

What I'll Be Reading When the Digital Labor Day is Done

We here at the DLWG love a good screed and there are very few doing it better than [David Golumbia](#) right now. I was very fond of his recent talk "Cyberlibertarianism: The Extremist Foundations of Digital Freedom" (available [here](#)) and am very excited to read his new, related piece for Jacobin "[Cyberlibertarians' Digital Deletion of the Left](#)" on my way home. Here's a sample:

When computers are involved, otherwise brilliant leftists who carefully examine the political commitments of most everyone they side with suddenly throw their lot in with libertarians — even when those libertarians explicitly disavow Left principles in their work.

This, much more than overt digital libertarianism, should concern the Left, and anyone who does not subscribe to libertarian politics. It is the acceptance by leftists of the largely rhetorical populist politics and explicitly pro-business thought of figures like Clay Shirky (who repeatedly argues that representative democratic and public bodies have no business administering public resources but must defer to “disruptive” forces like Napster) and Yochai Benkler (whose *Wealth of Networks* is roundly celebrated as heralding an anticapitalist “sharing economy,” yet remains firmly rooted in capitalist economics) that should concern us, especially when they are taken up as if they are obviously positions the Left should favor. It is the boastful self-confidence of engineers and hackers that their advanced computer skills inherently qualify them to say a great deal about any part of the social fabric to which we are lucky enough to have them contribute, regardless of their understanding of politics or society.

Wonderful to see someone critiquing the libertarian impulse in the ideology of "hacking" that isn't just sniping at [Glenn Greenwald from a VC funded perch](#).