



Abolishing Capitalism

None of these options are long-term solutions. We live in a civilization based on the separation of society into haves and have-nots. This cannot be allowed to continue.

The entirety of potential political and social structures don't balance on the axis of capitalism (and democracy, somehow always lumped with capitalism) versus state socialism. Capitalists would love for you to believe that, of course, because state socialism is so clearly a terrible idea. They would love for people to think capitalism is the only alternative to Stalinist atrocity, that our only choice is between two sets of rulers.

Capitalism is an atrocity, however, as a quick survey will let us know. Capitalism (the idea of not working for your money, but instead siphoning the wealth produced by others) has led us to the very brink of planetary ecocide with its mindless search for profit (a feature included even in the dictionary definition, and the legal responsibility of corporations to their shareholders!).

Many people have theorized ways of eradicating the rampant criminality of capitalism. Communism isn't actually a dirty word, and can mean a whole host of things, many of which are as far from Stalinism as a system could possibly be.

But the simplest one is this: we, as small communities (often overlapping ones), can make decisions for ourselves by the means we best see fit. We can feed and care for ourselves and each other. We can work in ways that make us happy, we can work for projects that actually concern us. I'd call that anarchism. Others may call it autonomy, horizontalism, decentralization, direct democracy, or just common sense. But to do this,

we have to take back our stolen wealth. The rich have the things they have because they are dirty stinking thieves, whether they know it or not.

If we don't let the ruling class rule us, we won't be ruled. They need us, we don't need them. We are many and they are few.

Taking action through theft, squatting, direct action, or even by advocating anarchism can risk arrest. But would you prefer to spend most of your waking life being exploited? Or should we risk a fraction of our lives, by immediately beginning the project of our liberation, with the chance of gaining our freedom?

We have nothing to lose, and a world to gain.

After seizing control of the factory, the workers march to the owner's neighborhood, along with their partners, friends, and children. They tear down the fences of his gated community and pour through its quaint streets, a riotous torrent. The security guards withdraw in fear as the mob approaches; by the time the people reach the boss's house, he is long gone.

On the return journey, one former employee sets down a box of books to slap a mosquito on her arm. Her daughter, lugging an armful of groceries, is surprised: "Wow, mom, that mosquito had a lot of blood in her."

"That's not her blood, dear," her mother responds. "That's my blood."

Where to find further reading

anarchistnews.org
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crimethinc.com
imagineborders.org
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prole.info
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I ♥ Work place Theft

Whether aware of it or not, your boss is stealing from your every paycheck. Employers profit from the "excess" wealth that you, as an employee, produce. There are two ways to get paid in America: from the work you do, or from the work other people do. Employees generate wealth; employers collect it.

We live in a capitalist society. The dictionary says capitalism is “an economic and political system in which a country’s trade and industry are controlled by private owners for profit, rather than by the state.” This definition is a bit deceptive, but let’s run with it for now.

I want to focus-in on the word “profit.” Profit is the money left over after all the expenses are paid. You buy ten apples from a farmer for ten cents each and sell them in town for twenty cents each, leaving you with an extra dollar. Hurrah! You make enough of those dollars, and you can pay your rent and afford to eat.

But you can only carry so many apples, and can only sell them so fast. You could make more profit if you hire other people to sell the apples for you. You pay them an hourly wage, or take a cut off of every apple they sell. Multiply this by enough people, and suddenly you’re quite wealthy. The people you hire only have enough to pay rent and eat, but you get to drive a Hummer-limo and smoke Cuban cigars or whatever. Why? Because you made the connections, raised the capital—and stole from your employees. You aren’t working harder than them—actually, you’re probably working less—and derive your income from the excess wealth generated by their labor.

And that’s capitalism: when rich people steal from poor people through the legal process of wage-labor. Capitalism is based on “capital”: wealth that can be used to generate more wealth. If capitalism was about getting rewarded for work, we’d be all about it. But it’s not. It’s about getting rewarded for other people working. It’s about letting money and people make your profits for you.

If you, as a wage laborer, didn’t create more wealth for your boss than your hourly wage, you wouldn’t have a job. What we’re calling “workplace theft” is a bit of a misnomer. Workplace theft is actually the norm: your bosses are stealing from you every day. If you care for someone whom will be a worker, is a worker, or was a worker, employers are profiting off your unpaid work too.

Capitalists are living off your sweat. When you take money out of the register and put it into your pocket, that’s not workplace theft. That’s workplace justice.

“My Boss Isn’t Like That!”

This isn’t the Gilded Age of the late nineteenth century, you could argue. Your boss might not be buying diamond-studded collars for his dog, or

be throwing \$20,000 dinners for all her friends. Most employers aren’t in it for the top hats and monocles. Many do it because they care about culture or books or food or whatever it is they sell. Good for them. Most small business owners haven’t earned the label “villain.” They’re just petty thieves—who likely don’t even think they’re stealing.

If a business isn’t doing so well, it’s run by petty thieves who are failing. They would like to steal your money by paying you less than you earn them, but they can’t, not yet. I don’t know about you, but a burglar who can’t figure out how to open the window of my house still isn’t my friend.

“I Don’t Have To Work Here”

Sure, you don’t have to work any given job. But you’ve got to work somewhere. And bosses like to think that people need the jobs they “provide.” “If you don’t like the pay, don’t work here.” It’s a shame the modern labor movement is in shambles, and most labor unions are hopelessly bureaucratic and lily-livered, because a hundred years ago they showed the world the falsity of that claim with remarkable articulateness.

One worker-organizer observed, “the only meaningful difference between the horrible exploitation and other crimes of big business around the world and those of the small businesses right down my street is scale...

“The problem with small businesses is the same as the problem with big businesses: the incredible power the owner has to exploit his workers. If an owner loses a worker, then the worker can generally be readily replaced from the growing mass of desperate and unemployed people out there. But if a worker loses his job, then his livelihood, his very means of survival, and (in America) even his family’s health are in jeopardy... There can be no justice when there is a power differential of this magnitude between owners and workers. No matter how large or small the business may be, the fundamental nature of the relationship between workers and owners remains the same.”

In capitalism, you work, or you don’t eat; you work, or you live on the streets. There are ways around it that individuals will find, but by and large, you don’t have a choice. You need a job. If it’s not one crummy job, it’s another. And most anywhere you go, there will be bosses. There’s an entire class of professional thieves just waiting to siphon away the products of your labor, ready to

buy your time (let’s be honest, your life) for as little as they can get away with.

Defending Yourself From Workplace Theft

If you’re ready to defend yourselves from these thieves, these bosses, then there are a few ways you can go about it.

Not Working: The purest and, at first glance, simplest solution. Stop selling your time and break the work-rent cycle. In the U.S. at least, there are tons of edible food thrown out each night by grocery stores; and you can grow food in empty lots. There are abandoned buildings to live in. You and your friends can teach each other the skills necessary to live, to thrive. Some stuff though, like dentistry, is going to be hard. And squatting is usually frowned upon by property owners (they would much prefer that you paid them for the honor of residing on their property, once again trying to make a buck off of you without lifting a finger). But at least no boss will get to steal from you.

Collective Bargaining: You and your co-workers can organize with unions. You can stand up for yourselves, you can show your employer that the system only works because of your input. The reason you might have an eight-hour work day (though it seems most Americans don’t anymore) is because union members refused to work endless hours and were shot or hanged for it. If you want a chance to argue for your fair share of the wealth that you have created, you won’t be able to do it alone. You’ll need your friends. You’ll need solidarity from folks you’ve never met before. Try the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) for a union that isn’t just trying to create a comfortable niche for itself within capitalism.

Worker Cooperatives: We don’t need bosses. You can set up your own businesses and organize without hierarchy. There are worker cooperatives all over the world, and most would be excited to help you understand how to set up your own.

Theft: If you don’t have the nerve (or have too many responsibilities, or are really quite fond of your teeth) to drop out of capitalist society entirely, you’re no good at organizing or your co-workers are apathetic, and you don’t have the capital or commitment to start your own cooperative, then, well, just take back what’s yours. It’s simple. Steal from your bosses, because your bosses are sure as hell stealing from you. If you’re not stealing from the bosses, you’re supporting the system that’s robbing your family and your community.