



WORKS

The Meaning of Anti-Work **Andrew “Andrewism” Sage** **(2022)**

I have worked in a number of different fields throughout my life. From data entry to manual labour, from paper pushing to restaurant work, from customer service to work from home. I've worked for myself and I've worked for others. But every single one of those jobs, no matter what they were, seized and drained my time, my energy, my mind, and my body. Despite the breadth of my employment experiences, I know I haven't faced the worst of what work imposes on people, but I can still recognise that we cannot simply resign ourselves to merely reforming work. Such an approach misses the forest for the trees. The mental, physical, psychological, social, and environmental consequences of work necessitate its end and the fundamental transformation of our society. But in order to understand the concept of antiwork, we first need to understand the concept of work.

What is Work?

The dictionary defines work as an activity involving mental or physical effort done in order to achieve a purpose or result. But antiwork advocates would more readily use that definition for the concept of labour. Work as understood by work abolitionists is grounded in an understanding of work's role in a broader socioeconomic sense. Work is forced labour, that is, compulsory production, enforced by economic and political means, by the carrot and the stick. Work is (usually) wage labour, as workers must sell themselves, mind and body, for the purpose of production. Thus, work has an inherent dynamic of domination, one that we see elaborated in all industrial societies today, even the ones that claim to be socialist.

We are employed to work at things called “jobs”, where we must perform tasks which, no matter how intrinsically interesting they may initially be, eventually become dull and monotonous when performed for upwards of forty hours a week, with no say over when you show up or leave, what you do, how long you do it for, how much you do, how you do it, who you do it with, and for whom it is done, all for the profit of those who control the means of production.

The world of work is a degrading experience of suffocating bureaucracy, surveillance, rotework, high pace, quotas, time charts, persistent harassment, paternalistic

