

THERE IS NOTHING SPECIAL ABOUT WHAT WE DO

While the union bureaucrats try to appeal to liberal sensibilities, communists and anarchists should be cautious of the division of 'intellectual' and 'manual' labor. Support for this strike need not lapse into an avowal of this specifically capitalist organization and fragmentation of life. A cursory review of the sympathetic press makes this problem quite evident.

The issue is not how 'integral' is the labor of research, teaching, or grading to the university. The labor of janitors, food service workers, sanitation, construction, health care, landscaping and maintenance is no less critical to the reproduction of the university system. Likewise, the university would not exist were it not for dispossession of the land's original inhabitants, the gentrification of campus hinterlands, the violent policing of these borders and racially segregated regions, and the extraction of rents from its campus housing. Valorizing 'intellectual' labor as 'integral' not only erases the contributions of these other forms of exploitation and dispossession to the anodyne political economy of the university, it reaffirms the university as a sphere in which 'fairness', 'justice', autonomy, or liberation can be achieved. It is not. Its prosaic routines are the routines of capital. Its horizon is the horizon of capital.

The point is this: the UC is not fundamentally a system of higher education with a mandate for the public good. It is the largest landlord in California with some of the highest rents in the state. It is a sink for speculative capital's R&D investments. It is an asset manager with portfolios topping \$150 billion. It is an institutional mechanism to absorb and conceal the existence of a highly racialized and gendered surplus population - it hides this structural unemployment. As such, it offers a ready-made population of debtors subordinated to their future labor, but with no hope for a future. **Its essential function is the reproduction of the mutually antagonistic but mutually dependent relation between capital and labor.**

When viewed from the totality of social relations that the university itself reproduces, the strike reveals a different sort of practical critique. The issue is not 'fair wages' for the so-called 'integral' intellectual labor of the academic workforce, but that any of us are compelled to sell our labor-power at all, and that 'we' do so without equal footing, prestige, or support. **If there are any promising developments for struggle, they must be within and against the UC, against the university, against the separation of 'intellectual' and 'manual' labor, and against the capital-labor relation.**

Against strike management

Know your enemies on the picket line. Fuck the University of California, the administration, the police, and the scabs. But also fuck the UAW union bureaucrats. They are here to manage unrest.

They are cowards hiding behind the rhetoric of 'worker power' while behind closed doors they work with the administration to stifle militancy and figure out how to re-brand major concessions as historic victories.

They fear retaliation almost as much as they fear proletarian struggle beyond their control. Powerless, they remain trapped between the threat of retribution from on high and the rumblings of proletarian revolt from below.

You, however, are not limited to their reticent and resigned methods. Keep the spirit of the wildcat alive. Now is the time to take action around all the things that piss you off and to do so in the ways you want, with your friends, comrades, and affinities.

Strike, occupy, blockade, expropriate. More than anything: escalate.

Link up: abolishtheUC@protonmail | [@abolishtheUC](https://twitter.com/abolishtheUC)

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