three articles. We can do the same thing by omitting the article altogether. A beagle makes a great hunting dog and family companion. An airedale is sometimes a rather skittish animal. The golden retriever is a marvelous pet for children. Irish setters are not the highly intelligent animals they used to be. The difference between the generic indefinite pronoun and the normal indefinite pronoun is that the latter refers to any of that class ("I want to buy a beagle, and any old beagle will do.") whereas the former (see beagle sentence) refers to all members of that class.

#### Text is key – the topic is the only basis for pre-rd prep – we generate links based on resolutional processes

#### Violation – they specify (insert nation)

#### Prefer

#### Limits – they justify tiny affs out of the more than 170 countries which explodes neg research burden and skirts neg offense – limits is k2 fairness b/c it ensures we can research quality arguments—that also means it’s k2 substantive engagement b/c we can’t learn about unlimited affs, so I’d never be able to engage your hyperspecific aff—you’d win every round. Causes the neg to be pigeonholed into generics every round.

#### Ground – they can shift out of core generic arguments like Econ and Infrastructure – neg ground is k2 engagement bc otherwise we can’t effectively engage in the topic and moots topic education, engagement is also k2 effectively testing the aff otherwise they always win by pigeonholing the negative

#### TVA – read the aff as an advantage under a Whole Resolution Affirmative – pics aren’t worse bc country specific DA’s are super hard to find on this topic and theory solves because if the PIC can’t be beat, it probably skews aff strategy and limits clash.

### K

#### The “right to strike” is a tactic of neoliberal legalism and gets circumvented. The state is thus able to decide legitimate parameters for violence and insulate itself from anticapitalist action.

Crépon 19 – Marc Crépon is a professor of philosophy at the École Normale Supérieure, Paris. (“The Right to Strike and Legal War in Walter Benjamin’s “Toward the Critique of Violence”,” August 2019, pg. 252-253)

If we wish to understand how the question of the right to strike arises for Walter Benjamin in the seventh paragraph of his essay “Zur Kritik der Gewalt,” it is important to first analyze the previous paragraph, which concerns the state’s monopoly on violence. It is here that Benjamin questions the argument that such a monopoly derives from the impossibility of a system of legal ends to preserve itself as long as the pursuit of natural ends through violent means remains. Benjamin responds to this dogmatic thesis with the following hypothesis, arguably one of his most important reflections: “To counter it, one would perhaps have to consider the surprising possibility that law’s interest in monopolizing violence vis-à-vis the individual is explained by the intention not of preserving legal ends, but rather of preserving law itself. [This is the possibility] that violence, when it does not lie in the hands of law, poses a danger to law, not by virtue of the ends that it may pursue but by virtue of its mere existence outside of law.”1

In other words, nothing would endanger the law more than the possibility of its authority being contested by a violence over which it has no control. The function of the law would therefore be, first and foremost, to contain violence within its own boundaries. It is in this context that, to demonstrate this surprising hypothesis, Benjamin invokes two examples: the right to strike guaranteed by the state and the law of war.

Let us return to the place that the right to strike occupies within class struggle. To begin with, the very idea of such a struggle implies certain forms of violence. The strike could then be understood as one of the recognizable forms that this violence can take. However, this analytical framework is undermined as soon as this form of violence becomes regulated by a “right to strike,” such as the one recognized by law in France in 1864. What this recognition engages is, in fact, the will of the state to control the possible “violence” of the strike. Thus, the “right” of the right to strike appears as the best, if not the only, way for the state to circumscribe within (and via) the law the relative violence of class struggles. We might consider this to be the perfect illustration of the aforementioned hypothesis. Yet, there are two lines of questioning that destabilize this hypothesis that we would do well to consider.

First, is it legitimate to present the strike as a form of violence? Who has a vested interest in such a representation? In other words, how can we trace a clear and unequivocal demarcation between violence and nonviolence? Are we not always bound to find residues of violence, even in those actions that we would be tempted to consider nonviolent? The second line of questioning is just as important and is rooted in the distinction established by Georges Sorel, in his Reflections on Violence, between the “political strike” and the “proletarian general strike,” to which Benjamin dedicates a set of complementary analyses in §13 of his essay. Here, again, we are faced with a question of limits. What is at stake is the possibility for a certain type of strike (the proletarian general strike) to exceed the limits of the right to strike— turning, in other words, the right to strike against the law itself. The phenomenon is that of an autoimmune process, in which the right to strike that is meant to protect the law against the possible violence of class struggles is transformed into a means for the destruction of the law. The difference between the two types of strikes is nevertheless introduced with a condition: “The validity of this statement, however, is not unrestricted because it is not unconditional,” notes Benjamin in §7. We would be mistaken in believing that the right to strike is granted and guaranteed unconditionally. Rather, it is structurally subjected to a conflict of interpretations, those of the workers, on the one hand, and of the state on the other. From the point of view of the state, the partial strike cannot under any circumstance be understood as a right to exercise violence, but rather as the right to extract oneself from a preexisting (and verifiable) violence: that of the employer. In this sense, the partial strike should be considered a nonviolent action, what Benjamin named a “pure means.”

#### Neoliberalism is unsustainable and causes extinction.

von Weizsäcker and Wijkman 17 – Ernest Ulrich von Weizsäcker, Professor and Director of the United Nation Centre for Science and Technology for Development, Founder and President of the Wuppertal Institute, Member of the German Bundestag, chairing the Committees on Globalization and the Environment, Dean of the graduate School of Environmental Science and Management at the University of California, appointed Co-Chair of UNEP’s International Resource Panel, Anders Wijkman, chairman of the Swedish Association of Recycling Industries, member of the Board of the Swedish Development Authority (SIDA), appointed chair of the Swedish Cross-Party Committee on Environmental Objectives, member of the European Parliament, Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations and Policy Director of UNDP, Secretary General of the Swedish Red Cross and Director General of the Swedish Agency for Research Cooperation with Developing Countries, Member of the Swedish Royal Academy of Sciences, the World Future Council and the International Resource Panel, 2017 (“Come On! Capitalism, Short-termism, Population and the Destruction of the Planet – A Report to the Club”, November 11th, Available Online via Subscription to Springer, Accessed 03-20-2018)

1.1 Introduction: The World in Disarray We all know that the world is in crisis. Science tells us that almost half of the top soils on earth have been depleted in the last 150 years1 ; nearly 90% of fish stocks are either overfished or fully fished.2 Climate stability is in real danger (Sects. 1.5 and 3.7); and the earth is now in the sixth mass extinction period in history.3 Perhaps the most accurate account of the ecological situation is the 2012 ‘Imperative to act’,4 launched by all the 18 recipients (till 2012) of the Blue Planet Prize, including Gro Harlem Brundtland, James Hansen, Amory Lovins, James Lovelock and Susan Solomon. Its key message reads, ‘The human ability to do has vastly outstripped the ability to understand. As a result, civilization is faced with a perfect storm of problems, driven by overpopulation, overconsumption by the rich, the use of environmentally malign technologies and gross inequalities’. And further, ‘The rapidly deteriorating biophysical situation is barely recognized by a global society infected by the irrational belief that physical economies can grow forever’. 1.1.1 Different Types of Crisis and a Feeling of Helplessness The crisis is not cyclical but growing. And it is not limited to the nature around us. There are also a social crisis, a political and a cultural crisis, a moral crisis, as well as a crisis of democracy, of ideologies and of the capitalist system. The crisis also consists of deepened poverty in many countries and the loss of jobs for a considerable part of the population worldwide. Billions of people have reached a state of mind where they don’t trust their government anymore.5 Seen from a geographic point of view, symptoms of crisis are found nearly everywhere. The ‘Arab Spring’ was followed by a series of wars and civil wars, serious human rights violations and many millions of refugees. The internal situation is not better in Eritrea, South Sudan, Somalia, Yemen or Honduras. Venezuela and Argentina, once among the richer states of the world, face huge economic challenges, and neighbouring Brazil has gone through many years of recession and political turmoil. Russia and several East European countries are struggling with major economic and political problems in their post-communist phase. Japan finds it difficult to overcome decadelong stagnation, and to deal with the 2011 tsunami and ensuing nuclear disaster. And the temporary economic upswing several African countries have enjoyed lost its dynamism as soon as the prices of mineral resources collapsed, and partly due to very unusual droughts. Land grabbing is plaguing much of Africa, but also other parts of the world, leading to involuntary dislocations of millions of people and the related problems with refugees both within countries and abroad.6 The response of governments has been concentrated, at worst, on managing their own political image, and at best to treat the symptoms of the crisis, not the cause. The problem is that the political class in the whole world is strongly influenced by investors and by powerful private companies. This indicates that the current crisis is also a crisis of global capitalism. Since the 1980s, capitalism has moved from furthering the economic development of countries, regions and the world towards maximizing profits, and then to a large extent profits from speculation. In addition, the capitalism unleashed since 1980 in the Anglo-Saxon world, and since 1990 worldwide, is mainly financial. This trend was supported by excessive deregulation and liberalization of the economy (see Sect. 2.4). The term ‘shareholder value’ popped up in the business pages of the media worldwide, as if that was now the new epiphany and guardrail for all economic action. In reality, it served to narrow business down to short-term gains, often at the expense of social and ecological values. The myth of shareholder value has been effectively debunked in a recent book by Lynn Stout.7 A different, if related, feature of ‘disarray’ is the rise of aggressive, mostly rightwing movements against globalization in OECD countries, often referred to as populism. These have become overt through Brexit and the Trump victory in the United States. As Fareed Zakaria observes, ‘Trump is part of a broad populist

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upsurge running through the Western world. … In most (countries), populism remains an opposition movement, although one that is growing in strength; in others, such as Hungary, it is now the reigning ideology’.8 This phenomenon of right-wing populism can be explained to an extent by the ‘trunk valley of the elephant curve’ (Fig. 1.1) 9 showing the decline of developed world middle classes, during a 20-year period. While more than half of the world’s population was enjoying over 60% income rises, OECD’s middle classes suffered losses caused mainly by the deindustrialization and job losses in major parts of the United States, Britain and other countries. In the United States, the median income increased by a meagre 1.2% since 1979. The stunning income growth on the left-hand side of the curve, the ‘back of the elephant’, lifting some two billion people out of poverty, was caused mainly by China’s and some other countries’ economic success. What remains invisible on the picture is the far end of ‘the trunk of the elephant’: The richest 1% of the world and, more revolting, the richest eight persons of the world now own as much wealth as the poorest half of the world population combined, a figure publicized by Oxfam during the 2017 World Economic Forum.10 The ‘elephant curve’ gives an incomplete picture for a second reason. The Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) has proposed a Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) going beyond just income and including ten indicators around health, education and living standards. Using that MPI, OPHI counts 1.6 billion people living in ‘multidimensional poverty’ in 2016 – nearly twice as many as the number of people living in extreme poverty measured by income alone.11 Thirdly, the interpretation of the curve requires an analysis of the people in each percentile group. In fact, they tend to move. And the curve does not distinguish those in Russia and East European countries who lost much of their income after 1990 from those in Detroit or middle England who, for very different reasons, also were among the losers.12 Another fact cannot be seen in the picture: the massive shift of money and income from the manufacturing and trade sectors to the financial sector.13 Bruce Bartlett, a senior policy advisor to both the Reagan and Bush administrations, argues that this ‘financialization’ of the economy is the cause of income inequality, falling wages and the poor performance. David Stockman, Reagan’s director of the Office of Management and Budget, agrees, describing our current situation as ‘corrosive financialization that has turned the economy into a giant casino since the 1970s’.14 Populist politicians in the OECD countries see themselves as speaking for the forgotten ‘ordinary’ people and for genuine patriotism, but they tend to fight and antagonize the people representing democratic institutions – what an irony! For the European Union (EU), the strongest trigger for populism has been the millions of refugees who came or would like to come to Europe from the Near East, from Afghanistan and from Africa. Even the most generous European countries have reached their own assumed limits for receiving these masses of refugees. The EU institutions were too weak (not too powerful, as they are depicted by the new nationalists) to deal with the ‘refugee crisis’, resulting eventually in an identity crisis in the EU. Once a success story of an entity ensuring peace and economic development, the EU has lost some of its unifying narrative. The populist right-wing movements or parties see and criticize the EU as the culprit for all kinds of undesired events. The irony is that continuing the success story would require more, not less, powers for the Union. The Union should be entrusted with border protection, a well-funded common asylum and refugee policy to deal with the refugee crisis and maintain the advantages of the Schengen agreement. And for the re-stabilization of the Euro, the EU or at least the Euro zone needs a common fiscal policy, as the new French President Emmanuel Macron is proposing. But it is these very measures of which nationalist populists are most afraid. The EU in its present form is not without shortcomings. Free market principles have come to dominate EU policymaking, leading to a subordination of other policies, like environment. Notably the UK wanted that priority, as it preferred to see the EU chiefly as a union for mutual trade. And the austerity policies pursued have blocked many benign investments and led to unnecessary suffering among tens of millions of Europeans. Such shortcomings, however, should never be used to put in question the overall objectives of the EU – a union of peace, the rule of law, human rights, cultural understanding and sustainability. Addressing the global crisis of democracy, the German Bertelsmann Foundation has published a 3000-page empirical report on progress (or lack thereof) on democracy and a social market economy, as measured by the Bertelsmann Transformation Index (BTI).15 Over the last few years, the report sees a consistent decay of such parameters as civil rights, free and fair elections, freedom of opinion and of press, freedom of assembly and separation of powers. Within the same time frame, the number of countries in which authoritarian, mostly religious, dogmas influence political decision making rose from 22% to 33%. That report was published before the assaults on democracy and civil rights that occurred in summer 2016 in Turkey or the Philippines. Symptoms of tyranny are spreading, including in some of the countries with a solid tradition of freedom and democracy.16 Let us briefly turn to a different kind of crisis. Well, not exactly a crisis but an unpleasant feature in an otherwise fruitful communication tool, the ‘social media’. Aside from being practical and useful for everyday arrangements and exchange of news and reasonable opinions, social media also have become vehicles for enhancing conflicts and vilification of mostly innocent individuals, and for spreading ‘post truth’ nonsense. Much of the contents of social media political conversation is selfenhancing political rubbish, as those media serve as ‘echo chambers’ for networks of like-minded frustrated citizens.17 An empirical study from China found that anger and indignation are the emotions that are most likely to get viral in the social media, meaning they are multiplied faster and stronger than other emotions.18 The Internet and the social media are also vehicles for ‘bots’ (short for robots) that can disrupt or destroy messages, multiply nonsense and create all kinds of mischief. There are dozens of types of malicious bots (and botnets) to harvest email addresses, to grab content of websites and reuse it without permission, to spread viruses and worms, to buy up good seats for entertainment events, to increase views for YouTube videos or to increase traffic counts in order to extract money from advertisers. A more frightening cause of disarray relates to terrorism. In earlier times, humanity’s violent conflicts occurred mostly between different countries. In recent times, systemic and at least partly religious conflicts prevail, using terror attacks with the explicit intention of making people feel insecure. During much of the twentieth century, religions remained quiet, non-aggressive and geographically confined to rather stable territories. This no longer is true. Partly because of globalized populations moving or being forced to leave their home territories, some factions of Islam have expanded geographically and are claiming strong influence over national states, for example, attacking countries like France with its tradition of laicism that does not permit religion to dominate politics. What tends to be underrepresented in the media is the positive role of religions. In Christian-dominated Europe, liberal and tolerant religion became part of the European identity a century after the Enlightenment successfully discredited the earlier doctrinaire, authoritarian and colonialist-missionary manifestations of the faith. During the Cold War, Christian goals of social cohesion helped build the system of ‘Western values’, often described as the social welfare state, or the ‘social market economy’ (for its partial demise, see Sect. 2.4). With a view towards leading Islam into an equally benign and co-operative social role, some Islamic scholars, such as Syrian born Bassam Tibi, call on Muslims in Europe to integrate into democratic society.19 Tibi, however, is not popular among radical Muslims, to put it mildly. But to understand the radicalization of Islam, one must not underestimate the role played by the West, in particular the United States, in interfering with Near Eastern states. Some would say that the troublesome situations mentioned so far, the recurring topics of media headlines, are only the surface of our world’s ‘disarray’. Deeper and more systemic problems include the breath-taking speed of technological development that may very easily run out of control. One trend is digitization that potentially threatens millions of jobs (see Sect. 1.11.4). Another trend or development can be observed in the biological sciences and technologies. The enormous acceleration of genetic engineering through the CRISPR-Cas9 technology20 is causing fears of monster creation or the extinction of species or varieties not seen as valuable under human utilitarian criteria. Generally, a non-specific feeling is spreading that ‘progress’ has scary sides and that the genie may already have left the bottle (see Sect. 1.11.3). No doubt there is a need to analyse and understand the symptoms and roots of the variety of crises, political, economic, social, technological and environmental. It is also important to recognize the extent to which people perceive the various phenomena of disarray and feel disoriented, and to recognize that the reality and the feelings of disarray have a moral and even religious dimension. 1.1.2 Financialization: A Phenomenon of Disarray An important part of the disorientation relates to financial markets. Historians will look back at the last 30 years with concern, when looking at the explosion in bank balance sheets, backed up by declining levels of equity and massive borrowing. One of the results was a temporary private-sector-led boom. The other was a massive increase in the world’s financial sector (finance, insurance, real estate – FIRE), often called financialization, and subsequently the financial crisis of 2008–2009. Excessive risk-taking developed into a crisis that was close to bringing the whole financial system to a halt. When the bubble burst, many governments were forced to step in with broad support programmes. Governments caught by the new mind-set (see Sect. 2.4) were intimately involved in all of this. True, there are many examples of serious malpractices within the private financial sector. But had it not been for the systematic deregulation of the banks by governments, with the purpose of stimulating economic growth by issuing more debt, the situation would have been radically different. The causes behind the crisis were many and varied: – Excessive lending by the banking industry – Lack of action on the part of regulators and central banks to stop (i) excessive lending, (ii) the spread of exotic financial instruments (synthetic assets and bonds, collateralized mortgage obligations/CMOs, structured debt issues, etc.) and (iii) pure speculative transactions – Opaque tax havens, and the absence of a binding legal framework that is accepted and implemented by the international community, in general, and the major jurisdictions and financial centres – Securitization and distribution by investment banks and other financial actors of mortgage-related assets and investment vehicles transferring the credit risk from the original lender to the ultimate bondholders – Failure by some rating agencies and auditing firms to properly assess and report the inherent risks posed by many of the financial products A deeper analysis is presented by economists Anat Admati and Martin Hellwig21 about the main causes behind the financial crisis. Western banks borrowed far too much with far too little equity in their balance sheets to act as a buffer if things went wrong in their business – from trading in the multitrillion-dollar derivatives markets to often reckless lending on real estate. In the decades following the Second World War, banks operated with between 20% and 30% of their liabilities as equity. By 2008, that had shrunk to just 3%. Banks obviously believed that they had invented instruments that removed the risk, allowing them to run their banks with a tenth of the buffer they had before. It proved to be very unrealistic. But they counted with the state to underwrite their risks. Bankers have enriched themselves spectacularly in the process. They made themselves ‘too big to fail’ – and too big to jail. The 2008 financial crisis was mostly caused by that irresponsible greed.22 Yet, in 2009, not only did bankers avoid criminal prosecutions and receive hundreds of billions in government bailouts, but some still paid themselves record bonuses. At the same time, almost nine million households in the United States had to abandon their homes when the value of their houses plummeted and they could no longer service the adjustable-rate mortgages – the so-called foreclosure crisis.23 Financialization refers to the dominance of the financial sector in the global economy and the tendency for accumulated profits (and leverage) to flow into real estate and other speculative investment. Debt is an intrinsic element in this process. In the United States, for example, both household debt and private sector debt more than doubled relative to GDP between 1980 and 2007.24 The same is true for most OECD countries. At the same time, ‘the value of financial assets grew from four times GDP in 1980 to ten times GDP in 2007 and the finance sector’s share of corporate profits grew from about 10% in the early 1980s to almost 40% by 2006’.25 Adair Turner, chair of the UK’s Financial Services Authority in the years following the 2007–2008 crisis, regards unchecked private credit creation as the key system fault that led to that crisis with its devastating consequences.26 From this follows that the financial sector constitutes a significant and increasing risk factor in the economy. The degree of financialization varies from country to country but the increase in the power of finance is general. The current finance sector evolved in the context of the deregulation that gathered pace from the late 1970s and expanded dramatically after the 1999 removal of the separation between commercial and investment banking in the United States.27 This barrier had been put in place in 1933 by the Roosevelt administration in response to the Wall Street Crash of 1929, when a period of rampant credit creation and financial speculation collapsed. Similar speculation preceded the crisis of 2007–2008: The face value of financial products reached US$640 trillion in September 2008, 14 times the GDP of all the countries on earth.28 Lietaer et al.29 compare speculation with ordinary money transfers paying for goods and services: ‘In 2010, the volume of foreign exchange transactions reached $4 trillion per day’, which does not even include derivatives. In comparison, ‘one day’s exports or imports of all goods and services in the world amount to about 2% of those $4 trillion’. Transactions not paying for goods and services, almost by definition are speculative. Such financial products and transactions, the authors continue, lead regularly to monetary crashes, sovereign debt crises and systemic crashes with an average of more than ten countries in crisis every year. One of the consequences of this development is that a significant part of economic growth has been distributed to the wealthy, as mentioned with the new Oxfam figures in the previous subchapter. Practices within the financial sector demonstrate a disregard for the impact they have on both people and the planet. That includes a distinct short-termism, the ratio of banks’ reserves to their loans, the ratio of banks’ lending that support the real economy versus speculation in property and derivatives, unchecked credit creation – in fact money creation – and the failure to account for long-term climate and environmental risks. In the words of Otto Scharmer at MIT,30 ‘We have a system that accumulates oversupply of money in areas that produce high financial and low environmental and social returns, while at the same an undersupply of money in areas that serve important societal investment needs’. The failure to account for environmental risks means that the pressure on already scarce natural resources accelerates – trees are felled, waterways polluted, wetlands drained and the exploitation of oil, gas and coal accelerating, as long as there is demand. It also means that huge savings, among them pension funds, are locked into investments in fossil-based assets. Such assets are increasingly looked upon as high-risk assets (see Sect. 3.4).

#### Their emphasis on communication and plan focus, especially as it pertains to circulating information about a topic concerned with democracy, intensifies communicative capitalism.

\*communicative capitalism, a manifestation of capitalism theorized obviously via mediums of communications, emphasizes ideas of discussion and participation that intensifies capitalist networks. Their political imaginary is concerned with democracy, which isn’t a political ideal; but a marketing slogan. Think about it! Their emphasis on openness of communication and advocacy is the same means by which companies like AT&T mobile market their products, as giving you quick access to the open exchange of ideas on the internet and social media.

\*the way that AOC has been distorted – comm cap reduces ideas to “eat the rich” which become recirculated in horrible tilted ways

\*turns their fw args—they don’t produce skills, they produce people who aspire towards engagement that identifies problems and proposes solutions in a capitalist paradigm. Their debate is just as much about the affective economy, the competitive success and the public display of their research, as it is about their scholarship; which is the same means by which debates in the public are “democratic” but are really just ratings drivers.

Dean 19 – [Jodi Dean is an American political theorist and professor in the Political Science department at Hobart and William Smith Colleges; “Communicative capitalism: this is what democracy looks like,” 2019, pg. 33-35] julian

Communicative capitalism designates a specific convergence of capitalism and democracy, one where the values heralded as central to democracy take material form in networked communications technologies. Ideals of access, voice, inclusion, discussion, and participation come to be realized in and through expansions, intensifications, and interconnections of global telecommunications. Changes in information and communication networks associated with digitalization, speed (of computer processors as well as connectivity), and memory/storage capacity impact capitalism and democracy, accelerating and amplifying elements of each as they consolidate the two into a new formation (Dean 2002, 2004, 2005, 2009a).

When communication is the means of capitalist subsumption, what are the repercussions for democracy? That is, if participation and debate – sharing and exchanging ideas, mobilizing politically, dissenting, even revolting – are primary components of the production and circulation of capital, what efficacy do they have as mechanisms for the rule of the people? My answer is that communicative capitalism’s realization of democracy eats up democracy’s use value. Democracy is not enough. It’s inadequate as a political ideal. Under conditions of communicative capitalism where democracy is the ambient milieu of inescapable participatory media, it cannot express the people’s desire and need for economic basics like food, shelter, education, work, and health (not to mention economic equality, ecological sustainability, and the end of exploitation).

For the last thirty years or so – in fact, throughout the period of neoliberal capitalism’s consolidation – participatory media has offered quick, easy, universal democracy: anyone with a mobile phone or access to the internet can make her voice heard. Everyone has a voice – and the internet lets us all express them. In this setting, democracy is a marketing slogan – the means of extension for AT&T and T-mobile and Microsoft. When linked to new media, democracy tags a politics lite that anyone can get behind (it’s not controversial or antagonistic) and that is especially attractive to purveyors of mobile phones, notebook computers, software, and social media platforms.

Our setting, then, is one of the convergences of communication and capitalism in a formation that incites voice, engagement, and participation only to capture them in the affective networks of mass personalized media. These networks materialize a contradiction. On the one hand, social media networks (and communicative capitalism more generally) produce a common, a collective information and communication mesh through which affects and ideas circulate (Hardt and Negri 2011). On the other, these networks presuppose and intensify individualism such that widely shared ideas and concerns are conceived less in terms of a self-conscious collective than they are as viruses, mobs, trends, moments, and swarms. It’s odd, isn’t it, this transformation of collectivity into the terms of epidemiology – an idea or image with an impact “goes viral.” Channeled through cellular networks and fiber optic cables, onto screens and into sites for access, storage, retrieval, and counting, communication today is captured in the capitalist circuits it produces and amplifies (Dean 2010).

This entrapment in capitalist circuits is the condition of possibility for communication’s transformation of production. Because contemporary capitalism is communicative, democratic rhetorics of access, transparency, voice, discussion, reflection, and participation strengthen the hold of capitalism in networked societies. Thus, the problems this democratic rhetoric identifies and the solutions it entails channel political energies into activities that reinforce the conditions of inequality it ostensibly contests. Disruptive events, intense debates, are economic opportunities – ratings drivers, chances for pundits to opine and opinions to be expressed and circulated – as much as they are political exercises.

To clarify the way preoccupation with process and media protect neoliberalism’s redistribution of wealth to the very, very rich, I set out three key features of communicative capitalism: the change in the form of our utterances from messages to contributions, the decline of symbolic efficiency, and the reflexive trap of the circuits of drive. In describing these features, my concern is with the effects of the merger of communication and capitalism on the subjects we are – what are the repercussions for the way we communicate, the way we think of ourselves, the way we enjoy? I then take up forms of exploitation specific to communicative capitalism. Whereas industrial capitalism exploited labor (the industry of workers), communicative capitalism exploits communication. Again, my basic claim is that communicative capitalism materializes and repurposes democratic ideals ~~and aspirations in ways that strengthen and support globalized neoliberalism. The proliferation, distribution, acceleration, and intensification of communicative access and opportunity produce a deadlocked democracy incapable of serving as a form for progressive political and economic change. What we have now – debate, discussion, inclusion, opportunities for dissent – is democratic. This is what democracy looks like. And since this is what democracy looks like, we should aspire to and fight for something else, something that will smash the hold of capitalism and claim the common for and as the common.~~

#### It turns the case. The current juridical-political order makes strikes ineffective.

White 18 – Ahmed White is Nicholas Rosenbaum Professor of Law, University of Colorado-Boulder. (“ITS OWN DUBIOUS BATTLE: THE IMPOSSIBLE DEFENSE OF AN EFFECTIVE RIGHT TO STRIKE,” 2018, pg. 1127–1129) julian

So it is that workers have found themselves with a right to strike that equals little more than a right to quit work-and maybe lose their jobs or their houses and savings in the balance. They have a right to strike, as Steinbeck's character, Mac, complained, but they "can't picket"-at least, not in a way that is really apt to change anything. And so they do not strike-in fact, under these circumstances they usually should not strike.

The proof of this is readily evident, not only in the dramatic decrease in strikes since the 1970s, but in the sad regularity with which even the most vibrant strikes have ended in defeat for workers. Phelps Dodge (1983), Greyhound (1983 and 1990), Hormel (1985-1986), Caterpillar (1992, 1993, and 1994-1995), Detroit Daily News/Daily Free Press (1995-1997)-these are but the most notable of a litany of vibrant strikes since the 1970s that ended in failure.306 They are, in fact, the definitive labor struggles of this period, overshadowing a much smaller number of comparable disputes, like the strikes at United Parcel Service in 1997 and Verizon in 2016 that-often shaped by uniquely favorable labor dynamics-ended in something resembling victory for the union.307 Each of these big and unsuccessful strikes was motived by very modest, in fact anti-concessionary, goals and well-supported by workers and the larger public alike. And each featured mass picketing and other attempts at militancy. But these tactics were met with injunctions, civil suits, mass arrests, and criminal prosecutions, which ended the protests and left the employers free to exert their vast advantages in material wealth and political power, end the disputes on their terms, and leave thousands of strikers unemployed.308

It is true that the last year or so has witnessed what many people have declared to be a miniature strike wave, that has been widely celebrated by unionists and their allies as a welcome departure from past trends and portent, many hope, of a sustained resurgence of labor activism."309 Headlined by statewide teachers strikes in West Virginia, Oklahoma, and Arizona, all in the first part of 2018, the strikes commanded a great deal of media coverage, at least compared to what labor disputes usually receive nowadays.310 However, closer inspection suggests that this wave is mainly an artifact of wishful thinking exacerbated by the novelty for many people nowadays of seeing these strikes reported in the media. For in fact, the number of strikes over the last couple of years has remained close to the level that has prevailed for several decades now."'

Perhaps more significant in putting these strikes in proper context is a reflection on their character. None have been organizing strikes. All of these strikes have been over contracts and working conditions, with many driven by workers' opposition to concessions and ended with less than spectacular gains by the strikers.3 12 Moreover, the strikes which comprise this supposed wave have been disproportionately mounted by government workers-teachers, mainly-who are not covered by the National Labor Relations Act. For this reason, several of the strikes have been unlawful, as state law typically denies such workers the right to strike anyway. But at the same time-and this may be the most crucial point-none of these strikes has unfolded in an especially militant way, at least by historical standards. There have been no big sit-down strikes, no threatening episodes of mass picketing, no routing of "scabs," no destruction of property. Which is all to say that the kinds of strikes that built the labor movement eighty or more years ago remain thoroughly in check.

#### Vote neg to refuse the aff’s neoliberal legalism and endorse a democratic approach to law. This is a prerequisite to effective reform.

Grewal and Purdy 17 – David Grewal, Associate Professor at Yale Law School, Jedediah Purdy, Robinson O. Everett Professor at Duke Law School, November 6th ("Law & Neoliberalism," Law and Political Economy, Available online at <https://lpeblog.org/2017/11/06/law-neoliberalism/>, Accessed 04-20-2019)

What do neoliberal arguments look like in practice? Broadly speaking, they treat market-modeled transactions as normative – natural, obviously desirable, self-evidently the sort of thing the Constitution protects, etc. – and abstract away from considerations of distribution and attention to competing values, especially democratic ones. So, you might notice that you are invited to consider the Coase theorem throughout law school, but not an equally utopian image of egalitarianism. You might observe the ease with which the Supreme Court extends protection of free speech to spending money, first in political campaigns, then in advertising and even transfers of marketing data with no evident relation to public debate, let alone to any clear conception of what role democratic decisions ought to play in balancing and controlling, rather than channeling, concentrations of private wealth. You might notice how little attention the abortion-rights portion of your constitutional law class pays to cases permitting Congress to prohibit public spending on abortions, or to the larger question (to which these policies are central) of how meaningful the right can be in the absence of a medical infrastructure in which to exercise it. You might ask how the field of antitrust came to be dominated by wealth-maximizing efficiency analysis when it was historically rooted in a conception of the way that productive capital and other economic power and roles should be distributed among members of a democracy. Neoliberal arguments are not necessarily coded in legal culture as right-wing or as “about the economy.” Sometimes, instead, they carry forward “public-law” values of freedom and equality in ways that are indifferent to the context of political economy. An urgent and genuine defense of abortion rights may be desperately incomplete if it takes the Supreme Court’s cues and ignores the dimension of medical infrastructure. A poetic invocation of the principle of Brown v. Board of Education may translate into a constitutional ban on the government’s taking account of structural inequality in formulating race-conscious policies. A poetic account of the dignity of democracy may conclude by insisting that unlimited campaign spending confirms that the people rule. (These examples are not invented.) Neoliberalism doesn’t replace public-law or even “progressive” commitments with economic reductionism, but instead bolsters versions of these commitments that tend to neglect the deeper logic of law’s involvement in political economy. There are often powerful, elegant, or simply very interesting arguments for neoliberal positions, from Hayek’s account of law as a kind of information-processing system for economic life to the doctrinal steps involved in extending free-speech protection to campaign spending. Nothing here is intended to suggest that calling these examples “neoliberalism” could be an excuse for not paying them close attention and trying to learn from them. But these forms of argument and habits of thought have been extremely powerful in legal practice, scholarship, and teaching. ~~Identifying neoliberalism as a form of legal reasoning is a way of getting to grips with the law’s under-engagement with themes of political economy: the ways that economic and political life are mutually shaped by the medium of law, and always involve competing ways of balancing or integrating competing conceptions of efficiency, democracy, liberty, equality, and so forth. The family of arguments that we are calling neoliberal should be understood as interested participants in this inevitable contest, not as rising above it or providing the only possible terms in which to conduct it. Stepping outside neoliberal arguments can be an essential first step in imagining the law and political economy of a democratic society of equals.~~

## Case

u/v

#### 1] Strikes imply lack of deliberation – they happen when workers and employers choose to not negotiate

No negotiations now

#### 2] White 18 – the strikes that would happen under neolib enivornment conclude in bad deliberations that exclude future workers from good benefits – that turns the case

Answered on K

#### 3] Conditional strikes imply deliberation among strikers occurs under specific scenarios – that improves strikings’ ability to improve deliberation

#### 4] No reason strikes have to be “unconditional” – condo strikes solve

No current law – means no strikes

Supports oil

### ~~Advantage~~

#### ~~Unions don’t solve inequality – they’re too weak and tons of alt causes~~

~~Epstein 20 [Richard A. Epstein Peter and Kirsten Bedford Senior Fellow @ the Hoover Institution. "The Decline Of Unions Is Good News." https://www.hoover.org/research/decline-unions-good-news]~~

~~So what then could justify this inefficient provision? One common argument is that unions help reduce the level of income inequality by offering union members a high living wage, as seen in the golden age of the 1950s. But that argument misfires on several fronts. Those high union wages could not survive in the face of foreign competition or new nonunionized firms. The only way a union can provide gains for its members is to extract some fraction of the profits that firms enjoy when they hold monopoly positions.~~

~~When tariff barriers are lowered and domestic markets are deregulated, as with the airlines and telecommunications industries, the size of union gains go down. Thus the sharp decline in union membership from 35 percent in both 1945 and 1954 to about 15 percent in 1985 led to no substantial increase in the fraction of wealth earned by the top 10 percent of the economy during that period. However, the income share of the top ten percent rose to about 40 percent over the next 15 years as union membership fell to below 10 percent by 2000.~~

~~But don’t be fooled—that 5 percent change in union membership cannot drive widespread inequality for the entire population, which is also affected by a rise in the knowledge economy as well as a general aging of the population. The far more powerful distributive effects are likely to be those from nonunion workers whose job prospects within a given firm have been compromised by higher wages to union workers.~~

~~It is even less clear that the proposals of progressives like Sanders, Warren, and Buttigieg to revamp the labor rules would reverse the decline of unions. Not only is the American labor market more competitive, but the work place is no longer dominated by large industrial assembly lines where workers remain in their same position for years. Today, workforces are far more heterogeneous and labor turnover is far higher. It is therefore much more difficult for a union to organize a common front among workers with divergent interests.~~

~~Employers, too, have become much more adept at resisting unionization in ways that no set of labor laws can capture. It is no accident that plants are built in states like Tennessee and Mississippi, and that facilities are designed in ways to make it more difficult to picket or shut down. None of these defensive maneuvers would be necessary if, as I have long advocated, firms could post notices announcing that they will not hire union members, as they could do before the passage of the NLRA.~~

#### ~~Unions are vulnerable to right-wing populism – the plan creates divisions~~

~~Gruenberg 21 [Mark Gruenberg is head of the Washington, D.C., bureau of People's World. He is also the editor of Press Associates Inc. (PAI), a union news service in Washington, D.C. that he has headed since 1999. Previously, he worked as Washington correspondent for the Ottaway News Service, as Port Jervis bureau chief for the Middletown, NY Times Herald Record, and as a researcher and writer for Congressional Quarterly. Mark obtained his BA in public policy from the University of Chicago and worked as the University of Chicago correspondent for the Chicago Daily News. "Worldwide, union leaders grapple with members backing right-wing ‘populists’." https://peoplesworld.org/article/worldwide-union-leaders-grapple-with-members-backing-right-wing-populists/]~~

~~WASHINGTON—For years, union leaders on both sides of “The Pond”—also known as the Atlantic Ocean—have faced a problem: Right-wing ideologues’ “populist” rhetoric sways millions of their members to vote against their own interests.~~

~~And then once those putative plutocrats achieve public office, they show their true colors, by enacting and enforcing repressive pro-corporate anti-worker laws.~~

~~The problem is visible in the U.S., where 40% of union members and their families backed former GOP Oval Office occupant Donald Trump in 2020. But it’s not just Trump.~~

~~Over the years, millions supported other right-wing Republicans such as Sens. Mitch McConnell (Ky.), Ted Cruz (Texas), various U.S. representatives, Gov. Greg Abbott (Texas), and former Govs. Bruce Rauner (Ill.) and Scott Walker (Wis.).~~

~~All of them, especially Trump and Cruz, spout populist bombast and claim to represent workers—and then enact edicts benefiting the corporate class.~~

~~“Trump’s policies favored the rich and the well-connected. But four in ten union voters wanted to give him a second term” last November, said Knut Pankin, moderator of a late-March panel discussion on Right-Wing Populism As An Anti-Worker Agenda. “Why?”~~

~~The dilemma exists in other democracies, too. Some unionists heeded anti-immigrant screeds from Germany’s extreme right Alternative for Deutschland, Marine LePen’s French National Rally (formerly the National Front), Norbert Hofer’s Austrian Freedom Party, Hungarian Prime Minister/strongman Viktor Orban of Fidesz, and Poland’s Law and Justice Party, panelists said.~~

~~Once those blocs won power in Austria, Poland, and Hungary, or influenced elections in France, mainstream politicians followed their lead, cracking down on workers as well as targeting migrants. The pols feared they would otherwise lose more votes to the right.~~

~~The panel, sponsored by Georgetown University’s Kalmanovitz Initiative for Labor and the Working Poor, and the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, a foundation set up to foster U.S.- German relations, tried to figure out why workers vote that way—and how to reorient them.~~

~~That’s not to say panelists Vonda McDaniel, president of the Nashville, Tenn., Central Labor Council, Prof. Federico Finchelstein, an expert on East European politics at New York’s New School for Social Research, and Prof. Thomas Greven of the Free University of Berlin reached a conclusion. They offered some reasons for the rightward shift and some solutions.~~

~~All those parties, including the GOP, “started as bourgeois, middle-class, shopkeeper-oriented” organizations, but have since pivoted to right-wing populism, Greven explained.~~

~~“Cruz at the Conservative Political Action Conference was trying to be the inheritor of the white working class who supported Trump,” he contended. The Texan proclaimed the GOP “the party of steelworkers, construction workers, police officers, firefighters, and waitresses.”~~

~~Nationalism, protectionism, and racism~~

~~“But one common denominator” is the GOP and the other right-wing parties, plus the workers they appeal to, “have a radicalized response” that “is nationalist, protectionist and nativist…to all facets of globalization,” he said. Those facets include corporate export of workers’ jobs to low-wage nations and resentment of refugees and migrants, often people of color whom white nativists in Europe and the U.S. view as a threat.~~

~~“’Us versus them’ is much easier to sell to working-class constituents. Union status doesn’t inoculate people versus right-wing populism,” Greven said. While populists’ pro-worker rhetoric is “a charade,” and progressives’ answer, “tax the rich,” is not enough, he added.~~

#### ~~Strikes lead to backlash bills which weaken unions – empirically proven. Partelow ‘19~~

~~Lisette Partelow [Lisette Partelow is the director of K-12 Strategic Initiatives at American Progress. Her previous experience includes teaching first grade in Washington, D.C., working as a senior legislative assistant for Rep. Dave Loebsack (D-IA), and working as a legislative associate at the Alliance for Excellent Education. She has also worked at the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Education and Labor and the American Institutes for Research. “Analysis: A Looming Legislative Backlash Against Teacher Strikes? Why Walkouts Could Become Illegal in Some States, With Strikers Facing Fines, Jail, or Loss of Their License”. 02-18-2019. The 74. https://www.the74million.org/article/analysis-a-looming-legislative-backlash-against-teacher-strikes-why-walkouts-could-become-illegal-in-some-states-with-strikers-facing-fines-jail-or-loss-of-their-license/. Accessed 11-3-2021; MJen]~~

~~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.~~