**Feminism AC**

**Rosemount LD**

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

**The standard is mitigating oppression**

**Reasons to prefer:**

**1.Recognizing structural inequalities is a prerequisite to any institutional reforms.**

**Laxer 14**

Laxer, Michael. “Part of the Problem: Talking about Systemic Oppression.” Feminist Current, 10 Nov. 2014, https://www.feministcurrent.com/2014/11/10/part-of-the-problem-talking-about-systemic-oppression/. recut- KH

**Systemic oppressions result in**very real**violence and**human**degradation**. Systemic misogyny, patriarchy, colonialism and racism have horrific consequences that we witness daily in our streets, communities and on the news. **Unless we,**especially those of  us like myself who are white men,**are willing** to acknowledge the fact ofour colonialist civilization, are willing **to confront**the fact of**our**legacy and **continuation of systemic racism**, are willing to acknowledge the role men play, collectively and individually, in the creation of a culture of misogyny, then **how can we seek to be allies to**those**communities**and movements that are **fighting to end the long and terrible history of institutionalized brutality** that directly benefited us and whose continuing, daily and pervasive manifestations still do? This is why talking about, **seeking to understand** and seeking to acknowledge **our collective role in systemic oppression is an absolute necessity**. **Without doing so, it is very difficult to see** how **our society**and civilization can ever begin to**move past it.**

**2. Since justice requires rectifying actual mistreatment, we should address material conditions of violence first.**

**Pappas 16**

Pappas, Gregory Fernando. [Texas A&M University] “The Pragmatists’ Approach to Injustice.” The Pluralist, Volume 11, Number 1, Spring 2016. BE

In Experience and Nature, Dewey names the empirical way of doing philosophy the “denotative method” (LW 1:371).18 What Dewey means by “denotation” is simply the phase of an empirical inquiry where we are con- cerned with designatin

as free from theoretical presuppositions as possible, the concrete problem (subject matter) for which we can provide different and even competing descriptions and theories. Thus an **empirical inquiry about** an **injustice must begin with** a rough and tentative **designation of where**the **injustices** from within the broader context of our everyday life and activities **are.** Once we designate the subject matter, we then engage in the inquiry itself, including diagnosis, possibly even constructing theories and developing concepts. Of course, that is not the end of the inquiry. We must then take the results of that inquiry “as a path pointing and leading back to something in primary experience” (LW 1:17). This looping back is essential, and it neverends as long as there are new experiences of injustice that may require a revi- sion of our theories. **Injustices are**events **suffered by** **concrete people** at a particular time and in a situation. **We need to start by pointing out and describing these problematic experiences instead of starting with a theoretical account** or diagnosis of them. Dewey is concerned with the consequences of not following the methodological advice to distinguish designation from diagnosis. Definitions, theoretical criteria, and diagnosis can be useful; they have their proper place and function once inquiry is on its way, but if stressed too much at the start of inquiry, they can blind us to aspects of concrete problems that escape our theoretical lenses. We must attempt to pretheoretically designate the subject matter, that is, to “point” in a certain direction, even with a vague or crude description of the problem**.**He adds: Just as with the doctor, empirical inquirers about injustice must return to the concrete problem for testing, and should never forget that their conceptual abstractions and general knowledge are just means to ameliorate what is particular, context-bound, and unique. In reaching a diagnosis, the doc- tor, of course, relies on all of his background knowledge about diseases and evidence, but a good doctor never forgets the individuality of the particular problem (patient and illness). The physician in diagnosing a case of disease deals with something in- dividualized. He draws upon a store of general principles of physiology, etc., already at his command. Without this store of conceptual material he is helpless. But he does not attempt to reduce the case to an exact specimen of certain laws of physiology and pathology, or do away with its unique individuality. Rather he uses general statements as aids to direct his observation of the particular case, so as to discover what it is like. They function as intellectual tools or instrumentalities. (LW 4:166) Dewey uses the example of the doctor to emphasize the radical contex- tualism and particularism of his view. The good doctor never forgets that this patient and “this ill is just the specific ill that it is. It never is an exact duplicate of anything else.”22 Similarly, the empirical philosopher in her in- quiry about an injustice brings forth general knowledge or expertise to an inquiry into the causes of an injustice. She relies on sociology and history as well as knowledge of different forms of injustice, but it is all in the service of inquiry about the singularity of each injustice suffered in a situation. The correction or refinement that I am making to Anderson’s character- ization of the pragmatists’ approach is not a minor terminological or scholarly point; it has methodological and practical consequences in how we approach an injustice. The distinction between the diagnosis and the problem (the ill- ness, the injustice) is an important functional distinction that must be kept in inquiry because it keeps us alert to the provisional and hypothetical aspect of any diagnosis. **To rectify or improve any diagnosis, we must return to the concrete problem;** as with the patient, this may require attending as much as possible to the uniqueness of the problem. This is in the same spirit as Anderson’s preference for an empirical inquiry that tries to “capture all of the expressive harms” in situations of injustice. But this requires that we begin with and return to concrete experiences of injustice and not by starting with a diagnosis of the causes of injustice provided by studies in the social sciences, as in (5) above. For instance, a diagnosis of causes that are due to systematic, structural features of society or the world disregards aspects of the concrete experiences of injustice that are not systematic and structural. Making problematic situations of injustice our explicit methodological commitment as a starting point rather than a diagnosis of the problem is an important and useful imperative for nonideal theories. It functions as a directive to inquirers toward the problem, to locate it, and designate it before venturing into descriptions, diagnosis, analysis, clarifications, hypotheses, and reasoning about the problem. These operations are instrumental to its ame- lioration and must ultimately return (be tested) by the problem that sparked the inquiry. The directive can make inquirers more attentive to the complex ways in which such differences as race, culture, class, or gender intersect in a problem of injustice. Sensitivity to complexity and difference in matters of injustice is not easy; it is a very demanding methodological prescription because it means that no matter how confident we may feel about applying solutions designed to ameliorate systematic evil, our cures should try to address as much as possible the unique circumstances of each injustice**.** The analogy with medical inquiry and practice is useful in making this point, since the hope is that someday we will improve our tools of inquiry to prac- tice a much more personalized medicine than we do today, that is, provide a diagnosis and a solution specific to each patient.

**Contention One is Gender Inequality**

**Subpoint A: Jobs dominated by women cannot strike**

**Women make up a majority of public sector jobs**

**Cooper & Wolfe 20** (David Cooper is the director of the Economic Analysis and Research Network. Julia Wolfe is an economic analyst. “Cuts to the state and local sector will disproportionately harm women and Black workers,” Economic Policy Institute, <https://www.epi.org/blog/cuts-to-the-state-and-local-public-sector-will-disproportionately-harm-women-and-black-workers/>)

Historically, **the** [**public sector has been a key employer for women and people of color**](https://www.epi.org/publication/bp339-public-sector-jobs-crisis/)**.** During the Civil Rights era of the 1960s and 1970s, the federal government—through executive actions and legislation—adopted various anti-discrimination and affirmative action measures that boosted the employment of women and Black workers in government. Now, decades later, all state and local government jobs are subject to the federal regulations requiring equal opportunity, and some states and localities have additional affirmative action programs. Consequently, state and local government has generally achieved a more diverse workplace than the private sector.

Now, as millions of state and local jobs are put at risk, the disproportionate representation of women and Black workers in those jobs means that, all else being equal, they will disproportionately feel the pain of state and local budget cuts. Figure A shows the share of state and local government employment that women workers represent. For decades**, women have made up the majority of the state and local government workforce, and in 2019, they made up 60% of all state and local public-sector workers.**

**And, these jobs are barred from striking  
Campbell 19** (Alexia Fernandez Campbell is a politics and policy reporter. “5 questions about labor strikes that you were too embarrassed to ask,” Vox, <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2019/9/20/20873867/worker-strike-walkout-stoppage-firing-job>)  
“The law protects **the right to strike**, no question,” Ruben Garcia, co-director of the Workplace Law Program at the University of Nevada Las Vegas, said to me, regarding employees in the private sector. “You don’t have to give any notice or any reason for walking.” But this **doesn’t apply to** all workers. The NLRA doesn’t cover certain transportation workers, agricultural laborers, or **public employees. Government employees** — state, local, and federal — **do not have a right to strike under the federal law.**

**Subpoint B: Women’s strikes are key to fighting wage inequality  
Tortorici 17** (Dayna Tortorici is the coeditor and director of n+1 magazine. “While the Iron Is Hot: The Case for the Women’s Strike, “ n+1, <https://www.nplusonemag.com/online-only/online-only/while-the-iron-is-hot/>)

**STRIKES ARE BY NATURE about value. To withdraw your participation in work**, even for a day, **is to ask others to consider the value of that work.** How long can they go without it? When they lose a day of your labor, what do they lose? For millennia, women’s contributions to society have been taken for granted, a fact that has made them difficult to see. **Ever since women first entered the American workforce**, not in the ’70s or the ’40s but in the 1600s, as indentured servants and slaves, **their would-be waged** or “productive” **labor has been worth less than that of their male peers.** Women’s work was and is considered “unskilled”or insignificant, less dangerous or difficult than the work men do. It has therefore been awarded less pay. But of course the real reasonwe devalue women’s work is because women are the ones who do it. **According to a 2009 study** on labor from the journal *Social Forces*, **whenever a considerable number of women enter a field that was once male-dominated**—janitorial work, say, or design, or biology—**wages in that field drop.** (“It’s not that women are always picking lesser things in terms of skill and importance,” one of the researchers told the *New York* *Times*. “It’s just that the employers are deciding to pay it less.”) Meanwhile, when men enter sectors once dominated by women—computer programming, for example—pay goes up. Why? There is no “family wage” that only men can provide: in the US, the average individual’s wage, regardless of sex or gender, is no longer enough to support a family. Every year more and more women become primary- or equal earners in their households; those households should not be punished for the sex of their providers. **Wage inequality is sexist discrimination**, compounded for many of us by other forms of discrimination: against race, religion, sexuality, legal status. Why do employers pay women less money than men? Because they can. Why do women tolerate it? Because we’re accustomed to losing. **The strike is an opportunity to collectively refuse what some would choose to see as inevitable. Then there is the work that has no pay: the uncompensated, “reproductive” labor of keeping other people alive.** Caring for children and family members, cleaning clothes, preparing meals: **most people still don’t consider this “work.”** Only recently have pundits, politicians, and GDP statisticians seen the political advantage of doing so. (Savvy Ivanka, having learned from Hillary Rosen’s mistake in 2012—Rosen came under fire for saying that Ann Romney, mother of five, “never worked a day in her life”—includes stay-at-home moms in her celebration of #womenwhowork. The President, meanwhile, doesn’t “do” child care. “Right,” he said sarcastically to Howard Stern in 2005, “I’m gonna be walking down Fifth Avenue with a baby in a carriage.”) **A strike can measure the value of work through its absence. We will know what unwaged labor does for society by how much people miss it when it’s gone.** Hence “A Day Without a Woman,” the Women’s March on Washington’s slogan for the strike that echoes un día sin inmigrantes, the February 16 strike that sought to reveal how much the US relies on the immigrants it now seeks to deport in ever greater numbers, among them millions of women. “Why is producing cars more valuable than producing children?” as Silvia Federici asked Judith Shulevitz in the *Times* last year? It’s an old question, one that gets answered anew by each generation. The Women’s Strike presents another opportunity to pose it to ours.

**Subpoint C: Wage equality is critical for women of color  
Frye 20** (Jocelyn Frye is a senior fellow at the Center for American Progress. “On the frontlines at work and home: The disproportionate economic effects of the coronavirus pandemic on women of color,” Center for American Progress, <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/frontlines-work-home/>)

**Women of color are integral to the economic stability of their families. Any erosion of their earnings would be disastrous, worsening instability** and robbing families of essential resources. Data consistently show that, across all family structures, women of color play a vital role in providing economic support on which their families rely to make ends meet.In families with children, **many women of color who are mothers are also breadwinners**, meaning that they are the sole earner for their family or earn as much as or more than their partner. A Center for American Progress analysis of 2018 data from the Current Population Survey found that **67.5 percent of Black mothers and 41.4 percent of Latina mothers were the primary or sole breadwinners for their families**, compared with 37 percent of white mothers.Other research analyzing 2014 American Community Survey data found that 67.1 percent of Native American mothers and 44.2 percent of Asian and Pacific Islander mothers provide at least 40 percent of their family’s income.Furthermore, mothers in lower-income families—disproportionately women of color—are far more likely to be breadwinners than mothers in higher-income families: In 2018, an estimated 70 percent of mothers in families in the lowest economic quintile were primary or sole breadwinners, compared with 31 percent of mothers in families in the top income quintile.Looking at families more broadly, data from the Current Population Survey Annual Social and Economic Supplement show that Hispanic women—of any race—and Black women are far more likely than white and Asian women to be single heads of households and, therefore, the main source of support for their family. In 2018, households headed by Black women constituted 41.2 percent of Black family households, and households headed by Hispanic women constituted 24.4 percent of Hispanic family households. In contrast, white women headed only 12.7 percent of white family households, and Asian American women headed 11.7 percent of Asian American family households.While COVID-19’s disruption of industries and economic sectors impairs the ability of women of color to support their families, it is worth noting that these disruptions are occurring on top of existing inequities that have long undermined the economic status of women of color. In addition to the substantial economic responsibilities for their families, **women of color** continue to **experience pay disparities that reduce their overall earnings and undermine their economic stability.** **Women of color consistently earn less than their white and male counterparts.** Among full-time, year-round workers, for every dollar earned by white men, Hispanic women earn 54 cents, Native women earn 57 cents, Black women earn 62 cents, white women earn 79 cents, and Asian women earn 90 cents. And while Asian American women tend to earn the highest wages of all women, there are wide variations across subpopulations, with some groups experiencing a much larger pay gap than others. For example, among full-time, year-round workers, Nepali women earn 50 cents and Cambodian women earn 57 cents for every dollar earned by white men.

**Subpoint D: Women’s strikes combat sexual harassment and poor working conditions  
Kelly 19** (Kim Kelly is a journalist focusing on labor issues. “How women are transforming organized labor,” The Washington Post, https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2019/04/22/how-women-are-transforming-organized-labor/)

This renewed energy is coming disproportionately from women. In fact, **women — and particularly women of color — remain on the front lines of worker-organizing** in a variety of industries, including those our patriarchal society has long coded as "women's work." **Workers in** a slew of **traditionally feminized labor sectors** — from education and domestic work to food service and sex work — **have driven some of the movement's most important victories**. That is critically important both because they now make up the majority of the working class and because their involvement is helping to reshape the priorities of organized labor. Women always have been on the front lines of labor, but during the 1970s, U.S. working-class demographics started their decisive shift toward the current reality *,* one in which the stereotypical "white guy in a hard hat" who once signified the working class has been supplanted by women, specifically women of color. The Coalition of Labor Union Women was founded by union women in 1974, and the 1979 film "Norma Rae" resonated for a reason. Women radicalized by the feminist movements of the '60s and '70s were bringing that energy into the workplace and started demanding more. During the Reagan era, when the 1981 PATCO strike was defeated and organized labor was brought to its knees, women's voices were present, but not amplified. Our moment, in which women are embracing labor to pursue broader goals, provides a striking contrast to the political realities of that time. Building collective power gives women an opportunity to challenge the Trump administration, for instance, which has launched an all-out assault on bodily autonomy, health care, reproductive freedom, abortion rights, civil rights and LGBTQ rights, in addition to its ongoing war on labor. All of these issues intersect in meaningful, personal ways for the women on the picket lines, especially those who are of color, who are undocumented, who are queer, who are trans, who are living outside the gender binary, who are disabled, who are poor, who are raising children or caring for other family members. **Sexual violence** also is an issue that **has become a rallying point** for many in the movement, especially as #MeToo highlighted how pervasive it is across industries. **Domestic workers (80 percent** of whom **are women) and agricultural workers (women make up 32 percent** of the total farmworker population) **experience a disproportionate level of sexual harassment and sexual violence on the job.** A 2010 survey in the California Central Valley reported that 80 percent of women who do farm work had experienced sexual harassment or assault on the job. **Organizers** such as Mónica Ramírez at Justice for Migrant Women **are working to combat sexual assault** in the farm industry. In 2018, more than 7,700 Unite Here hotel workers across the country, from Boston to Chicago to Honolulu, went on strike for improved health care, higher wages and protection from sexual harassment on the job. As Unite Here notes, women, people of color and immigrants make up the majority of its membership. The voices leading those chants on the picket line also were overwhelmingly those of women. Last year saw #NYCStripperStrike, in which strip club workers united under the leadership of organizer Gizelle Marie to combat racial discrimination, job security, pay disparities and worker mistreatment in the city's strip club industry. Despite international efforts to organize sex workers and U.S. activists' ongoing campaigns to decriminalize sex work in the country, sex workers are still extremely vulnerable — especially black trans sex workers, who are at a heightened risk of violence. The decades-old effort to decriminalize sex work has finally reached national prominence thanks in part to Sen. Kamala D. Harris (D-Calif.) reversing her earlier positions and coming out in favor of the idea. The U.S. labor movement, however, has not yet made a concerted effort to support them. Bread-and-butter economic issues have further kindled the fire for thousands of women across the country. **Seventy-seven percent of teachers in the United States are women, and in 2018, thousands of them revolted**, building on a movement that has been gaining steam since the 2012 Chicago teachers' strike. **Underpaid, overworked teachers nationwide went on strike, and many won major concessions** and public sympathy **as they fought for their livelihoods and their students' futures.**

**Subpoint E: Unconditional right to strike is key for public sector workers, especially women and people of color  
Myall 2019** (James Myall is a leader researcher on labor issues, gender and racial equity, and healthcare policy at the Maine Center for Economic Policy. “Right to strike would level the playing field for public workers, with benefits for all of us,” <https://www.mecep.org/blog/right-to-strike-would-level-the-playing-field-for-public-workers-with-benefits-for-all-of-us/>)

The right of workers to organize and bargain with their employer benefits all Mainers. **Collective bargaining leads to better wages, safer workplaces, and a fairer** and more robust **economy** for everyone — not just union members. **The right to strike is critical to collective organizing and bargaining**. Without it, Maine’s public employees are unable to negotiate on a level playing field. **Maine’s Legislature is considering a bill that would give public-sector workers the right to strike.** MECEP supports the legislation, and is urging legislators to enact it. **The right to strike would enable fairer negotiations between public workers and the government.** All of us have reason to support that outcome. Research shows that union negotiations set the bar for working conditions with other employers. And as the largest employer in Maine, the state’s treatment of its workers has a big impact on working conditions in the private sector. Unions support a fairer economy. **Periods of high union membership are associated with lower levels of income inequality**, both nationally and in Maine. Strong unions, including public-sector unions, have a critical role to play in rebuilding a strong middle class. Unions help combat inequities within work places. **Women and people of color in unions face less wage discrimination than those in nonunion workplaces**. On average, wages for nonunionized white women in Maine are 18 percent less than of those of white men. Among unionized workers, that inequality shrinks to just 9 percent. Similarly, women of color earn 26 percent less than men in nonunionized jobs; for unionized women of color, the wage gap shrinks to 17 percent.[[i]](https://www.mecep.org/blog/right-to-strike-would-level-the-playing-field-for-public-workers-with-benefits-for-all-of-us/#_edn1) All of us have a stake in the success of collective bargaining. Buta union without the right to strike loses much of its negotiating power**.** The right to withdraw your labor is the foundation of collective worker action. When state employees or teachers are sitting across the negotiating table from their employers, how much leverage do they really have when they can be made to work without a contract? It’s like negotiating the price of a car when the salesman knows you’re going to have to buy it — whatever the final price is. **Research confirms that public-sector unions are less effective without the right to strike. Public employees with a right to strike earn between 2 percent and 5 percent more** than those without it.[[ii]](https://www.mecep.org/blog/right-to-strike-would-level-the-playing-field-for-public-workers-with-benefits-for-all-of-us/#_edn2) While that’s a meaningful increase for those workers, it also should assuage any fears that a right to strike would lead to excessive pay increases or employees abusing their new right.

**Contention Two is Birth Strikes**

**Subpoint A: Concerns over low birth rates high now - abortion bans prove  
Brown 2019** (Jenny Brown is a member of the National Women’s Liberation and a writer on labor issues. “Abortion is our right to strike,” Jacobin Magazine, ​​https://www.jacobinmag.com/2019/08/abortion-rights-strike-economic-battlefront-birth-rates)

**Politicians** and pundits **are in a froth because the US** [**birth rate**](https://www.npr.org/2019/05/15/723518379/u-s-births-fell-to-a-32-year-low-in-2018-cdc-says-birthrate-is-at-record-level) **is the lowest it has ever been**: 1.72 children per woman. **They fret that the decline in births will create a sluggish economy**. **Conservative commenter** Patrice Lee **Onwuka** [**tweeted** in May](https://twitter.com/patricepinkfile/status/1128982244863959040) that **“sustained low birth rates can be disastrous for our economy** and financial future.” She added that as a new mom, “I did my part to add to the 3.8 mil new babies born last year.” In 2017, then–House Speaker Paul Ryan made [headlines](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/paul-ryans-recipe-for-a-robust-economy-have-more-babies/2017/12/15/dcd767b4-e1dc-11e7-89e8-edec16379010_story.html) for saying, “We need to have higher birth rates in this country,” as he prepared to attack Social Security. But he was just saying what establishment think tanks and policy analysts have been urging for decades. In 2012, conservative columnist Ross Douthat pleaded for “more babies please,” in the New York Times, and **the Wall Street Journal regularly warns that if birth rates continue to slide, the result will be economic stagnation and national decline**. Racist versions have been bursting through, too. Iowa congressperson Steve King, a vigorous opponent of abortion and immigration, tweeted in 2017: “Culture and demographics are our destiny. We can’t rebuild our civilization with somebody else’s babies,” while Florida Republican state senator Dennis Baxley [suggested](https://www.orlandoweekly.com/Blogs/archives/2019/05/20/leave-it-to-florida-republican-dennis-baxley-to-find-an-incredibly-racist-reason-to-ban-abortions) that Alabama’s abortion ban was good because it would encourage white births. Even some liberal feminists are convinced that low birth rates demand austerity. In her 2009 book, feminist and now–New York Times columnist Michelle Goldberg [warns](https://www.amazon.com/Means-Reproduction-Power-Future-World/dp/0143116886/ref=tmm_pap_swatch_0?_encoding=UTF8&qid=1565547424&sr=1-1) of the “grave threats” represented by increasing longevity and falling birth rates: “There will be fewer young workers to support this expanding elderly population,” and “to maintain pension systems, taxes will have to be raised or benefits cut, or both.” **The fact that fewer people are willing to have children isn’t surprising given the undermining of** everything that makes **working-class life** viable. **But it does put the establishment in a bind. If they want to increase the birth rate voluntarily, they will have to put resources into universal childcare, healthcare, paid parental leave, and livable wages** and working hours**.** Naturally, **they’d prefer to take away reproductive liberties because it’s a much cheaper way to boost the birth rate.** **In Texas, where restrictions and regulations closed eighty-two family planning clinics** after 2011, birth control use dropped and [**childbearing rose 27 percent**](https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMsa1511902)compared to areas that still had birth control access. While around 70 percent of the US public supports Roe, there’s big money behind the anti-abortion cause. The Texas restrictions, and anti-abortion laws around the country, [have been pushed](https://rewire.news/article/2013/11/05/anatomy-of-the-war-on-women-how-the-koch-brothers-are-funding-the-anti-choice-agenda/) by the pro-business American Legislative Exchange Council and by Koch brothers–created PACs. The Kochs claim to be libertarians, so we might expect them to defend individual liberty in such matters. But while elite men [may want their own girlfriends to get abortions](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/aug/25/a-republican-theme-on-abortions-its-ok-for-me-evil-for-thee), they’re all business when it comes to the rest of us. They want babies produced cheaply, with a maximum of unpaid labor and a minimum of employer expenditure.

**Subpoint B: Abortion is a condition on birth strikes, which protest poor reproductive working conditions  
Brown 2019**Under these circumstances, even with limited access to birth control and abortion, we are having fewer children than ever. “People say they’re not having kids because it’s insanely expensive,” [explained a summary](https://splinternews.com/people-say-theyre-not-having-kids-because-its-insanely-1827366698) of a 2018 survey showing that **the decision to start a family is being weighed down by childcare costs**, lack of affordable housing, and overwork. But right now women, and all parents, are blaming themselves when they can’t make it work. This is why **it’s important to expose the anti-abortion right as the enforcement arm of an economic system that pushes the costs and burdens of childrearing onto families and relies on women’s unpaid labor.** While lower birth rates are a phony crisis from the standpoint of workers, for the establishment the problem is real. **Their profits**, and capitalist economic growth in general, **rely on a continually expanding workforce replenished with** ever-larger cohorts of **young people to labor and consume** and pay taxes and serve in the military, and to provide for retired workers, either individually through family ties or collectively through Social Security. Immigration has compensated somewhat for slumping birth rates in the United States. Politicians and employers openly discuss immigration as a way to dump the work and expense of raising the next generation of workers onto the mothers, families, communities, and nations that immigrants leave behind. But [pro-immigration Republicans worry](https://www.simonandschuster.com/books/Immigration-Wars/Jeb-Bush/9781476713465) that birth rates are dropping in sending countries, such as Mexico. And now, immigration isn’t making up for the deficit in births. In addition, immigration carries its own political liabilities for the employing class — immigrants may organize against mistreatment, unionize, and eventually vote. [Terrorizing](https://www.jacobinmag.com/2019/08/ice-immigration-customs-enforcement-koch-foods-discrimination-harassment-suit) immigrant communities is only so effective. That is why Republicans, including Trump, support expanding guestworker programs, which place workers in a no-rights twilight zone where they can be deported should they annoy the boss by working too slowly or demanding their rights. If the birthrate is the underlying issue, it is no wonder establishment Democrats are “wimpy” on [abortion](https://jacobinmag.com/2019/01/medicare-for-all-abortion-hyde-amendment) and [even birth control](https://www.nytimes.com/2011/12/09/us/obama-backs-aides-stance-on-morning-after-pill.html). Just like the rest of the ruling class, Democratic elites want to encourage a higher birth rate without additional public or corporate expenditure. And when establishment Democrats do recommend birth control, they emphasize the tax savings. Catherine Rampell [writes](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/a-powerful-tool-in-the-fight-against-poverty/2015/09/24/832c05fe-62f3-11e5-b38e-06883aacba64_story.html) in the Washington Post, “If you want to . . .  discourage people from going on welfare, improve low-income people’s earning potential, and reduce government spending overall, more generous support for family planning services should be on your list.” Raising wages or repealing anti-union laws are not on her list. This is why the [black women](https://www.sistersong.net/reproductive-justice/) who coined the term “reproductive justice” [answer that](https://www.amazon.com/Reproductive-Justice-Introduction-Vision-Century/dp/0520288203) we need “(1) the right not to have a child, (2) the right to have a child, and (3) the right to parent children in safe and healthy environments.” We’ll be stronger in the abortion fight when we recognize that the battle is over our reproductive labor and how cheaply that work will be done. And with a fresh feminist angle showing how attacks on abortion rights and birth control access are about keeping reproductive labor cheap, we have a chance to reach additional women. By connecting our right to refuse reproductive labor to our demands for improved reproductive working conditions, we can move people on this issue. Many women have only been exposed to a feminism of the one percent, which says that any problems you have supporting and raising kids are your personal responsibility. After all, you had a “choice.” Lean in. But socialists and pro-woman feminists insist that women aren’t dumb or brainwashed for having kids — it’s important, difficult work that benefits the whole society. **This is** also **an opportunity for feminists** and the broader movement **to leverage the ruling class’s panic about low birth rates to win things we desperately need.** The organization I’m part of, [National Women’s Liberation](http://womensliberation.org/), suggests that while we should organize for full abortion and reproductive freedom— our right to strike — **we should** also **use our** informal “[**birth strike**](https://secure.pmpress.org/index.php?l=product_detail&p=998)**” to demand the things that make parenting feasible:** expanded and improved **Medicare for All, generous paid parental leaves** for both parents, **a universal childcare system** with a unionized workforce (as with public schools), **and shorter work hours** for everyone with full-time pay. **Abortion is our right to strike against untenable reproductive working conditions.** It is time we defend it on that basis.

**Subpoint C: Birth strikes can effectively challenge climate change  
Featherstone 21** (Liza Featherstone is a journalist focusing on labor issues. She is an adjunct Professor of International and Public Affairs at Columbia School of International and Public Affairs. She is also an adjunct faculty member at NYU’s Journalism Institute. “If politicians want to raise birth rates, they should plass climate policy,” The New Republic, https://newrepublic.com/article/163832/politicians-want-raise-birth-rates-pass-climate-policy)But **the 39 percent of young people hesitating to have kids** aren’t thinking about it from the perspective of carbon footprints. They just **don’t want to inflict the climate crisis on their kids** or to endure the potential terror of fearing for their children in an increasingly dangerous world. It’s in that spirit that **many are considering an undeclared birth strike**. It’s not the first time in history that people have questioned the wisdom of bringing children into a screwed-up world. But this moment is unusual: People don’t usually forgo reproduction en masse out of apocalyptic fear. There is no evidence that Cold War anxieties around nuclear war shaped Americans’ family planning, for example. One reason today is different is that although the idea of nuclear war was undeniably scary, it was only a possibility. **Climate disaster**, on the other hand, **is a current reality with a grim trajectory**: [A study published in *Nature* this week](https://www.science.org/doi/10.1126/science.abi7339) found that if the planet keeps warming at its current pace, **a child who was six years old in 2020 will live through 36 times more heat waves, twice as many wildfires, three times more river floods, and twice as many droughts as an adult born in 1960**, all increasing the risk of crop failures, as well. When we become parents, we worry about every possible danger that our children might face, no matter how unlikely. The fears run in our minds on a loop in what a friend of mine once described as “the horror movie in your head.” It can be reassuring to dismiss the most absurd of our parental worries: It turns out there is statistically no chance that the toddler will drown in the toilet, even though the baby industrial complex will try to sell you a toilet lock to prevent that distressing event. (My husband had to talk me out of this one at Buy Buy Baby, and later presented the cheering stats.) It’s harder to talk oneself down from worrying about car accidents or teen suicides, but these are still only possibilities. Climate change, however, is already here. In this way**, young adults’ climate-induced wariness about parenthood is** more **comparable to birth strikes over** the contemporary context for **child-rearing**. Jenny Brown, in [her 2019 book](https://www.pmpress.org/index.php?l=product_detail&p=998) *Birth Strike: The Hidden Fight Over Women’s Work* (PM Press*)*, argues that a declining birth rate can be an undeclared refusal, by women, to perform work under intolerable conditions. Even before the climate crisis touched mass consciousness, many erstwhile parents in the United States were confronting a lack of societal support—affordable day care, health care, college—and choosing to have fewer children, or none. To Brown, a labor journalist who has been active in National Women’s Liberation and Redstockings, **a birth strike**, like any other strike, **has powerful potential**. In her book, she argues that policymakers and corporate elites want the citizenry to reproduce and provide future workers, and women’s refusal to do so should be framed in political terms, as a demand for better working conditions. Could young people’s climate birth strike alarm elites into addressing the climate crisis? At times **governments have responded to declining birth rates by trying to improve the conditions for reproductive labor**. Though most of it comes from labor activism, some of **Sweden’s famous social welfare state was influenced in part by policymakers’ concerns about falling birth rates**. Bolshevik revolutionary—and government minister—Alexandra Kollontai thought the early Soviet Union should address its low birth rate by making reproduction more appealing: providing state support, including all-day day cares, socialized cooking through public canteens, and maternity hospitals where new mothers could recuperate from birth and spend time with their babies. (Stalin later found much of this program too expensive and simply made abortion illegal.) Similarly, **addressing—and mitigating—the climate crisis would improve the conditions for reproductive labor and make having children far more appealing** for humans today.

**Subpoint D: Climate change disproportionately harms women, worsening working conditions and increasing wage inequality  
McCarthy 20** (Joe McCarthy is a staff writer at Global Citizen, focusing on environmental issues. “Understanding why climate change impacts women more than men,” Global Citizen, https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/how-climate-change-affects-women/)

**Climate change** is a planetary phenomenon that will impact all countries, but its effects are being shaped by pervasive and entrenched gender inequality. Heat waves, droughts, rising sea levels, and extreme storms[**disproportionately affect women**](https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/climate-change-hits-women-harder-un-study-finds/). That’s **because women are more likely** [**to live in poverty than men**](https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/women-extreme-poverty-un-report/), **have** [**less access to basic human rights**](https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/why-global-citizen-is-campaigning-to-levelthelaw/)like the ability to freely move and acquire land, **and** [**face systematic violence**](https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/gender-equality/) **that escalates during periods of instability.** These factors, and many more, mean that as climate change intensifies, women will struggle the most. In fact, the Paris climate agreement [includes specific provisions](https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/english_paris_agreement.pdf) to ensure women receive support to cope with the hazards of climate change. “**The IPCC** [International Panel on Climate Change] **found that gender inequalities are further exaggerated by climate-related hazards, and they result in higher workloads for women, occupational hazards** indoors and outdoors, psychological and emotional stress, **and higher mortality** compared to men,” Verona Collantes, an intergovernmental specialist with UN Women, told Global Citizen. “Gender inequality hampers women’s capacity and potential to be actors of climate action. These gender inequalities — access to and control over resources, access to education and information, and equal rights and access to decision-making processes — define what women and men can do and cannot do in a particular context of climate change,” she added. The future environment is daunting, but it’s not all grim. Women are showing remarkable resilience around the world. They’re leading climate action movements, championing clean sources of energy, and building alternative models of community that focus on sustainability and cooperation. “It’s really important to emphasize that women aren’t merely helpless victims when it comes to climate change,” Mayesha Alam, an expert on climate, women’s rights, and conflict at Yale University, told Global Citizen. “Their participation and leadership can have transformative effects in their countries and communities.” Hurricane Maria struck Puerto Rico in 2017, [becoming the worst storm](https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/puerto-rico-slow-recovery-hurricane-maria/) in modern US history. Nearly 3,000 people were killed by the storm. And tens of thousands of people across the island were displaced. After the storm, women were hit the hardest when it came to recovering from the destruction, [a report from Oxfam found](https://www.oxfamamerica.org/explore/stories/hurricane-maria-put-a-disproportionate-burden-on-women/). “Women were usually the ones who spent hours wringing sodden towels by hand and hanging them to dry, carrying containers of water into the kitchen, bathing children in buckets, or washing floors with rainwater collected in cans. It was exhausting, and demoralizing,” the report said.  **Women** often have to **shoulder a larger burden**, in countless settings, **and it deepens existing gender inequalities**, according to Alam. “**In rural communities** across the globe, **women** and girls **overwhelmingly undertake the labor of gathering** food, water, and **household  energy resources**,” she said. “**As droughts worsen and forests burn, they have to travel further distances and spend more time acquiring these resources**." Climate change is making it harder to manage household responsibilities like cooking, cleaning, gathering resources, and caring for children. This is especially felt in [remote rural communities](https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/end-violence-against-women/2014/poverty).  Natural disasters and saltwater intrusion from rising sea levels can tarnish water quality. Women in parts of India and Bangladesh, for instance, have faced health consequences and seen their economic prospects diminish [as rivers become saltier](https://www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/women-india-water-saltier/).  When droughts and extreme temperatures dry up sources of water, women have to travel longer distances to collect water for cooking, cleaning, and managing gardens. **As a result, they have less time to pursue other sources of income, which prevents them from becoming economically independent.**

**For these reasons, I affirm.**

**1AR Blocks**

**A2 Essential Workers Shouldn’t Strike**

**A2: Teachers**

1. **Cross-apply Kelly 2019 - 77% of teachers in the US are women and education is considered a “feminized” industry.**
2. **These teachers have successfully striked to improve working conditions and learning conditions for their students; strikes KEY to better education, NOT conditions**
3. **Conditions on teachers effectively block women from improving their conditions - this perpetuates sexist discrimination**

**A2: Nurses**

1. **Sexism is the root cause of nurse shortages and poor working conditions; only increasing wages solves  
   Oppenheim 20** (Maya Oppenheim is the Women’s Correspondent for The Independent. “Female nurses paid much less than male counterparts despite dominating sector, report finds,” The Independent, <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/nursing-gender-pay-gap-women-men-staff-shortage-a9306691.html>)

[**Nurses**](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/nursing) **are undervalued due to the sector predominantly being made up of women while female nurses are paid significantly less than their male counterparts**, a damning new report has found. The study, conducted by **the** [**Royal College of Nursing**](https://www.independent.co.uk/topic/royal-college-of-nursing)**, found the “old-fashioned view that caring for others is** a **feminine** characteristic” continues to persevere in British society and **has led to the curtailing of nurses’ wages and working conditions** for generations. Researchers warned **the grave nursing shortage will continue to worsen if pay for nurses is not improved.** While one in nine nursing jobs are left empty, a third of the profession are due to retire by 2026. The report, which also involved Oxford Brookes University, discovered nurses routinely have to turn their hand to responsibilities which would have “previously been the preserve of doctors”, despite earning an average of £15.42 per hour – less than a third of the amount earned by doctors and dentists. Although nine out of ten nurses in the UK are women, they take home on average 17 per cent less than men in similar roles every week. Female nurses also make up less than a third of senior positions.Dr Anne Laure Humbert, one of the report’s authors, said: “Despite the growing complexity and technical nature of the work, as well as the difficult emotional labour it entails, ‘old-fashioned’ perceptions persist of nursing as a job carried out by women for whom caring is ‘natural’, thus deskilling and devaluing those involved. “We see care as a naturally feminine skill or characteristic. This sits in direct opposition to the high level of skills and professionalisation required in contemporary nursing.” The report argued **the serious dearth of nurses should have triggered an increase in wages to meet demand but has not due to the profession not being sufficiently valued.** Dr Kate Clayton-Hathway, research fellow at Oxford Brookes University, said: “Concerns were also raised regarding the well-being of nurses, primarily because of high levels of work intensity and unsafe staffing levels.

1. **Cross-apply Tortorici 2017 - the best way to improve the value of women’s labor is through strikes. Nurse shortage and low pay is due to devaluing of their work - STRIKES KEY**
2. **Conditions effectively block women from demanding better conditions. This perpetuates sexism AND root causes of nurse shortages.**

**A2: If their conditions are ONLY teachers and nurses… (include this in addition to the above blocks)**

1. **The negative is only placing conditions on jobs that are primarily held by women.**
2. **This blocks women from accessing better pay and working conditions - that’s Kelly 2019**
3. **This perpetuates the wage gap, which is sexist discrimination - that’s Tortortici 2017**
4. **These conditions perpetuate sexism and should be rejected outright.**

**A2: Econ**

1. **Cross-apply Brown 2019 - politicians use fears of econ decline to deny women liberties. Stopping oppression must come first.**
2. **Cross-apply Frye 2020 - equal wages for women of color is critical to economic stability for people of color**
3. **Cross-apply Myall 2019 - unconditional right to strike creates fairer economy via decreasing income inequality**
4. **Closing gender pay gap key to econ growth  
   Schulze 2018** (Elizabeth Schulze is a correspondent for CNBC. “Closing the gender pay gap could have big economic benefits,” CNBC, <https://www.cnbc.com/2018/03/08/closing-the-gender-pay-gap-could-have-big-economic-benefits.html>)

**Despite debate over the causes of the gender pay gap, many experts agree leveling it will have economic benefits**. **A** [**2017 study**](https://iwpr.org/publications/impact-equal-pay-poverty-economy/) by the Institute for Women’s Policy Research **found that the poverty rate of working women would be cut in half** if women earned as much as men. The research also said **equal pay would add an additional income of $512.6 billion to the U.S. economy** if men’s wages stayed the same. ActionAid, an international organization that aims to reduce poverty, [estimated](https://www.actionaid.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/womens_rights_on-line_version_2.1.pdf) **equal pay would boost women’s earnings in developing countries by $2 trillion**. Beyond upping women’s wages, increasing female participation in the labor force can also reap economic rewards. **If as many women worked as men, the** [**IMF estimated**](http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/fandd/2017/03/picture.htm) **GDP would increase by 5 percent in the U.S.**, 9 percent in Japan, 12 percent in the United Arab Emirates and 27 percent in India. The IMF also found that adding more women into senior management roles or on corporate boards can directly boost a company’s return on assets. “Businesses have learned that they can draw upon diversity to strengthen their bottom line,” said Miranda Brawn, director of legal and transaction management at Daiwa Capital Markets. Brawn, who founded The Miranda Brawn Diversity Leadership Foundation in the U.K., said **a diverse workplace contributes to a more** creative, innovative and **productive workforce**. “In this way, **diversity is a key ingredient to growing a strong and inclusive economy** that is built to last.”

**Topicality Stuff**

**These are incomplete blocks, just ideas.**

**A2: Birth isn’t work; birth strikes aren’t strikes**

1. **Cross-apply Tortorici 2017 - Reproductive labor is WORK.**
2. **Birth strikes have been acknowledged as a legitimate tool to improve reproductive working conditions - that’s Featherstone 21**
3. **Excluding reproductive work from conversations about labor rights furthers the devaluing of women’s labor; this has in-round implications**
4. **This is key to education - learning about diverse perspectives to key to topic education**

**A2: Abortion isn’t a condition / Extra-T**

1. **Extend Brown 2019 - abortion bans exist to force women to reproduce under poor conditions, which takes away their leverage**
2. **You cannot effectively refuse to give birth without abortion**
3. **I’m only claiming offense from birth strikes themselves; I do not claim offense from legalizing abortion**

**Reproductive labor is both paid and unpaid work that creates and maintains life  
Duffy 13** (Mignon Duffy is an Associate Professor of Sociology at University of Massachusetts Lowell. ["Reproductive Labor"](https://books.google.com/books?id=En-iCQAAQBAJ&pg=PT1213). In Smith, Vicki (ed.). *Sociology of Work: An Encyclopedia*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications. pp. 1213ff. https://books.google.com/books?id=En-iCQAAQBAJ&pg=PT1213#v=onepage&q&f=false)

The concept of **reproductive labor has been used to describe unpaid activities in home as work**, thereby conferring value and visibility on the largely invisible labor performed overwhelmingly by women. Feminist scholars and activists have argued that taking care of children, preparing meals, keeping the house clean, and other **activities that contribute to maintaining daily life and reproducing the next generation of workers should be recognized as labor** that is critical to the continued functioning of a society. **Some have expanded the analysis of reproductive labor to include paid workers who perform similar tasks**, emphasizing the continuities in the gendered devaluation of reproductive labor across the paid and unpaid spheres. Scholars have also pointed to important racial-ethnic inequalities in the distribution of reproductive labor. This article presents a brief overview of the concept of reproductive labor as it has been applied to both paid and unpaid work and summarizes the links between reproductive labor and gender and racial-ethnic inequalities.

**A2: State Bad**

**Even if it isn’t perfect, State-based feminist reforms are key to both immediate improvements and long-term conscious-changing**

**Wendell, 87** (Susan Wendell, Professor of Women’s studies at Simon Fraser University, “A (Qualified) Defense of Liberal Feminism”, Hypatia, Vol. 2, No. 2 (Summer, 1987), pp. 65-93, http://www.jstor.org/stable/3810017)//TL

Liberal feminists have long been committed to achieving women's equality with men in legal rights. This commitment is frequently criticiz- ed by socialist and radical feminists on three grounds. First, equality under the law is far from sufficient to guarantee that women will not be oppressed, even by the legal system, since access to freedom and justice is determined in large part by access to social and economic power. Most liberals are also aware of the insufficiency of legal equality to end women's oppression, if only because, as de jure class, race and sex discrimination has been reduced over the past 150 years in the English-speaking world, the power and pervasiveness of de facto discrimination have been revealed. Second, legal equality can be used to cover up or rationalize other kinds of inequality, including defacto discrimination and the more subtle ways in which women's choices are limited. "After all," it can be said, "there are no rules preventing them from doing anything they want, so women must not be trying hard enough, or perhaps women don't really have what it takes to get what they want." Third, since **many** socialist and **radical feminists are com- mitted to abolishing** or transforming **the State** completely, it seems to them futile and perhaps a betrayal of their ultimate goals to work for legal reforms. These **objections to working for legal equality must be weighed against its benefits.** **The immediate benefits to individual women of moves toward legal equality have been substantial**. For example, re- cent **reforms of** the **marriage laws** in some Canadian provinces have **guaranteed** for the first time **that women who** have **contributed their labour to making the family** farm or **business successful will not lose everything if the marriage breaks down**. A good argument can be made that most legal reforms have not produced the beneficial effects on in- dividual women's lives that were expected of them,15 but **we must ap- preciate what legal equality can do for some women when we see them winning back jobs they lost because of sexual harassment**, winning monetary compensation because of wage discrimination, and winning the right to be considered on an equal basis with men for jobs from which they were previously excluded.16 Nevertheless. I suspect that **the greatest benefits** of legal equality **are** not the immediate benefits to individuals but the long-term contribu- tions that both the public struggles for legal equality and **the recogni- tion of principles of equality in the laws of the land have made toward changing people's** beliefs and **attitudes**. Consider the long struggle (which is not yet over) to reform the rape laws, the enforcement methods by which they were applied, and the treatment of rape cases in the courts. Some rape victims have surely benefitted directly from im provements in the way they are treated by the police and prosecutors, and from changes in court procedures and standards of appropriate evidence. Rape victims used to be (and many still are) on trial for their chastity and sexual morality, as though there were a presumption that they were more responsible for the actions of an accused rapist than he was. In many places in Canada and the United States, the legal situa- tion of the rape victim has improved considerably, but still everyone admits that relatively few rapists are convicted (an estimated 2% in Canada),17 and even fewer serve a significant prison term. However, consider the enormous improvement in awareness, especially among women, of the realities of rape, compared to most people's attitudes and beliefs about it fifteen years ago. **At least some of that improve- ment has come from** the public efforts to **reform** the legal system. People have begun discussing the issue of responsibility openly, and **more and more victims are refusing to accept** guilt and **shame for having been raped. When the law supports them in its judgment**, by changes in the criminal code and in the opinions expressed by judges, **people begin to re-examine attitudes they took for granted**.18 The law is a public ex- pression of what behaviour is acceptable or unacceptable in a society. For many citizens, unfortunately, it is the standard of morality; few people will condemn actions the law condones. In most matters, the law is a weak tool for forcing people to behave in the ways we want them to, but I see the law, and the public struggle to reform the legal system, as powerful forces for changing consciousness. Those who fear that obtaining legal equality will fool women into believing that we are the social and economic equals of men are under- estimating women and, I think, not paying enough attention to the historical evidence. Surely history shows that oppressed groups do not tend to be satisfied with legal equality, and that obtaining it helps to uncover the other sources of oppression.