

Considering Resistance in Economic Institutions

LMU Colloquium in Social and Political Philosophy

January 21, 2026

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Workplace Democracy
- 3 Framework for resistance at work
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- 5 Final thoughts

Section 1

Introduction

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- if we think things are really bad, we must be morally allowed to do more

Section 2

Workplace Democracy

The status quo

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- but all that still makes for little effective power on the ground
- superiors still have wide-ranging powers to order people around in their daily work lives

The basic moral-political argument

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 - a general problem: we usually don't think these values can outweigh political rights

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 - Or Isabelle Ferreras: “citizens, when they arrive at their jobs, become the subjects of a despotic corporate government“ (*Firms as Political Entities*, 3)

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 - or say that firms aren't important institutions

- *or* consider more closely what can be done in response:

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 - consider resistance in relation to the severity of the problem

Section 3

Framework for resistance at work

A general thought about moral rights

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 - not just stealing because you like money!

Section 4

Considering categorical objections

Work isn't so bad after all

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 - e.g. work isn't an important part of people's lives

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- or for working in a different job where you're not doing bad things to people

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 - 2 Democratic version: employees should try political activism before breaking the law

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- e.g. Finlay 2005 (132): “Necessity demands that agents choose that strategy for achieving the just cause that offers the best possible balance between morally relevant anticipated costs and morally relevant expected gains.” ”

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- consider empirical data on how easy or hard it is to do things politically
- again: err on the side of those who are harmed!

Section 5

Final thoughts

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