

The Gig Economy Is the Capitalist's Wet Dream

By individualizing employment, our labor market is where it was 100 years ago

In the old days, many of the poorest people were day laborers. They were only hired for very short periods of time. Often, they had no property. They also enjoyed no protection or rights. Today, capitalists have a way to create a modern-day equivalent. They can hire people, without providing any protection, and without the need to follow any labor laws whatsoever. The secret to success is the so-called gig economy. Self-employed people always existed, no doubt. Most of these were artists, architects, lawyers, and the like.



The image was taken by an unknown Russian photographer, around 1900. Public domain, via [Wikimedia Commons](#)

But the capitalists managed to extend this concept into the lowest-paid sectors of the economy. Enter the Gig Economy.

Gig Economy Workers are Disposable

In the gig economy, the delivery driver is not employed. He is instead self-employed. He gets a small payment per delivery. Because he is self-employed, he carries all the economic risks. He does not know how many deliveries he will have on any given day. So, he will never know if he has money to pay rent at the end of the month.

He needs to provide his own liability, health, and accident insurance. His employers have thus evaded even the most basic responsibility. Providing a healthy work environment.

He also carries all the major costs of running the business. Car maintenance, electricity, fuel, and equipment costs.

You don't like to read boring articles like this? Do you prefer to go watch movies instead? I have a recommendation for you.

You should watch "Sorry, We Missed You".

There are many other examples of this as well. This is also the business model of Uber. And countless food deliverers like Deliveroo, Wolt, and hundreds of others. Scooter providers, such as Lime also rely on these gig workers to keep their scooters charged and maintained.

Many private home care companies operate in the same way as well. As do most cleaning companies.

And they sell it back to us as a benefit. Because we are our own boss. We can be in control of our own success.

It is gaslighting of the highest order. Basically, the capitalists struck a goldmine.

Labor Laws Don't Matter in the Gig Economy

The capitalists' goal is to convert the entire economy into a gig economy. Imagine the possibilities for billionaires and shareholders. Think of all the labor protection laws, which unions have been fighting for over the course of more than 150 years. All of this progress would be kicked into the bin.

Employers don't have to pay minimum wage. That is our own responsibility. We are self-employed, remember? We are all our own business. No more provisions

for maternity leave or paid holidays. No restrictions on how many hours they can put you to work.

And most importantly, they no longer have to give you any notice when they let you go.

Of course, that wouldn't be possible without help from politicians. Do you know, what the best part is? It is all legal.

The gig economy allows us to regress back into the 19th century. A time before there were pesky unions. You know, those worker collectives demanding that workers should have rights and protections.

Who knows? They might even find a way to bring child labor back. Like in the good old days.

The Status Quo Is Being Challenged. That is a Good Start

It is not all doom and gloom, though. Courts are finally starting to wake up to this new dystopian reality.

In Germany, workers of the delivery service Gorillas managed to form their first union.

The fight goes on. Because our capitalist overlords are not sleeping either. They found one way to keep workers divided. They declare each warehouse or distribution center a separate legal entity. This makes it much harder for their workers to get together in large groups to unionize.

This is the practice Amazon uses. It is also why the victory of the Amazon workers in New York was so important in this fight.

But we should never forget. That workers have to operate under such oppressive conditions is not a natural law. It is anything but. It is by political will. Our politicians are the ones, who enable these practices. The record shows that it does not matter which parties those politicians belong to.

In fact, in much of Europe, it was the Social Democrats leading the charge.

The first step we can take is to start calling it for what it is. Blatant exploitation of workers in the name of profit.

And we should stop buying into their bullshit by adopting their fancy terms. How about we rename the "gig economy" into "exploitation economy"? There is no need to buy into capitalist fairytales.