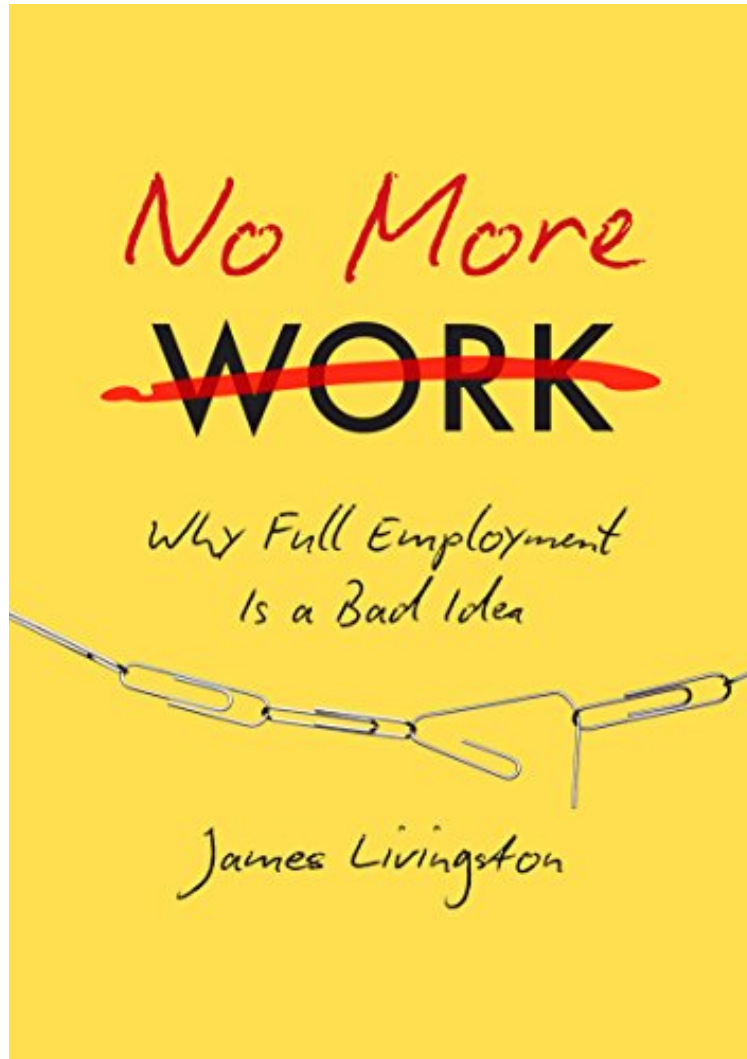


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No More Work: Why Full Employment Is a Bad Idea

James Livingston

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James Livingston : No More Work: Why Full Employment Is a Bad Idea before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised No More Work: Why Full Employment Is a Bad Idea:

11 of 12 people found the following review helpful. Love and Labor in C21By JennyA first rate and indispensable meditation on the intellectual dilemma and profound moral opportunity that defines our age. Pithy, funny and brilliant -- a quick read that will inspire lengthy consideration of the ways we define our selves and the work we do.4 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Worth readingBy MaxLivingston' books are always original and thought provoking. This one is no exception.20 of 21 people found the following review helpful. RivetingBy A ReaderJames Livingston's refrain throughout these searching, provocative, and erudite 111 pages is 'No More Work.' Most of us probably feel a measure of relief, not to say liberation, in merely uttering the phrase: 'No More Work.'

Work. ***k it. ***k it all to hell. Well OK, so aside from finding a catchy slogan to capture what so many of us feel in our workaday lives, what's Livingston's purpose in telling us that we're essentially wasting our time on the job? We already know that; that the postcapitalist system under the sign of which we labor all the livelong day is paying us too little to boost productivity; that ten-dollar word that captures what the powers that be treat as "socially necessary" even while offering us garbanzo beans for doing work that's "socially beneficial", like child-rearing, or uploading our latest piece of fan fiction, or, oh, railing against Trump on Facebook. So why should we just buck up and get on with it and, work ethic in heart and mind, keep telling ourselves that work, however meaningful, will somehow build character, keep hoping against hope that what doesn't kill us will make us stronger...workers? Well and this is something Livingston has to establish in brief historically, you understand, and economically, and even philosophically; the problem with this line of thinking is that the robots really are upon us, all of us. And that means you too, Shanghai sweatshop worker sweating over Apple components. In fact, it's likely to many leftists' dismay to learn that there have been select moments in US political history when liberals like [cough] Nixon, and Rumsfeld, and Cheney advocated for policies that would have effectively guaranteed a minimum income to everyone; an especially sensible move after it was proven, over and over, that this had no effect to speak of on worker productivity. At any rate the signs are everywhere that capitalism has failed or, as Livingston has it, succeeded; read the ***king book; and his argument is that there simply aren't enough good paying jobs to keep us gainfully employed making the stuff that dreams are made of, and moreover, that things are only going to get worse for homo economicus, DIY craft-based spiritually-fulfilling artisan startups notwithstanding. We'd be better off paying everyone a guaranteed income, and if that results in a small cohort of lazy asses who just want to ***k off and read books like *No More Work*, that would be a far, far better thing than millions living on the dole, and the rest working their asses off for peanuts in industrial systems that, oh yeah, are ravaging the Earth. After all, there'll still be yahoos like yours truly writing pro bono reviews, right? But wait...there's more! And it has to do with our distinctively human lot, as some would have it, whereby work and love; that's right, love; comprise the ties that bind. ***k with one, you ***k with the other. But what do brick and rivet and lime have to do with love? Read the ***king book, even if you would prefer not to. As Clark Gable puts it in *The Misfits*, beats wages.

For centuries we've believed that work was where you learned discipline, initiative, honesty, self-reliance--in a word, character. A job was also, and not incidentally, the source of your income: if you didn't work, you didn't eat, or else you were stealing from someone. If only you worked hard, you could earn your way and maybe even make something of yourself. In recent decades, through everyday experience, these beliefs have proven spectacularly false. In this book, James Livingston explains how and why Americans still cling to work as a solution rather than a problem--why it is that both liberals and conservatives announce that "full employment" is their goal when job creation is no longer a feasible solution for any problem, moral or economic. The result is a witty, stirring denunciation of the ways we think about why we labor, exhorting us to imagine a new way of finding meaning, character, and sustenance beyond our workaday world--and showing us that we can afford to leave that world behind.

"No More Work is, wonderfully, at once a rude book and a kind one. Livingston is bracingly impolite about the cult of capitalistic productivity, all in the service of the happiness and pleasure that could be ours if we demanded less toil from ourselves and more justice from our society." --Benjamin Kunkel, author of *Utopia or Bust*

James Livingston's manifesto answers the question as to why Americans have such a 'fetish' with the idea of full employment and what happens when work in the United States disappears. Given the current debates about America's economic status, modern American life, and dependence on Third World labor, Livingston's new political theory poses a new self-understanding for Americans in an era of long-term unemployment." --Bruce Robbins, Columbia University

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Reading *No More Work*, I get a glimpse of what it must be like to have Jim Livingston as a teacher. Here we are treated to exhilarating leaps of the historical imagination--from the Bible to Daniel Bell--cushioned by a sensibility that is as radical as reality itself. I read this book in one sitting, but, like the best books, it will sit with me long after the sitting is done.--Corey Robin, Brooklyn College and the City University of New York Graduate Center

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Author James Livingston, PhD, is a professor of history at Rutgers University-New Brunswick. He is the author of *Origins of the Federal Reserve System: Money, Class, and Corporate Capitalism Pragmatism and the Political Economy of Cultural Revolution, 1850 1940 Pragmatism, Feminism, and Democracy: Rethinking the Politics of*

American History The World Turned Inside Out: American Thought and Culture at the End of the 20th Century and Against Thrift: Why Consumer Culture is Good for the Economy, the Environment, and Your Soul. Grover Gardner is an award-winning narrator with over eight hundred titles to his credit. Named one of the Best Voices of the Century and a Golden Voice by AudioFile magazine, he has won three prestigious Audie Awards, was chosen Narrator of the Year for 2005 by Publishers Weekly, and has earned more than thirty Earphones Awards.