# 1nc

## Util

#### The value is morality. The standard is maximizing expected well being. Prefer –

#### 1] Only pleasure and pain are intrinsically valuable – all other frameworks collapse.

Moen 16 [Ole Martin Moen, Research Fellow in Philosophy at University of Oslo “An Argument for Hedonism” Journal of Value Inquiry (Springer), 50 (2) 2016: 267–281]

Let us start by observing, empirically, that a widely shared judgment about intrinsic value and disvalue is that pleasure is intrinsically valuable and pain is intrinsically disvaluable. On virtually any proposed list of intrinsic values and disvalues (we will look at some of them below), pleasure is included among the intrinsic values and pain among the intrinsic disvalues. This inclusion makes intuitive sense, moreover, for there is something undeniably good about the way pleasure feels and something undeniably bad about the way pain feels, and neither the goodness of pleasure nor the badness of pain seems to be exhausted by the further effects that these experiences might have. “Pleasure” and “pain” are here understood inclusively, as encompassing anything hedonically positive and anything hedonically negative.2 The special value statuses of pleasure and pain are manifested in how we treat these experiences in our everyday reasoning about values. If you tell me that you are heading for the convenience store, I might ask: “What for?” This is a reasonable question, for when you go to the convenience store you usually do so, not merely for the sake of going to the convenience store, but for the sake of achieving something further that you deem to be valuable. You might answer, for example: “To buy soda.” This answer makes sense, for soda is a nice thing and you can get it at the convenience store. I might further inquire, however: “What is buying the soda good for?” This further question can also be a reasonable one, for it need not be obvious why you want the soda. You might answer: “Well, I want it for the pleasure of drinking it.” If I then proceed by asking “But what is the pleasure of drinking the soda good for?” the discussion is likely to reach an awkward end. The reason is that the pleasure is not good for anything further; it is simply that for which going to the convenience store and buying the soda is good.3 As Aristotle observes: “We never ask [a man] what his end is in being pleased, because we assume that pleasure is choice worthy in itself.”4 Presumably, a similar story can be told in the case of pains, for if someone says “This is painful!” we never respond by asking: “And why is that a problem?” We take for granted that if something is painful, we have a sufficient explanation of why it is bad. If we are onto something in our everyday reasoning about values, it seems that pleasure and pain are both places where we reach the end of the line in matters of value.

#### A] Only util can escape culpability in the instance of tradeoffs – eg only consequences could resolve the trolley problem because no matter your choice you’d be ethically responsible for killing under a deontological theory

#### B] It means we’re responsible for impacts like the aff if we let them happen. If they contest this arg, auto negate – omitting from an action would always be an ethical choice whereas there’s a risk that doing the aff is unethical

#### 3] Weighability – only consequentialism can explain the ethical difference in breaking a promise to take someone to the hospital and breaking a promise to take someone to lunch – that outweighs –

#### A] Resolvability – there’s no way to weigh between competing offense under their fw which means their fw can’t guide action – outweighs cuz it’s a pre req to deciding the debate

#### 4] Tradeoffs are inevitable -- governments are forced to make decide between tradeoffs ie welfare for the rich and welfare for the poor which means they’re forced to aggregate – we did actor spec ow above

#### 5] Preserving life is a pre requisite to the ideal conditions their theory assumes -- all value stems from experienced wellbeing.

## police unionization

#### Historically, police unions protect police, empowering violent misconduct

Scheiber 20, Noam Scheiber, Farah Stockman and J. David Goodman, 6-6-2020, "How Police Unions Became Such Powerful Opponents to Reform Efforts (Published 2020)," No Publication, https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/06/us/police-unions-minneapolis-kroll.html // tw

Over the past five years, as demands for reform have mounted in the aftermath of police violence in cities like Ferguson, Mo., Baltimore and now Minneapolis, police unions have emerged as one of the most significant roadblocks to change. The greater the political pressure for reform, the more defiant the unions often are in resisting it — with few city officials, including liberal leaders, able to overcome their opposition. They aggressively protect the rights of members accused of misconduct, often in arbitration hearings that they have battled to keep behind closed doors. And they have also been remarkably effective at fending off broader change, using their political clout and influence to derail efforts to increase accountability. A few days after prosecutors in Minneapolis charged an officer with murder in the death of George Floyd, the president of the city’s police union denounced political leaders, accusing them of selling out his members and firing four officers without due process. “It is despicable behavior,” the union president, Lt. Bob Kroll, wrote in a letter to union members obtained by a local reporter. He also referred to protesters as a “terrorist movement.” In other instances, unions have not resisted reforms outright, but have made [reforms] them difficult to put in place. Federal intervention is often one of the few reliable ways of reforming police departments. But in Cleveland, the union helped slow the adoption of reforms mandated by a federal consent decree, according to Jonathan Smith, a former U.S. Justice Department official who oversaw the government’s investigation of policing practices there. “A major role for police unions is basically as an insurance policy,” said Dale Belman, a labor relations professor at Michigan State University who has consulted for police unions. “The feeling of a lot of officers is that it’s very easy to sacrifice them. Something goes wrong and boom.” Unions can be so effective at defending their members that cops with a pattern of abuse can be left untouched, with fatal consequences. In Chicago, after the killing of 17-year-old Laquan McDonald by officer Jason Van Dyke, it emerged that Mr. Van Dyke had been the subject of multiple complaints already. But a “code of silence” about misconduct was effectively “baked into” the labor agreements between police unions and the city, according to a report conducted by task force. When liberal politicians do try to advance reform proposals, union officials have resorted to highly provocative rhetoric and hard-boiled campaign tactics to lash out at them. This past week, the head of the sergeants’ union in New York posted a police report on Twitter revealing personal information about the daughter of Mr. de Blasio, who had been arrested during a protest. While statistics compiled by the group Campaign Zero show that police killings and shootings in Chicago have fallen following a set of reforms enacted after a federal investigation, advocates worry that the union will undermine them in contract negotiations. Police unions have traditionally used their bargaining agreements to create obstacles to disciplining officers. One paper by researchers at the University of Chicago found that incidents of violent misconduct in Florida sheriff’s offices increased by about 40 percent after deputies gained collective bargaining rights.

#### Allowing more strikes only cedes more power to unions

Grim 20, Andrew Grim, 7-1-2020, "Perspective," Washington Post, https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2020/07/01/what-is-blue-flu-how-has-it-increased-police-power/ tw

This weekend, officers from the New York City Police Department are rumored to be planning a walkout to protest calls to defund the police. This builds on a similar tactic used by police in Atlanta less than a month ago. On June 16, Fulton County District Attorney, Paul L. Howard Jr. announced that Garrett Rolfe, the Atlanta police officer who fatally shot Rayshard Brooks, would face charges of felony murder and aggravated assault. That night, scores of Atlanta Police Department officers caught the “blue flu,” calling out sick en masse to protest the charges against Rolfe. Such walkouts constitute, in effect, illegal strikes — laws in all 50 states prohibit police strikes. Yet, there is nothing new about the blue flu. It is a strategy long employed by police unions and rank-and-file officers during contract negotiations, disputes over reforms and, like in Atlanta, in response to disciplinary action against individual officers. The intent is to dramatize police disputes with municipal government and rally the citizenry to their side. But the result of such protests matter deeply as we consider police reform today. Historically, blue flu strikes have helped expand police power, ultimately limiting the ability of city governments to reform, constrain or conduct oversight over the police. They allow the police to leverage public fear of crime to extract concessions from municipalities. This became clear in Detroit more than 50 years ago. In June 1967, tensions arose between Detroit Mayor Jerome Cavanagh and the Detroit Police Officers Association (DPOA), which represented the city’s 3,300 patrol officers. The two were at odds primarily over police demands for a pay increase. Cavanagh showed no signs of caving to the DPOA’s demands and had, in fact, proposed to cut the police department’s budget. On June 15, the DPOA escalated the dispute with a walkout: 323 officers called in sick. The number grew over the next several days as the blue flu spread, reaching a height of 800 absences on June 17. In tandem with the walkout, the DPOA launched a fearmongering media campaign to win over the public. They took out ads in local newspapers warning Detroit residents, “How does it feel to be held up? Stick around and find out!” This campaign took place at a time of rising urban crime rates and uprisings, and only a month before the 1967 Detroit riot, making it especially potent. The DPOA understood this climate and used it to its advantage. With locals already afraid of crime and displeased at Cavanagh’s failure to rein it in, they would be more likely to demand the return of the police than to demand retribution against officers for an illegal strike. This was far from the end of the fight between Cavanagh and the DPOA. In the ensuing months and years, they continued to tussle over wages, pensions, the budget, the integration of squad cars and the hiring of black officers. The threat of another blue flu loomed over all these disputes, helping the union to win many of them. Throughout the 1960s, ’70s and ’80s, the blue flu was a ubiquitous and highly effective tactic in Baltimore, Memphis, New Orleans, Chicago, Newark, New York and many other cities. In most cases, as author Kristian Williams writes, “When faced with a walkout or slowdown, the authorities usually decided that the pragmatic need to get the cops back to work trumped the city government’s long term interest in diminishing the rank and file’s power.” But each time a city relented to this pressure, they ceded more and more power to police unions, which would turn to the strategy repeatedly to defend officers’ interests — particularly when it came to efforts to address systemic racism in police policies and practices.

#### Police violence disproportionately targets communities of color and upholds white supremacy – the access to legal intervention creates a cycle of oppression

DeVylder et al 20, Jordan DeVylder PhD, Lisa Fedina PhD, and Bruce Link PhD, 7-9-2020, "The American Journal of Public Health (AJPH) from the American Public Health Association (APHA) publications," American Journal of Public Health, https://ajph.aphapublications.org/doi/10.2105/AJPH.2020.305874

For the purposes of this article, we refer generally to “police violence” and “mental health” because there is not yet sufficient research to confidently link specific subtypes of police violence to specific mental health outcomes. We therefore define police violence as acute events of physical, sexual, psychological, or neglectful violence, following the World Health Organization’s guidelines on defining violence and earlier work on the phenomenology of police violence exposure.7 Mental health is intended to be inclusive of behaviors and psychological symptoms that would be considered indicators of clinical psychopathology, including but not limited to general psychological distress, posttraumatic stress symptoms, suicidal ideation and behavior, psychosis like experiences, and depression. These definitions may need to be expanded as this literature develops, as currently it typically focuses on acute violent events (rather than chronic or vicarious exposures) and a psychopathology oriented view of mental health (rather than a focus on functioning or quality of life), but they are being used here as a reflection of the variables typically employed in the literature at this point in time. Recent public attention directed toward police violence has spurred an emerging literature on the health significance of police violence exposure,1,8,9 addressing a long-unheeded call to conceptualize police violence as a public health issue in the United States.7 Cross-sectional studies have consistently found clinically and statistically significant associations between police violence exposure and a range of mental health outcomes,10-16 and community-level data have likewise demonstrated higher rates of mental health symptoms in neighborhoods or cities in which police abuse (e.g., “stop and frisk” practices, which are primarily used in neighborhoods predominantly composed of people of color) and killings of unarmed civilians are more common.17,18 These associations have generally been found to remain statistically significant (and of sufficient effect sizes to support public health significance) even with adjustment for closely related forms of violence exposure, such as interpersonal violence or lifetime abuse exposure.10,14 For example, exposure to assaultive forms of police violence (i.e., physical or sexual) has been found to be associated with 4- to 11-fold greater odds for a suicide attempt among adults across racial/ethnic groups, even with conservative adjustments.12,14 Although most of this research has been conducted with adults, recent analyses suggest that this problem extends into adolescence as well.19 A selective overview of recent work on this topic is provided in Table 1, and has recently been reviewed elsewhere.21 A long tradition in social science theory suggests that the police play a critical role in disciplining the public, not just in terms of offenses and punishments but in the construction and maintenance of an established social order favoring dominant groups. In light of the use of the police in this regard, it follows that exposure to violence emanating from their actions would have distinct and pernicious features.22,23 Police organizations in the United States are thus authoritative institutions legitimized to apply force—and potentially fatal force—to maintain a particular social and political order.24 In interactions with civilians, police officers are in positions of relatively greater power because of both the symbolic and state-sanctioned status of their profession, and their immediate legal availability of means (e.g., guns, batons, tasers) to wield force, threat of force, and coercion, at their discretion. This distinguishes police violence from interpersonal forms of violence that are perpetrated by people who are not sanctioned to enact violence, such as caregivers, peers, or intimate partners. This distinction is made not to downplay the seriousness of other forms of violence—such as child abuse, intimate partner violence, or sexual assault—but to assert that modern-day police violence is embedded in historical state-enforced practices that permitted cruel, unusual, and dehumanizing punishment of individuals deemed to be from threatening or “dangerous classes,”25 particularly Blacks. Communities of color and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) communities have been historically subjected to racially motivated, discriminatory state-sponsored laws (e.g., Jim Crow laws, sodomy laws) enforced by police that permitted harassment, discrimination, and excessive and fatal force against individuals from these communities. As such, the processes and contexts in which police violence has been historically perpetuated are uniquely distinct from the perpetuation of interpersonal forms of violence by others. Furthermore, police violence is sanctioned not only by institutions in the United States but also by the American public, and is intentionally designed to uphold White supremacy.26 Members of the dominant society thus contribute to police violence and the lack of police accountability Victims of police violence have little legal recourse or opportunities for seeking help in the criminal justice system. The police have legal sanction to intervene in other crimes of violence (e.g., sexual assault, physical assault), making it much more difficult to prove that the violence was unjustly or excessively delivered. Additionally, the people reviewing disputed cases are often also police officers, and indicted police officers are tried by prosecutors who must otherwise work with police officers. These and other circumstances make contesting the perpetration of violence extremely difficult. Victims of other forms of violence, particularly intimate partner violence, indeed face enormous barriers in seeking help and legal recourse, including stigma in reporting intimate partner violence, poverty and other economic barriers, and other sociocultural and contextual factors.27 Victims of police violence face many of these same barriers; because they have few if any options for reporting an incident, for legal recourse, or for advocacy services and referrals to mental health treatment, any mental health symptoms they have may worsen over time.28 People feel more secure if they feel safe and protected in their day-to-day activities. Assumptive World Theory proposes that people’s deeply held beliefs about the world and themselves can be shaken by an event that forcefully disconfirms such beliefs.31 Police violence is particularly likely to provide such disconfirming evidence in that the police represent a societal institution that many, though not all, have come to rely on deeply and implicitly for help when a threat emerges. When police perpetrate violence, this belief is shattered as the police are no longer protectors but rather the central threat that needs to be addressed. Additionally, police violence is normative, rather than an acute or singular event, which has led to the erosion of public trust in the police and favorable views of police seen as protective. Because police violence is disproportionately directed toward people of color, many of whom are poor, it can underscore a sense of diminished value within the US racial and class hierarchies. Accordingly, the media narrative around police violence has focused on incidents directed toward Black people, and has at times framed these incidents within the context of the legacy of racism and White supremacy in the United States. Data from the first and second Survey of Police–Public Encounters studies have confirmed that—at least in Baltimore, Maryland; New York City; the District of Columbia; and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania—police violence is more likely to be directed toward people of color, although it is notable that these studies have found Latinx groups to be at approximately the same level of risk as non-Latinx Blacks.11,14 Although White respondents were also at some risk of exposure to police violence, the racial disparities were significant, even after adjustment for crime involvement and income. Similarly, the prevalence of police-inflicted shootings is approximately 3.5-fold greater among non-Latinx Black than non-Latinx White residents of the United States. Notably, there is insufficient prior data to allow a thorough discussion of police violence and mental health among indigenous populations, although the rate of police killings is extremely high among this group. Other potentially high-risk groups likely include people who identify as sexual or gender minorities, people who are homeless, or those who have a severe mental illness diagnosis, among others. Future research should focus on understudied sociodemographic groups that are disproportionately subject to police violence (e.g., indigenous populations, trans individuals), and the conceptual framework presented in this article will require modification as more data become available. Further, when there are major social movements or protests following prominent incidents of police violence, many in the public, particularly those who benefit from the dominant social order that the police help to maintain, take a “blaming the victim” mentality and highlight infractions by the victim that may have justified their injury or death (e.g., the alleged theft of cigarillos by Michael Brown cited as justification for excessive and fatal force). On a broader societal level, protests in Ferguson, Missouri were blamed for a subsequent supposed “war on cops” in which the rate of civilians killing police officers purportedly increased, although there is no actual evidence for any such increase.38

#### Police unions are anti-labor- means the aff can never solve without getting rid of them AND turns case.

Modak 20. Ria Modak [Student Coordinator, Muslim American Studies Working Group, Harvard Student Labor Action Movement and the Harvard Graduate Students Union] 20 - ("Police Unions Are Anti-Labor," Ria Modak, Harvard Political Review, 9-9-2020, 10-27-2021 https://harvardpolitics.com/police-unions-are-anti-labor/)//AW

My own experiences with HUPD are reflective of a long history fraught with violence. For two centuries, **the police have been used to suppress labor action** and promote corporate interests. **The police**, the National Guard and the U.S. Army **played an integral role in suppressing the Great Strike of 1877**, the Homestead Strike of 1892 **and** the **Lawrence Strike** of 1912, to name a few examples. **In** each of **these incidents,** the **police resorted to extreme violence**, acquiring new legal powers and protections as they terrorized working class communities. By the middle of the 20th century, **the police had become** **a**n autocratic, **militarized force whose** primary **role was to challenge organized labor through union-busting and strike-breaking.** They continue to occupy this role. For evidence, we have to look no further than the ongoing protests for racial justice in which the police have been called to attend to instances of rioting. Their brutal treatment of protesters, including the use of teargas and rubber bullets, is further proof of their commitment to property over people. It is no coincidence that cops interfere with labor action; the fundamental objective of the police is to protect property. Modern day police forces in urban cities like Boston were founded to safeguard trade and protect commercial property, and in the South, policing evolved from slave patrols tasked with chasing down runaway slaves. **Policing** was, and **continues to** be, a way to protect and **serve capitalism, not people**. By attending to private property, which itself depends on the extraction of labor from the working class, the police align themselves with capitalists, rather than with workers**. The** material **interests of** the **police are antithetical to the very ethos of organized labor, which seeks to protect workers from capitalist exploitation.** It is impossible to build a working class movement while supporting an institution that was founded to oppress working class and Black communities. Police unions are also complicit in anti-labor action in the federal political arena. The Fraternal Order of Police and **the International Union of Police Associations**, the two largest police unions in the country, endorsed President Trump in 2016 and recently endorsed his reelection campaign. By funneling money into President Trump’s campaign, **the IUPA is** directly **responsible for** hisblatantly **anti-labor policies, which have restricted the freedom to join unions, silenced workers, and gutted health and safety protections.** Furthermore, much of the power **of** policing lies in **police unions,** which **enable racist, anti-labor action by making it** nearly **impossible for** police **officers to be held accountable** for their actions. Collective bargaining agreements allow officers to evade the consequences of innumerable wrongs — including the violent killing of Black people, sexual assault, lying to investigators and falsifying documents — by limiting independent oversight and expunging misconduct records. In addition, unions spend millions of dollars lobbying against police reform on the local, state and federal levels. By shielding officers from consequences and blocking reform, **police unions embolden violence against the Black and Brown communities** that are the most vulnerable to police brutality. One way to put an end to racialized police violence is to put an end to police unions. **Dismantling police unions is a** crucial **step in taking power away from the police and giving it back to** working class communities and **communities of color.** Although not all police departments are unionized or affiliated with a larger labor federation like the AFL-CIO, those that are must be expelled. However, disaffiliation must be only the first step in a broader struggle to dismantle the police in its entirety. Police abolition means building a world that does not rely on capitalism and racism to structure society. Although some critics of abolition argue that disaffiliating police unions would threaten other public sector unions, many trade unionists disagree with this position, indicating support from public sector workers themselves. Union members represented by the Service Employees International Union and United Auto Workers have demanded the disaffiliation of police unions from the larger labor movement. In addition, a coalition of labor organizers called “No Cop Unions” have called on the AFL-CIO to expel IUPA and urged AFL-CIO affiliates with partial law enforcement membership to terminate their relationships with unionized police and correctional officers. Ultimately, the call to separate **police unions** from the labor movement is a recognition that they **have no role in a society that truly values workers**. The **goals of the police**, which are maintained and facilitated by police unions, **are incompatible with pro-labor ideology**. The labor movement must take a firm stance against police unions and work to develop an anti-racist praxis. There can be no labor justice while police unions continue to protect anti-worker interests.

## automation

#### **False worker confidence is fueling strikes but in reality, workers are getting replaced**

Marks 21, Gene Marks,, 10-26-2021, "Employees are not showing up to work — employers are replacing them with robots," TheHill, https://thehill.com/opinion/technology/578484-employees-are-not-showing-up-to-work-employers-are-replacing-them-with

It’s the “Great Resignation,” and many workers seem to prefer not coming in to work. Employers are increasingly obliging them. How? By eliminating their jobs altogether. A recent survey from Verizon of more than 600 U.S. small businesses found that 30 percent [of small businesses] have already adopted digital tools to help compensate for a shortage of workers during the COVID-19 pandemic. Think this is short term? It’s not. As the cost of these technologies rapidly decline, both big and small companies are making significant investments in software and hardware that is helping to eliminate what is for many their biggest headache: people. For obvious reasons, businesses don’t like to talk about how they’re eliminating employees with automation. But it’s happening. Yes, it’s happening. In retail, for example, supermarket chain Hy-Vee announced that it is testing shelf-scanning inventory management robots in its stores, while ShopRite is piloting robotic delivery. Amazon is quietly rolling out thousands of self-service grocery stores manned by a skeleton staff of workers to restock shelves — until they’re eventually replaced by robots. Airport retailer Hudson is using Amazon’s technology to automate its locations. In the United Kingdom, supermarket giant Tesco has come up with its own “walkout store” to compete against Amazon. Pennsylvania convenience store chain Wawa has added self-checkouts to dozens of its stores with plans to make this permanent across all locations. Make no mistake: These self-service technologies eliminate workers. That’s why retailers are jumping on this trend. The same goes for the restaurant industry. Owners there are finding themselves at ground zero of the Great Resignation. So, they’re also doing their part to help their employees find employment, somewhere else. According to a recent New York Times report, many are turning to robots to “make French fries, mixed drinks and even clean toilets, and they never ask for a raise”  (or complain about Dave Chappelle). A Connecticut seafood chain says it will soon have as many as five robotic “servers” programmed to “bring food out to tables and dirty dishes back to the dishwasher station.” A California eatery now offers robot-served Japanese food. A robot that makes pizzas is replacing workers while another company prospers as it sells robotic arms that make everything from burgers to salads to sushi. These companies know one thing for sure: Robotic servers and robotic arms show up for work every day. Dave & Buster's recently announced  that its locations are using contactless ordering, a move that has allowed them to “expand the size of server sections and reduce staffing levels to be more efficient” (translation: fewer workers). McDonalds is testing an automated, voice-recognition based drive-thru ordering system at 10 of its Chicago locations that will reduce to one in five the number of orders that workers have to complete. And reduce the number of people taking orders too, of course. (Shhhh.) On the factory floor, robots are doing all the work at Nissan's “intelligent plant,” with an executive from the company gushing how "up to now, people had to make production adjustments through experience, but now robots with artificial intelligence, analyzing collected data, are able to do it.” Transportation and warehouse workers as well as truck drivers better double-check their savings too. That’s because Ford, Argo and Walmart are bringing robo-delivery to Miami, Austin and Washington, D.C., and Walgreens and Google are teaming up to offer drone deliveries in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. Delivery service Grubhub is rolling out robots to deliver pizza across 250 colleges in the U.S. For the companies still actually employing people, many are doing so by using artificial intelligence-powered virtual recruiting tools and offering mental health benefits powered by chat bots. According to a recent report, 75 percent of U.S. employers (rising to 99 percent of Fortune 500 companies) are using interviewing and other recruiting technology “in response to a rise in digital job applications from the ‘90s onwards. Technology has made it easier for people to apply for jobs, but also easier for companies to reject [people] them.” Do you get it, people? Your “ghosting,” quitting and unreliable behavior is now paying off. Your demands for higher pay, more time off, increased benefits and a greater say in how your employers conduct their businesses are being answered. Your complaints, whistleblowing and public shaming of your employer (deserved or not) is now having its effect.

#### The aff accelerates automation via an increase in strikes which causes mass unemployment and greater wage inequality

Casselman 21, Ben Casselman, 7-3-2021, "Pandemic Wave of Automation May Be Bad News for Workers," No Publication, https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/03/business/economy/automation-workers-robots-pandemic.html

An increase in automation, especially in service industries, may prove to be an economic legacy of the pandemic. Businesses from factories to fast-food outlets to hotels turned to technology last year to keep operations running amid social distancing requirements and contagion fears. Now the outbreak is ebbing in the United States, but the difficulty in hiring workers — at least at the wages that employers are used to paying — is providing new momentum for automation. Technological investments that were made in response to the crisis may contribute to a post-pandemic productivity boom, allowing for higher wages and faster growth. But some economists say the latest wave of automation could eliminate jobs and erode bargaining power, particularly for the lowest-paid workers, in a lasting way. “Once a job is automated, it’s pretty hard to turn back,” said Casey Warman, an economist at Dalhousie University in Nova Scotia who has studied automation in the pandemic. The trend toward automation predates the pandemic, but it has accelerated at what is proving to be a critical moment. The rapid reopening of the economy has led to a surge in demand for waiters, hotel maids, retail sales clerks and other workers in service industries that had cut their staffs. At the same time, government benefits have allowed many people to be selective in the jobs they take. Together, those forces have given low-wage workers a rare moment of leverage, leading to higher pay, more generous benefits and other perks. Automation threatens to tip the advantage back toward employers, potentially eroding those gains. A working paper published by the International Monetary Fund this year predicted that pandemic-induced automation would increase inequality in coming years, not just in the United States but around the world. Checkers, like many fast-food restaurants, experienced a jump in sales when the pandemic shut down most in-person dining. But finding workers to meet that demand proved difficult — so much so that Shana Gonzales, a Checkers franchisee in the Atlanta area, found herself back behind the cash register three decades after she started working part time at Taco Bell while in high school. The push toward automation goes far beyond the restaurant sector. Hotels, retailers, manufacturers and other businesses have all accelerated technological investments. In a survey of nearly 300 global companies by the World Economic Forum last year, 43 percent of businesses said they expected to reduce their work forces through new uses of technology. In a recent working paper, Professor Acemoglu and a colleague concluded that “a significant portion of the rise in U.S. wage inequality over the last four decades has been driven by automation” — and he said that trend had almost certainly accelerated in the pandemic. At some businesses, automation is already affecting the number and type of jobs available. Meltwich, a restaurant chain that started in Canada and is expanding into the United States, has embraced a range of technologies to cut back on labor costs. Its grills no longer require someone to flip burgers — they grill both sides at once, and need little more than the press of a button. The grocery business has long been a source of steady, often unionized jobs for people without a college degree. But technology is changing the sector. Self-checkout lanes have reduced the number of cashiers; many stores have simple robots to patrol aisles for spills and check inventory; and warehouses have become increasingly automated. Kroger in April opened a 375,000-square-foot warehouse with more than 1,000 robots that bag groceries for delivery customers. The company is even experimenting with delivering groceries by drone.

#### Automation causes widespread job loss and inequality which turns case

Aratani 20, Lauren Aratani, 11-27-2020, "Robots on the rise as Americans experience record job losses amid pandemic," Guardian, https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2020/nov/27/robots-replacing-jobs-automation-unemployment-us

The Covid-19 pandemic has left millions of Americans unemployed – disproportionately those in the service industries where women and people of color make up the largest share of the labor force. In October, 11 million people were unemployed in the US, compared with about 6 million people who were without a job during the same time last year. A recent report from the World Economic Forum predicted that by 2025 the next wave of automation – turbocharged by the pandemic – will disrupt 85m jobs globally. New jobs will be created but “businesses, governments and workers must plan to urgently work together to implement a new vision for the global workforce”. The impact of a recession on the growth of automation has been well-documented by economists and has shown that automation does not grow steadily, but rather happens in bursts. Businesses are more likely to automate after experiencing economic shocks, when they have strong incentives to save on labor. While an increase in automation can be good for educated workers and help to stimulate the economy, studies have also shown that new technology tends to leave low-wage workers behind. “Automation has been a major driver in the increase in inequality,” said Daron Acemoglu, an economist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Acemoglu co-authored a study published in May that showed automation creates a “prosperity gap” that benefits high-skilled workers at the sake of lower-skilled workers. Low-wage workers are not only more susceptible to job loss and wage depression due to automation, but they also experienced the most job losses due to shutdowns. Higher-wage workers are more likely to be able to work from home during the pandemic, while lower-wage workers – a disproportionate number of whom are Black or Hispanic – were more susceptible to layoffs due to shutdown orders.

# case