

Digital Labour and Digital Workerism

Abstract

All of a sudden, everybody's talking about the gig economy. From taxi drivers to pizza deliverers to the unemployed, we are all aware of the huge changes that it's driving in our lives as workers, consumers and citizens. The use of digital technology has become a key part of contemporary debates on how work is restructuring, the future of work/ers, resistance, and organising. Workerism took up many of these questions in the context of the factory – particularly through the Italian Operaismo – connecting the experience of the workplace with a broader struggle against capitalism. However, there are many differences between those factories and the new digital workplaces. The methods of workers' inquiry and the theories of class composition are a useful legacy from Operaismo, providing tools and a framework to make sense of and intervene within workers' struggles today. This seminar will discuss digital labour, and the challenges and opportunities for a "digital workerism", and the new forms through which workers' struggles can be circulated.