



Furthermore, autonomist Marxists have argued that the cybernetization of capital will not usher in a leisure society, but will instead encourage an enlargement of the work realm. They claim that labour displaced from primary and secondary industries would be reabsorbed by “the tertiary, quaternary, or quinary sectors as farther and farther flung domains of human activity are assimilated within the social factory.”¹⁰ Cybernetized capital, through the commodification of expanded and novel realms of human activity, can maintain wage labour, “incessantly recreating its proletariat, unless it is forcibly interrupted by the organised efforts of workers to reclaim their life-time.”¹¹

Work Abolitionism

More radical than the Marxist futurists are those who advocate the abolition of work. Believing that a “job” signifies a dependency relationship disguised as independence (the “freedom” to consume), work abolitionists call for workers of the world to relax. They gleefully reject what they call the Leftist mantra of full employment, which results in further

integration of the working classes into capitalism through preservation of jobs at all costs.¹² Abolitionists draw on traditionally anarchist or libertarian sensibilities that move beyond the reductionist contortion which has equated work with jobs. Instead, they emphasize creativity, self-determination, and conviviality of relations. “Jobs” are seen to restrict peoples’ capacities to care for themselves and those within their communal/ecological groupings, and are therefore rejected as a basis for radical activist convergence.

Work abolitionism suggests a movement simultaneously “of class” and “against class”, i.e. against the commodification of creativity and performance. The category “jobs” speaks to the compulsory character of involvement in capitalist production—production enforced via relations of economic and political control and power. In order to receive sustenance in a capitalist system, people must sell themselves. This is the imperative of wage labour: work is not done for its own sake but for secondary effects, such as wages, which are not characteristic of or inherent to the work itself. In other words, jobs

form a condensation point for complex relations of power around the trading of time for money, or what Zimpel quite poignantly refers to as “a transaction of existential absurdity.”¹³ Jobs are characterized by an extension of organizational control *over* people: “employees” signify a system of domination practised through forms of discipline which include surveillance and time-management. The regimentation and discipline of the job serves to habituate workers to hierarchy and obedience while also discouraging insubordination and autonomy. Jobs as regimented roles replace direct, creative participation and initiative through arrangements of subservience. Bob Black argues that employment is capital’s primary and most direct coercive formation; one that is experienced daily.

Marxists might object that work abolitionism does not necessarily transform capitalism. After all, even some neo-liberal post-industrial theorists write about the “abolition of work” and they see it as the result of the application of innovative technological resources within capitalist relations—not as a destruction of those relations. At its most dramatic, the