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AUTONOMY AND WORK

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Introduction

Autonomous agency is a primary human good, and respect for individual autonomy is a foundational principle of liberal democracies. In this chapter, I consider autonomy in relation to working life: what constitutes an autonomous choice of work? Does an autonomous choice of work justify oppressive employment? In what other ways does autonomy relate to work? In addressing these questions, I lay out a basic distinction among autonomously chosen work, achieving autonomy as independence through work, and exercising autonomous agency *in* work.[1] All three dimensions of autonomy in relation to work are significant: it makes all the difference whether a person has freely chosen employment that aligns with life goals, employment that earns a decent living, and employment that permits agency and decision-making. The work we do both reflects and affects our autonomous capabilities, and for this reason I find that respect for workers' autonomy entails appreciating more than an initial choice of employment: we should also consider what work does to the worker and whether the work itself affords opportunities for autonomous agency. In looking at realities of contemporary working life, I also find that there is good reason to recognize that most work is heteronomous and that there is need for improvement in working life with respect to all three dimensions of autonomy in relation to work.

First, let us consider the meaning of autonomy. Classically defined as self-determination or self-governance, autonomy includes the ability to shape our own lives and to pursue plans and commitments that we reflectively endorse as our own. An autonomous person directs her life by her own will and has a range of options for the course of her life; she is not manipulated by external forces, severely constrained or coerced, or subject to the dictates of others. Navigating life autonomously requires not only freedom of choice concerning our actions, values, and identities but also rational and volitional capabilities that facilitate self-direction, including capabilities for critical thinking, self-reflection, imagination, decision-making, good judgment, and self-control. Theorists of autonomy often acknowledge that these capabilities develop in social contexts, including educational and family settings, but theorists of autonomy rarely explore work as a social context that can support or stifle the development and exercise of autonomous capabilities. This lack of attention to work may stem from the unruliness of the topic of work, or perhaps from a belief that work is simply a means to an end and has no integral role in living well.

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The topic of work merits more attention than it receives from philosophers, for work absorbs a substantial portion of our energies and has a profound influence on our lives. More than a means to a paycheck, work enables people to exercise skills, earn esteem, and serve a purpose within the world. Work also permits a person to have an impact on the lives of others. As two researchers of unemployment write, "people deprived of the opportunity to work often feel useless and report that they lack a sense of purpose" (Hayes and Nutman 1981: 43). Work contributes to a life that is fully occupied and can help a person thrive by developing her capabilities and nestling her in a social community. It is at work that we often hone our distinctive capabilities and skills, including job-specific skills and general problem-solving skills, social skills, and decision-making skills that help us thrive both within and outside of work.[2] With the importance of both work and autonomy in mind, let us turn to examine first what it means for a person to have autonomously chosen work.

1. Autonomously Chosen Work

One philosophical question that arises in thinking about autonomy in relation to work concerns what makes work autonomously chosen. Is it the act of agreeing to work at a particular organization? The freedom to exit a workplace and find another job, or freedom to exit the workforce altogether? Is it the realizing of reflectively formed life goals in a chosen occupation? There are a number of reasonable answers to these questions. On the one hand, many of us have a basic sense that persons exercise autonomy in a choice of occupation or in a choice to work at a particular organization; we may believe, furthermore, that these choices lend a kind of moral legitimacy to forms of work. In "Sweatshops, Choice and Exploitation" (2007), philosopher Matt Zwolinski articulates this line of thinking, arguing that even those who work in sweatshops, despite strong desires not to do so, exercise a genuinely autonomous choice that sanctifies the employment relationship. The choice to work at a sweatshop is not trivial but serious, as sweatshop employees work to survive and support their families, and this choice both exercises autonomy and merits respect from others. A morally transformative power of choice – which Zwolinski calls the moral magic of choice or consent – establishes a claim against interfering in conditions of sweatshop labor. Even if choosing to work in a sweatshop occurs in the context of a severely constrained set of life options, the choice still manifests a will to work under grueling conditions, and it would be wrong to take away the option of sweatshop work from a potential employee who may be harmed by the lack of the option. Given rights of non-interference established by the moral magic of choice, Zwolinski joins others in arguing that "labor rights organizations ought not to seek to change the law in countries which host sweatshops in order to establish higher minimum wages or better working conditions" and that "consumer boycotts of sweatshop-produced goods are misguided" (2007: 689).

On the other hand, another perspective on autonomously chosen work comes from philosopher John White, who frames the concept of autonomous work as activity whose end-product is a freely chosen life goal (White 1997a: 48 and 5–10).[3] Autonomous agency consists in part in devising and pursuing life goals, and if someone determines that, as a life goal, she seeks to educate the young, create art, or promote health in her community, then choosing to teach, paint, or provide health care constitutes autonomous work. By contrast, heteronomous work is not personally significant; it is work a person is constrained to perform for any number of reasons, such as needing money, satisfying others' expectations, or even following God's directive to do or produce something that one would otherwise not choose to do.[4] Manufacturing supermarket carts, vacuuming carpets, laying drains, and

typing business letters are among White's examples of heteronomous work (White 1997a: 35–36, 53). Teaching may ordinarily provide a good example of autonomously chosen work, but in the event that a person teaches only for the paycheck, and educating the young is not among his personal life goals, then his work as a teacher is heteronomous. It is an implication of White's account of autonomous work that most work is heteronomous, since most work is done for the sake of a paycheck and benefits, rather than for the realization of personal goals and values.

White's characterization of autonomous work sets a high bar for an autonomous choice of work, but his definition is reasonable in capturing both a standard definition of work as goal-directed activity and a basic dimension of personal autonomy – the choice of life goals. As one leading philosopher of autonomy, Marina Oshana, characterizes a basic intuition about autonomous personhood, "the autonomous person formulates certain goals as relevant to the direction of her life, and is able to pursue these goals and make them effective in action" (Oshana 1998: 82). In addition to capturing a basic sense of autonomy as the pursuit of chosen life goals, White's account of autonomous work is also successful in capturing, frankly, the unhappiness of working life for many people. Most people do not grow up dreaming of working at call centers or assembling parts of products on assembly lines, but people need to work to earn a living and come to accept what White calls heteronomous work.

Notably, despite recognizing the pervasiveness of dispiriting heteronomous work, White himself does not believe that reducing heteronomous work, or increasing opportunities for autonomous work, should be matters for social policy. He advances a value pluralist argument that social policy should not privilege particular conceptions of the good life but rather "encourage a wide variety of ways of life in which autonomous work might – or might not – find a place" (White 1997b: 241).[5] Nevertheless, he acknowledges a moral truth that reducing heteronomous work would improve our lives. "The case for reducing unpleasant work – work which is mechanical, exhausting, dangerous or boring – in the interest of personal well-being is overwhelming," and he points in particular to temptations of consumerism: "The wastefulness of our consumer society heaps up behind it a quite unnecessary mountain of heteronomous work" (White 1997b: 242). In this respect, one solution to problems of heteronomous work includes turning away from voracious consumerism toward moral values of simplicity and frugality, thus reducing the mountains of heteronomous work that others must do.

The reader may be reluctant to accept that most work done in the world is heteronomous, for, after all, it can be said with thinkers like Zwolinski that workers choose particular employment and reap the benefit of a paycheck, even when what they do at work does not align with their personal life goals. Work that people rather not perform also makes the world go round, and slighting it as heteronomous undercuts the apparent moral legitimacy of our social and economic orders and, in particular, moral arguments for global capitalism. Furthermore, if most work is heteronomous, we face an unwelcome truth that a lack of autonomy pervades the lives of a great majority of people. What we do at work is no small matter. In a social world in which people are expected to work nine to five, five days a week, work dominates most of our days and absorbs the better part of our waking productive energies. Work also forms a person, affecting his thoughts, habits and character traits, and the satisfactions and frustrations of a job linger long after work is complete. Since work has no small influence in the lives of working people, it is fair to say that if we lack autonomy in relation to work, we lack autonomy in relation to substantial portions of our lives.

In evaluating whether most work should indeed be classed as heteronomous, it is interesting to consider recent proposals for a universal basic income, which implicitly bring to light a lack of autonomy many people have in relation to work. Proponents of universal basic

income advocate that, on grounds of justice and autonomy, all citizens or residents of a political community should have an income, ideally sufficient for subsistence, regardless of work or willingness to work. Persons with a guaranteed subsistence-level income have an unparalleled freedom in life and in choice of work: they are free to turn down paid work and focus on other pursuits: education, personal development, occupational training, hobbies, creative expressions, fun adventures, family obligations, community service, and so on. Proponents of a universal basic income imagine audaciously that everyone, rather than just the well-to-do, should enjoy this concrete freedom. Two of the leading contemporary proponents of universal basic income, Philippe Van Parijs and Yannick Vanderborght, call the economic security of universal basic income an instrument of real freedom for all (2017: 4). The idea is that the worth of our freedoms depends on the resources people have at hand to make use of formal freedoms, and having an income is primary among resources that allow us to pursue our life goals.

Critical discussions of universal basic income often raise a question: how will society motivate people to work if everyone enjoys an income sufficient for subsistence, regardless of work or willingness to work? The short answer to this question, which I address at length elsewhere in defending universal basic income, is that that the benefits of work are plentiful (Veltman 2020). Firstly, we can reasonably expect that many people will be motivated to work by the extrinsic incentive of pay. Proponents of universal basic income do not aim to change the familiar fact of working for money but only the premise that people must work or starve. A universal basic income is a starting floor, and people will be at liberty to work for money that augments their basic income. Secondly, many forms of work have intrinsic benefits that draw people to want to contribute to communities, and these benefits are not to be forgotten among appeals to the incentive of money.[6] Forms of work without much intrinsic or extrinsic reward may fall to the wayside in communities with a universal basic income sufficient for subsistence, as edifices of exploitation crumble and greater autonomy emerges for workers and potential workers. But lessening the amount of bad work people perform heteronomously seems a step in the right direction in advancing human flourishing and reducing the wastefulness of consumer society.

Here, I would like to pause to appreciate that the question of motivating work under basic income schemes is revealing in itself. It exposes something about our social orders that people ordinarily prefer not to dwell on: the lack of freedom with respect to work that lies at the core of the lives of the majority of people. This heteronomy is easy to miss, first in the respect that a liberal democracy inclines toward celebrating the freedoms we do have in life and in work. In principle, we chose our occupations; many young people with a solid educational foundation can grow up to realize their dreams in their chosen occupations, and even adults can develop new skills and change occupations, or at least change workplaces or positions throughout life. But heteronomy envelops working life not only in that, at present, most people *must* work or fail to acquire a means of living, but also in that many people labor for much of their lives at hard, grueling work that is inherently unchoiceworthy. In his discussion of work in *Spheres of Justice*, Michael Walzer speaks of hard work as work that is harsh and difficult to endure – work that is like a hard winter or prison-sentence in that people would not choose such work if they faced even minimally attractive alternatives (1983: 165). Hard work is entrenched in social systems of production and distribution, and it seems unlikely that even newfangled advancements in technology will realize an old dream of eliminating hard, grueling, dangerous, dirty work from the human condition.

The heteronomy that covers the world of work is also easy to miss because, as Elizabeth Anderson writes in *Private Government* (2017), we see surprisingly little discussion of power

relations in the workplace even among thinkers concerned with freedom and autonomy. Anderson presents a striking analogy between communist dictatorships and everyday workplaces, in which, standardly, nearly everyone operates under surveillance and has a superior they must obey. The orders of this superior may be arbitrary and subject to change at any time; and those of lower ranks "may have their bodily movements and speech minutely regulated for most of the day" (Anderson 2017, 37). Superiors are not accountable to those they order around and, without question, routinely monitor the communications of the inferior ranks, and even claim authority to regulate workers' off-duty lives, as when workplaces effectively prohibit use of recreational drugs and enforce this prohibition through routine or random drug-testing. If one doubts things are really so bad in average contemporary workplaces, one should consider the factual examples Anderson presents at the start of her treatise. Wal-Mart employees cannot talk casually among one another, lest they be charged with time theft; Apple employees lose unpaid time every day as they wait for supervisors to search their personal belongings; Tyson employees are not allowed to use the restroom while on duty, with the result that some "urinate on themselves while their supervisors mock them" (Anderson 2017: xix). Anyone in doubt of oppressive workplace realities should also read some of the many empirical and journalistic exposés of everyday working conditions, such as Emily Guendelsberger's *On the Clock,* Christian Fuch's *Digital Labor and Karl Marx*, Robin Nagel's *Picking Up*, Barbara Ehrenreich's *Nickel and Dimed*, or Ruth Cavendish's *Women on the Line*.

To be sure, one may retort to the complaint that people lack freedom in relation to work that we cannot eliminate labor and work from the human condition: life itself thrusts upon us the need for labor and work, and there are limits to what technologies can do in lifting these burdens. Human beings – and even non-human animals – need to work because what we need and want for our existence is not miraculously self-actualizing. Since a compulsion to work springs from the conditions of life, some political philosophers may see the question of freedom in relation to work as something of a category mistake: freedom does not obtain in our relations to nature but in relations among persons.[7] I say in response that, at the same time that work is indeed an indelible part of the human condition, communities do face moral and political choices concerning work, including choices about what we produce, how much we produce, how we organize and assign production, and how we distribute the benefits of production to benefit some people but not others. A universal basic income sufficient for subsistence animates even additional choices in relation to work, because it raises the real possibility that many people can turn down work they rather not perform, including the heaps of superfluous work that now run through our culture.

2. Autonomy and Economic Independence

Let us move on to consider a second way in which autonomy relates to work: as I mentioned at the start, we can distinguish an autonomous choice of work from autonomy as independence achieved through work. In laying a groundwork for the philosophical study of autonomy in *Self, Society and Personal Choice*, Diana Meyers differentiates personal autonomy from economic autonomy, where the latter represents an ideal of self-sufficiency that people seek to prevent

> the possibility that others might gain power over them through their needs. If one can take care of oneself, one is beholden to no one – neither to the state nor to any other individual. Thus, one is at liberty to live as one chooses.
>
> *(Meyers 1989: 12)*[8]

In essence, economic independence is conceptually distinct from personal autonomy but can promote autonomy, in part because it can prevent a person from living under the will of another. To illustrate in the terms of classic feminism, a woman who does not have her own income and who is financially dependent upon a man leaves herself vulnerable to living under his will and his whims. Even if he is a good and benevolent man, her lack of economic independence makes her vulnerable to a range of harms, especially if his benevolence suddenly ceases. It is in this light that feminists such as Simone de Beauvoir (1952), Onora O'Neill (2000), and Marina Oshana (2006 and 2014) see economic independence as a component of women's liberation,[9] although to be sure other feminists highlight morally problematic implications of a social ethos of financial independence.[10]

The concept of autonomy as economic independence is entangled with notions of autonomy no longer fashionable, as feminist philosophers have duly critiqued conceptions of autonomy as independence as *drawn from male biographies and bound up with socially atomistic conceptions of human beings. Some* also observe that an ideal of autonomy as economic self-reliance is manipulated in political rhetoric and used to justify denying welfare assistance to poor women, whose need to raise young children renders ideals of independence and self-sufficiency unattainable. Lorraine Code writes that

> in the politics and rhetorics of social welfare … an assumed equality of access to social goods, that requires no advocacy, underwrites the belief that failure to achieve autonomy is a social sin…. [R]eliance on social services slides rhetorically into a weakness, a dependence on social advocacy that, paradoxically, invites—and receives—judgments of moral turpitude.
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> *(Code 2000: 194)*

Insofar as a regulative ideal of autonomy as economic independence or self-sufficiency expresses a political ideology that is simultaneously oppressive and unattainable, we may be inclined to shelve the notion in a dustbin of dated ideas, or perhaps supplant concepts of independence and self-sufficiency with a concept of supportive interdependence.

Rather than shelving the concept of economic autonomy, I believe we should continue to appreciate the importance of economic autonomy in promoting personal autonomy. Particularly for those whose work lacks internal rewards, the aims of achieving economic independence, earning a livelihood, or providing for a family provide a purpose to work and a point to what one endures on the job. Earning a paycheck is a source of pride and, as mentioned above, having an income can free a person from living under the thumb of another. Additionally, it remains entirely relevant to the oppression of workers in our time that low-wage workers toil at jobs that do not enable financial independence. At the same time that a purpose of work – deeply felt as such among many working people – is to achieve a measure of economic independence and to support oneself and one's family, many employees of profitable corporations cannot manage a living above poverty lines. Some Wal-Mart employees require public assistance to survive (Greenwald 2005), and people often work full-time in garment factories, assembly lines, call centers, restaurants, and other places, and yet still struggle with economic and food insecurities owing to low wages and diminishing benefits. Given this state of affairs, it is hardly the case that a social sin of failing to achieve self-reliant independence falls upon men or women who fail to work enough, but a social sin probably does fall upon corporations which net enormous profits and which can afford to pay adequate wages and benefits but which place profit ahead of people. Thus, if the notion of autonomy as economic independence remains dated and problematic, it also remains perversely relevant

in illuminating an appreciable dimension of oppression in relation to work – one distinct from autonomous work as freely chosen and from autonomous agency in work itself.

3. Autonomous Agency in Work

Beyond enabling economic independence, work can support autonomous agency in the respect that daily activities *within* work provide opportunities for making judgments and decisions, taking responsibility for decisions, conceiving and carrying out projects, forming goals, planning methods by which to accomplish goals, adjusting goals and methods in light of experience, and so forth. These forms of autonomy in work develop and exercise autonomous capabilities, which is a dimension of meaningful work that allows people to thrive. In a recent piece on autonomy and meaningful work, philosopher Keith Breen argues that, in coming to grips with ethical values reflected in the organization of work, we should appreciate that autonomy in work is bound up with human dignity and respect for persons. Workplaces in which employees control working processes, contribute to collective decision-making, and exercise reasoning in the course of work show a respect for workers as autonomous and intelligent persons, whereas workplaces in which employees primarily follow the orders of others all day stand in need of ethical improvement. "Work in which individuals lack discretion over their actions is … ethically impoverished in offending against our equal status as decision-making beings," he writes (2019: 52).[11]

This aspect of autonomous agency in work is important to consider for a few reasons. First, as Breen suggests, it is a matter of respect for persons that workers exercise autonomous capabilities in work itself. Second, empirical literatures on work and well-being indicate that having autonomous control over working processes is among the most prominent features of satisfying and meaningful work. For instance, in *Demanding Work*, Francis Green discusses a range of factors affecting the quality of work life, focusing on skill and effort required in a job, worker discretion and control over work processes, perceptions concerning pay comparisons, and job security. He highlights that "the evidence is unequivocal that higher levels of personal discretion and influence over job tasks have a strong beneficial impact on workers' well-being" (Green 2006: 173). Evidence is also clear, Green highlights, that as work becomes more demanding workers become more pressed for time and more stressed (2006: 174). In agreement with other organizational psychologists, he also notes that the quality of working life has an impact on workers even beyond the workplace itself: "one aspect of life satisfaction is satisfaction with one's work" (2006: 152). Additionally, our jobs affect our psyches, and a lack of autonomous agency in work undermines the personal autonomy of workers even off the job. In a classic longitudinal study on the impact of work on workers, Marvin Kohn and Carmi Schooler (1983) show a reciprocal relationship between work and aspects of autonomous agency; in particular, following orders of others all day fosters a narrow self-conception among workers who, in turn, suffer diminished drives toward accomplishing self-determined life goals:

> In industrial society, where occupation is central to men's lives, occupational experiences that facilitate or deter the exercise of self-direction come to permeate men's views, not only of work and of their role in work, but also of the world and of self…. The conditions of occupational life at lower social-stratification levels … foster a narrowly circumscribed conception of self and society, and promote the valuation of conformity to authority. Conditions of work that foster thought and initiative tend to enlarge men's conceptions of reality; conditions of constraint tend to narrow them.
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> *(1983: 33, 103)*

In brief, complex work that permits self-direction and discretion fosters autonomous self-conceptions among workers, whereas work that is routine, unskilled, and closely supervised encourages conformity to authority and narrow conceptions of self among workers. Forms of work at lower social stratification levels often fail to permit autonomy in work because workers pursue goals determined by others, in ways that others deem appropriate, where often, as Adina Schwartz adds, "even the order in which [workers] perform operations, the pace at which they work, and the particular bodily movements they employ are largely determined by others' decisions" (1982: 634). For her part, Schwartz argues for a democratic redesigning of workplaces to minimize divisions between decision-makers and laborers, since these divisions of labor undermine the autonomous capabilities of those who primarily execute others' decisions or perform only routine tasks. In light of the impact of work on the development and exercise of autonomous capabilities, she writes, "we cannot believe that individuals should be free to acquire wealth at the cost of others' development as free agents" (1982: 643).

Redesigning workplaces around respect for worker autonomy may appear impossibly far afield from the world of work as we know it. Here, I would encourage open-mindedness, for workplace structures and practices are not invariable elements of a natural order, but rather change over time. It is worth considering for a moment the considerable measures of moral progress that workplaces have achieved in some quarters of the world in the twenty-first century. It is now commonplace to maintain as ideals – and to instantiate in practice in varying degrees – rational and fair hiring processes, non-discriminatory and harassment-free workplaces, equitable wages and freedom from threats, abuse and profanity while on the job. According to historian Stanford Jacoby (2004), not one of these ideals was in place just a century ago, when the dominant mode of the production of commodities was a factory system in which foremen used close supervision, abuse, profanity, and threats to motivate faster and harder work, and in which work was highly insecure, poorly paid, fraught with pay inequities and ethnic discrimination, and not uncommonly secured through nepotism, favoritism, and bribery. Some of us already live in workplace utopias in comparison with the factories of the early 1900s, at which time it would have been difficult to see possibilities for the sort of change that is now an accepted reality. In this respect, it ought not be said in thinking about working life that work simply is what it is, for appreciating historical moral progress in working life highlights the abilities of human communities to transcend and reinvent given workplace structures, drawing us to entertain ideals and possibilities for transforming elements of working life that continue to stifle human development, autonomy, and dignity.

In closing, I highlight that appreciating the impact of work on autonomous capabilities can potentially guide transformations of workplace structures so that working can become more autonomous and meaningful for more people. I also highlight that an initial autonomous choice of occupation by no means exhausts the intersections between autonomy and work, and focusing only on autonomous choice of occupation can obscure ways in which oppressive forms of work undermine autonomous capabilities of workers both in work and beyond. Since the work we do affects our autonomous capabilities, I find it doubtful that individuals or social organizations show due respect for autonomy solely by genuflecting at individual choices of occupation. Given that autonomous capacities are developed within social contexts, including work, a democratic commitment to supporting people's autonomous capacities, and a general ethical prioritization of people over profit, entails opposing oppressive and dehumanizing forms of work that stifle worker autonomy and well-being.

Notes

1 A distinction along these lines appears in a number of philosophical books and essays on autonomy and work. For instance, James Bernard Murphy writes in capturing part of this distinction, "Autonomy requires not just that we have the liberty to choose what kind of work to pursue, whether carpentry or teaching, but also that we have some discretion about how to perform our work" (Murphy 1993: 226). Similar distinctions appear in Breen (2019), Roessler (2012), and Bowie (1988).

2 In *Meaningful Work* (2016), I develop these points in arguing that meaningful work is central in human flourishing.

3 A condensed version of the argument of White's book, *Education and the End of Work* (1997a), appears in his paper "Education, Work and Well-being" (1997b).

4 As White writes, heteronomous work is work "whose end-product has not been chosen as a major goal" (1997a: 57). See also White (1997b: 234).

5 In *Meaningful Work* (2016), I argue to the contrary of value pluralism that meaningful work is central in human flourishing, but I agree with value pluralists that it is not the proper role of the state to guarantee opportunities for meaningful work.

6 For discussion of the many intrinsic benefits of work, see Veltman (2016).

7 Libertarian political philosophers, who think extensively about the meanings of freedom, are prone to clarify that freedom is a relation among persons, not a relation between humanity and nature. John Hospers, for instance, argues that rights and liberties on the part of one person entail only duties of forbearance on the part of others, and "The non-violation of these rights [to life, liberty and property] will not guarantee you protection against natural catastrophes such as floods and earthquakes, but it will protect you against the aggressive activities *of other men*. And rights, after all, have to do with one's relation to other human beings, not with one's relations to physical nature" (Hospers 2008: 324).

8 In *Autonomy, Gender, Politics* (2003), Marilyn Friedman writes similarly that economic autonomy helps the realization of personal autonomy, but personal autonomy and financial independence are distinct notions: "financial independence is no constitutive part of autonomy," nor is it causally sufficient for it, she clarifies (4749). Friedman notes that in popular understanding, there is a superficial resemblance between philosophical conceptions of personal autonomy and conceptions of independence and self-sufficiency, but in philosophical literatures, economic independence is one condition among others that can promote personal autonomy, which philosophers generally understand as the ability to direct one's own life.

9 Onora O'Neill identifies financial independence as a valuable goal for women who are otherwise "vulnerable not only to low wages, low standards of industrial safety, endemic debt and disadvantageous dependence on those who provide credit, but also to disadvantageous patterns of entitlement within the family" (2000: 162167). Marina Oshana also identifies financial self-sufficiency as one of several social-relational properties of autonomy, arguing that a level of economic autonomy that enables a person to be independent of others is a requirement of personal autonomy (Oshana 2006: 87). See also her argument that a life of low-wage wage labor, with its attendant vulnerabilities and financial insecurities, is autonomy depriving in Oshana (2014).

10 See Kittay and Feder (2002), particularly the chapter therein by Iris Marion Young, "Autonomy, Welfare Reform and Meaningful Work."

11 Breen distinguishes freedom as self-determination within work from both (1) freedom as non-domination in work and (2) freedom as self-realization in work, and he argues that all three dimensions of freedom in work are central in the achievement of meaningful work.

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