

THE DRINKING BIRD

BY MCFEELY SAM GOODMAN

About The Drinking Bird Comic

This comic book is adapted from a play that I wrote and developed with [Limited Liability Theater Company](#) from 2015 to 2019.

The play had a staged reading as part of This Is Not Normal at The Brick (NYC), was developed through The Swarthmore Project in Theater (Swarthmore College, Swarthmore, PA), and was produced as part of Ice Factory at New Ohio Theater (NYC).

The following artists have contributed to this project at some stage of the process: Sarah Hughes, Eliza Bent, Lindsay Hockaday, Amelia Possanza, Evan Savitt, Eva von Schweinitz, Bailey Williams, Lucy Kaminsky, Agnes Borinsky, Lanxing Fu, J Moliere, Stephanie Regina, Sam Breslin Wright, Wesley Han, Michaela Shuchman, Michelle Johnson, Margot Wisen, Jenna Horton, Marisela Grajeda Gonzalez, Narea Kang, Rachel Lin, Mike Mikos, Emily Auciello, Cha See, Allie York, Ryan Goff, Alyssa Simmons, & Rad Pereira

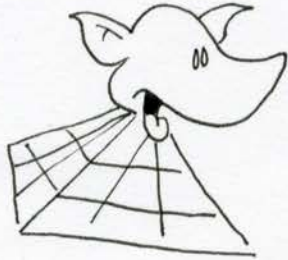
The comic book version owes a great deal to Berkeley Breathed, as well as to Bill Waterson, George Herriman, Walt Kelly, Aaron McGrudder, Garry Trudeau, Gary Panter, and last, but not least, Tasha Lewis.

The ideas in *The Drinking Bird* owe a great deal to the writing of Lewis Hyde, David Graeber, Scott Santens, and Dean Baker, among others. I first encountered the thought experiment of women going next door to get paid for their housework during a conversation with Sarah Hughes that she no longer remembers. I've since learned about the International Wages for Housework Campaign, one of the precursors to contemporary campaigns for a universal basic income.

Readers of *The Drinking Bird* may wonder which of the characters is me. The answer is that when I was writing the play, they both were. I wrote the play as a way of working through things that I was reading and things that I was thinking about. One character proposes ideas; the other asks questions. Some of the ideas were mine; some were things I had read. Some of the questions were mine; some reflected questions that I could imagine other people asking. Answering those questions left me with new questions. Five years into the journey of trying to answer those new questions, I'm not sure either of the characters in *The Drinking Bird* is me anymore. I hope that reading this comic leads people, whether they recognize their own ideas and questions in it or not, to have more conversations about these things. We are going to need to have more of these conversations with each other if we are going to have any chance of getting ourselves out of the mess that the prevailing economic dogma has gotten us into.

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Dramatis Personae:



ARMADILLO ANNEX



SQUARE BLUE SKY

SETTING: The United States of America

PROLOGUE: "Quote-unquote women's work"

Bullshit Jobs

Bullshit Robot Jobs

Pride

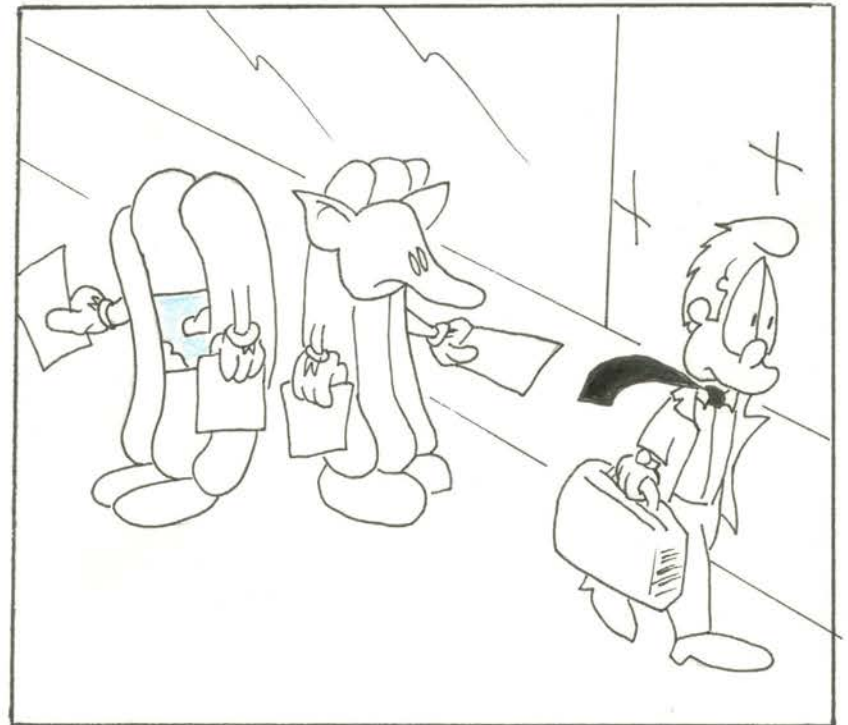
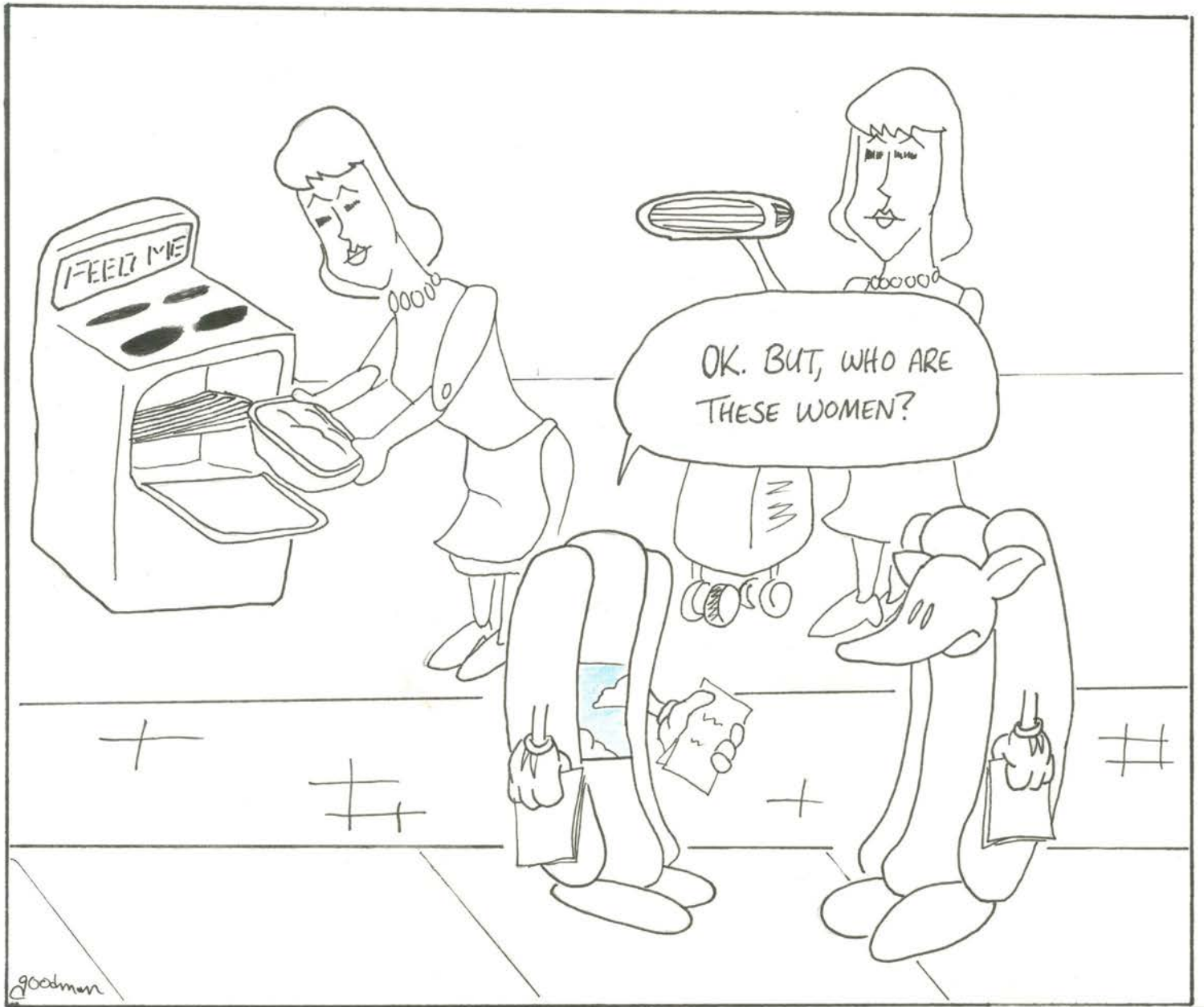
"A country called productivity"

"A human job"

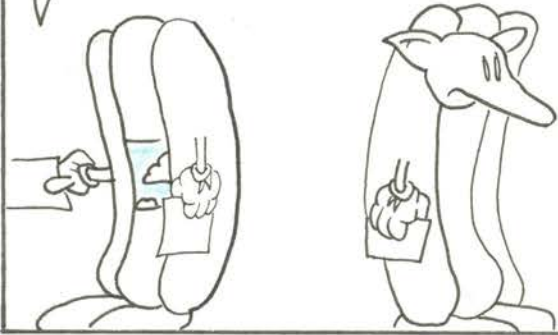
Parental Basic Income

The Section Formerly Known as Homer Simpson Layoff Tax

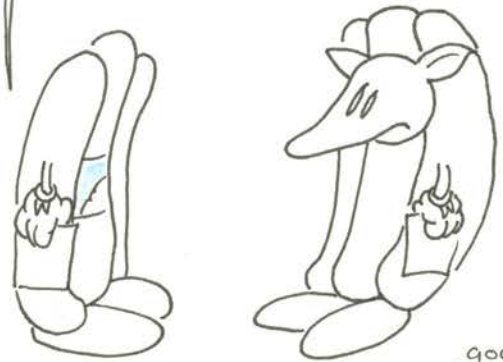
EPILOGUE: "Love made visible"



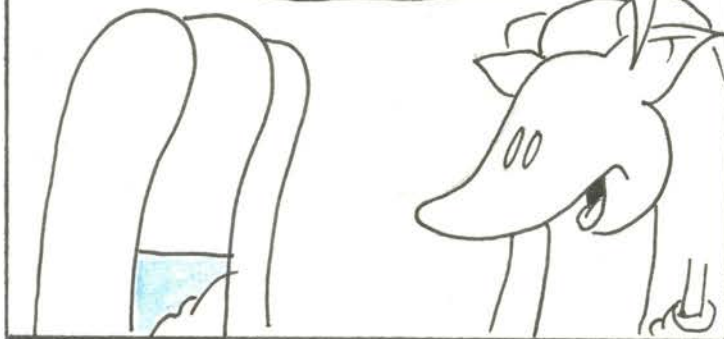
WHERE IN THE UNITED STATES
OF AMERICA TODAY IS THERE
A NEIGHBORHOOD WHERE EVERY
HOUSE HAS A HOUSEWIFE AND THEY
ALL LIVE NEXT TO EACH OTHER?



OR ARE WE
TALKING ABOUT
LIKE THE 1950s?



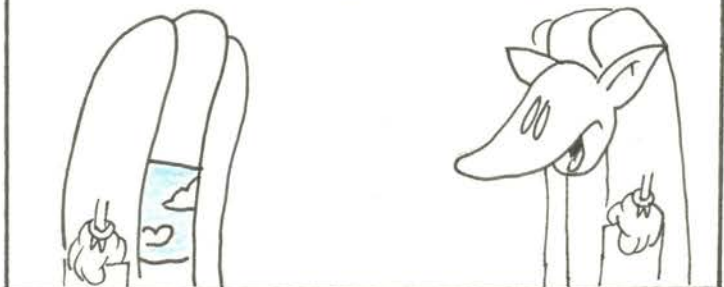
THE POINT IS NOT THAT
THIS EXISTS, NECESSARILY



SO WHAT'S
THE POINT?



THE POINT,
IF YOU'LL LET ME
FINISH



THE POINT OF THE METAPHOR

THE ALLEGORY

THE IMAGE

THE RHETORICAL
DEVICE

THE THING I'M
TALKING ABOUT



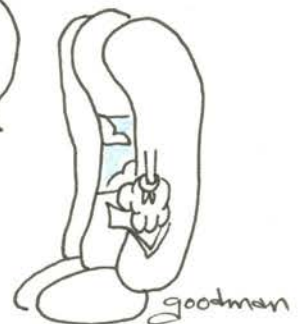


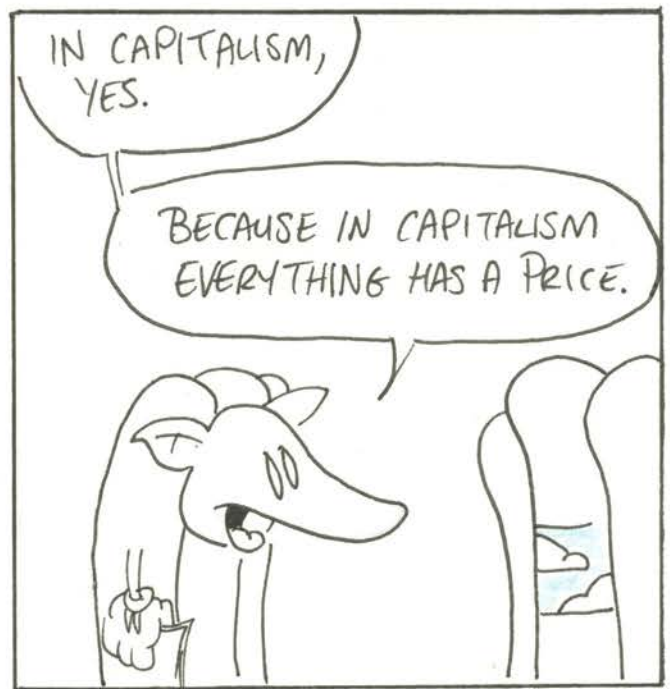
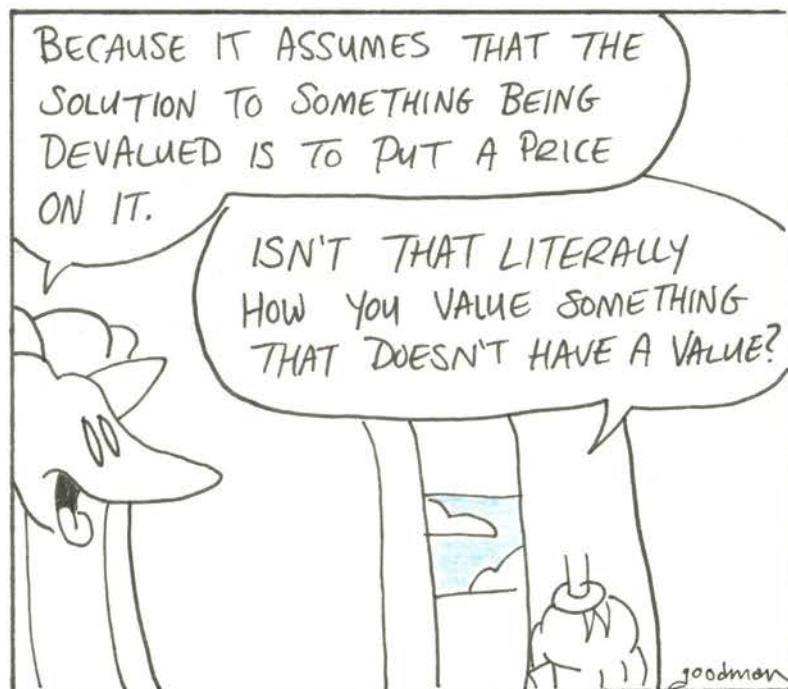
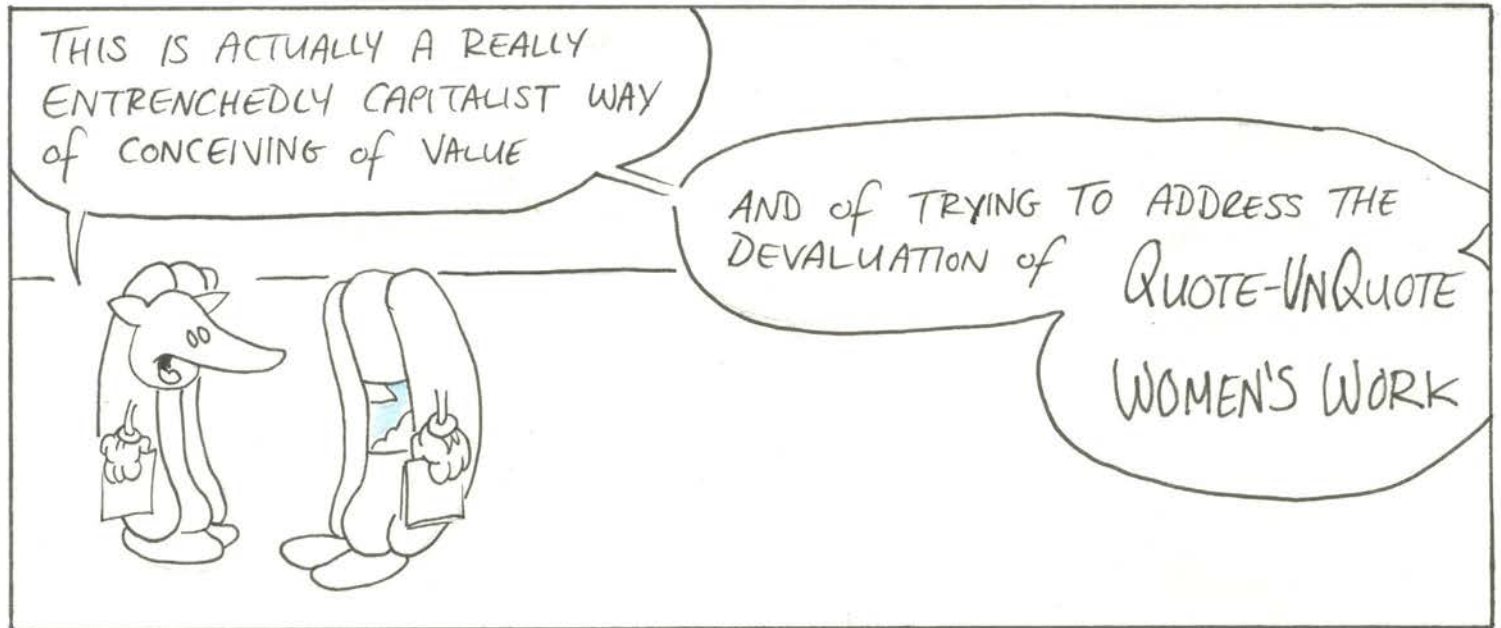
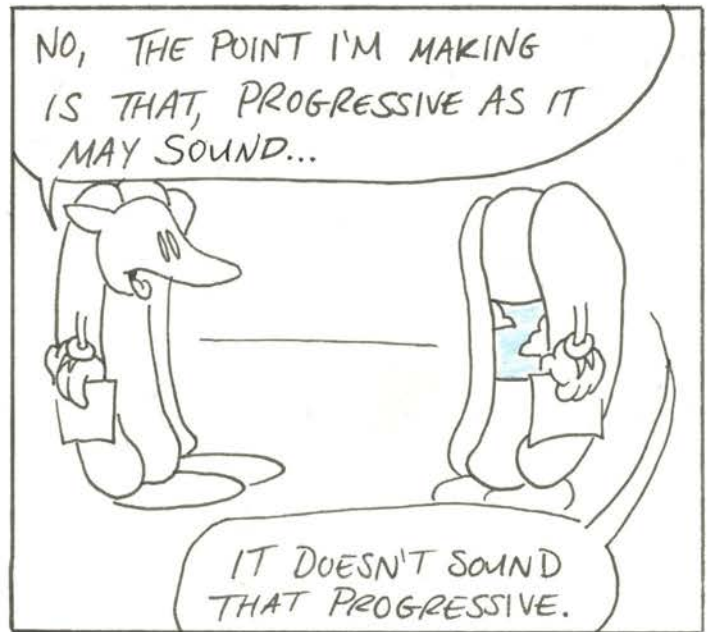
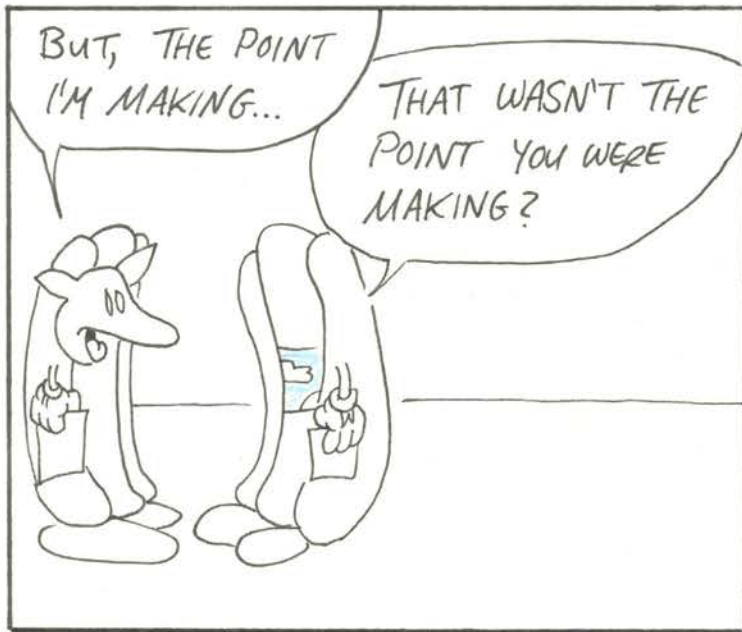
is to use this image
this situation
which maybe is sort of plucked from another age,
but which allows us to reconceptualize
this sector of the economy,
to use this image to think in a different way
about work and the way that work is commodified.

So, if we picture this community,
whether it exists or not,
in which the convention is that we have these
two-parent nuclear families
in which one parent
(usually male)
goes to a quote-unquote
JOB
and the other parent
(usually female)
stays home and cooks and cleans and takes care of the kids

We think of the parent who goes out of the house to work
(the father)
as the one with the JOB.
But, of course, the parent who stays home
(the mother)
is also working.

And so the line of thinking
or the rhetorical figure
sort of goes
if we imagine these stay_-at-home workers
(women)
going next-door instead
so that each of these wómen is taking care of someone else's
house
and getting paid for it,
the idea is,
according to this line of thinking
that we would have a greater appreciation for this kind
of work.





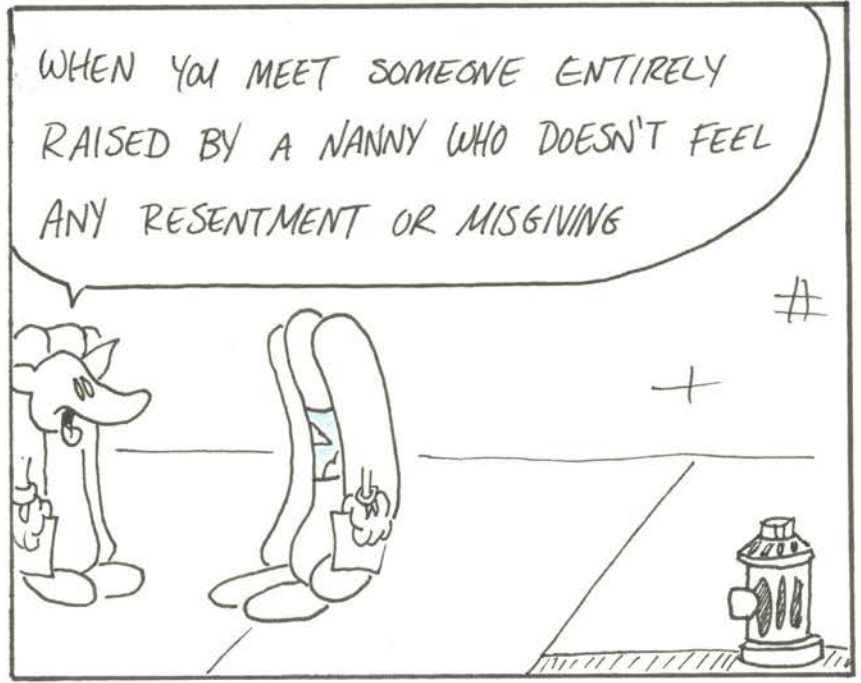
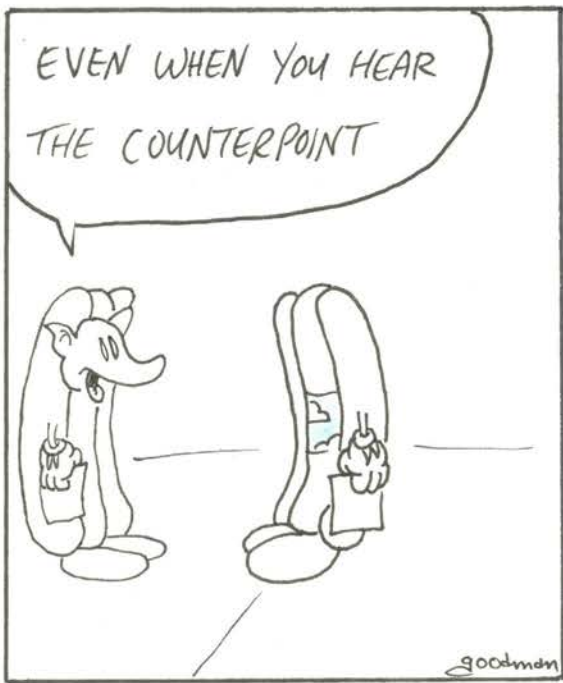
and we take that price
to be the value of a thing.
And yet, there are things that we call
price-less.
When we call something priceless
When we say that you cannot put a price on something,
we are recognizing,
whether we realize it or not,
that there are things in life
which transcend a capitalist system of value,
which, in truth, transcend capitalism,
or exist outside it,
or ought to.

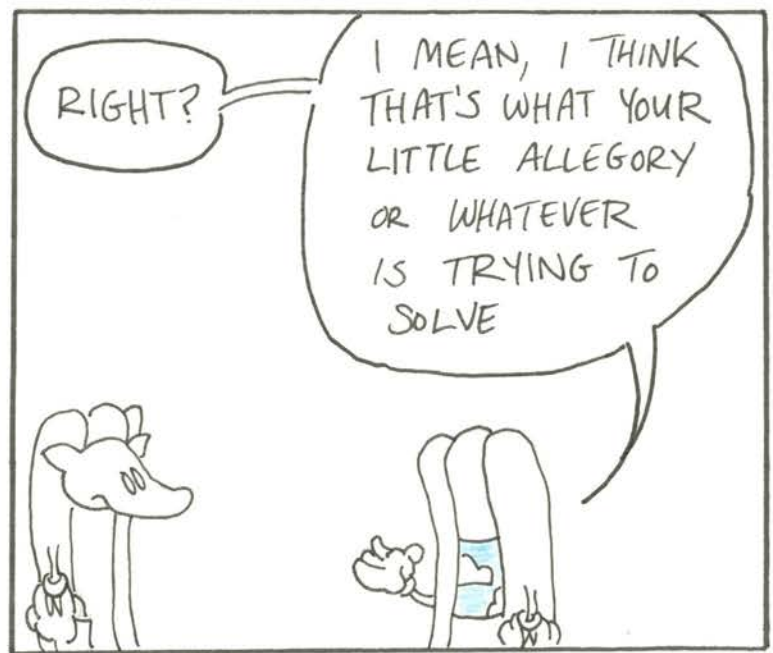
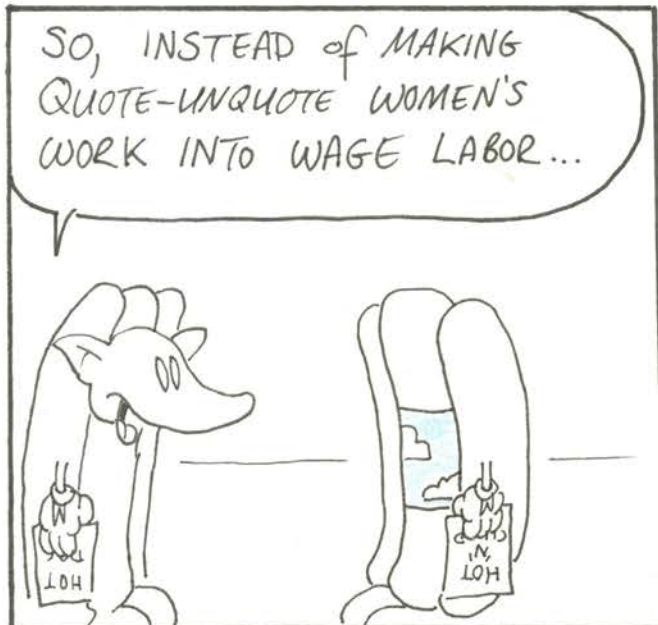


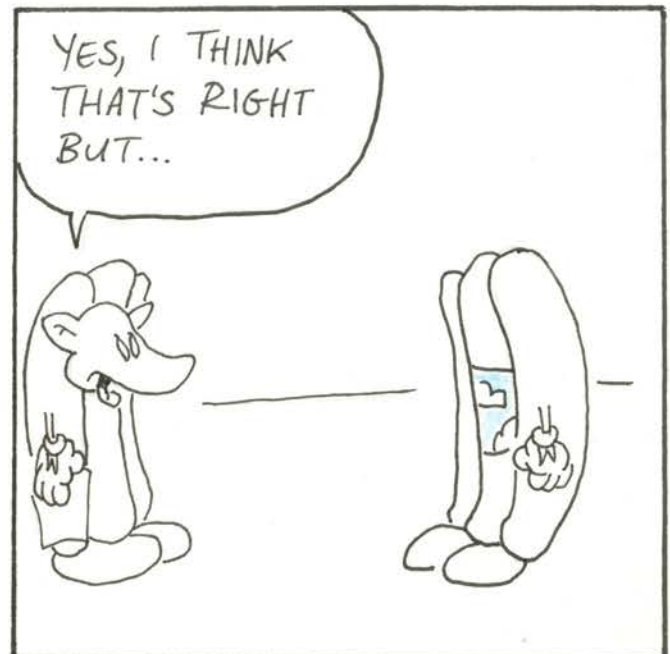
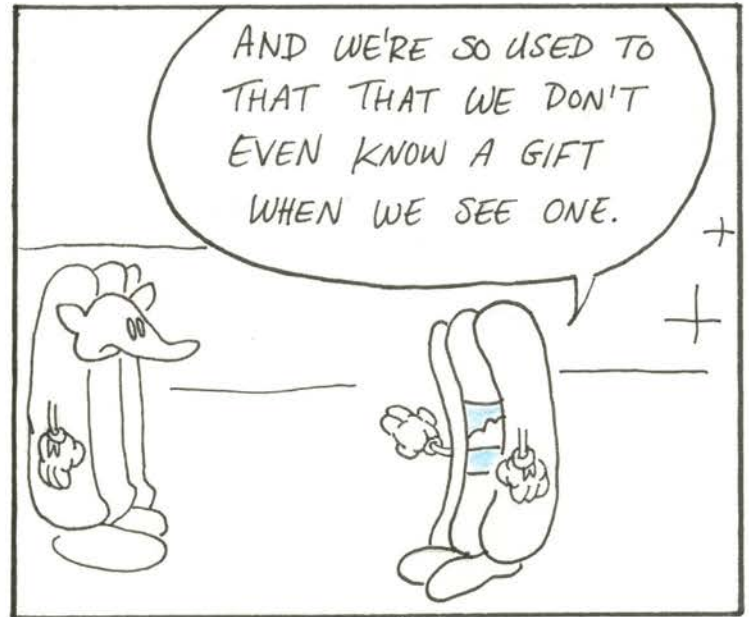
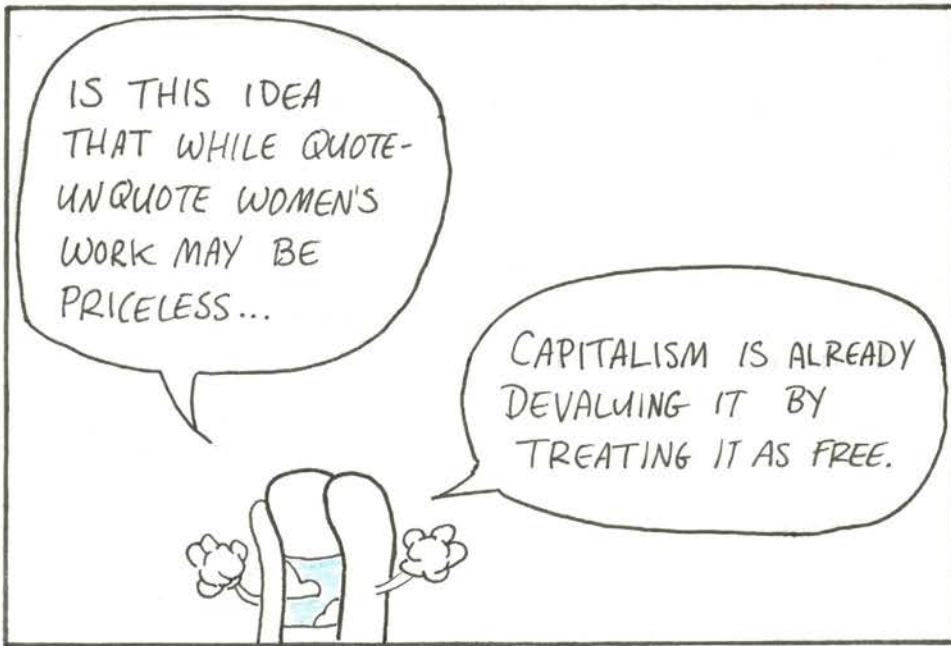
And the things that we call "women's work"
home cooking,
providing a clean, safe, comfortable home,
raising children,
caring for the elderly
and the sick,
these are priceless gifts,
not commodities.

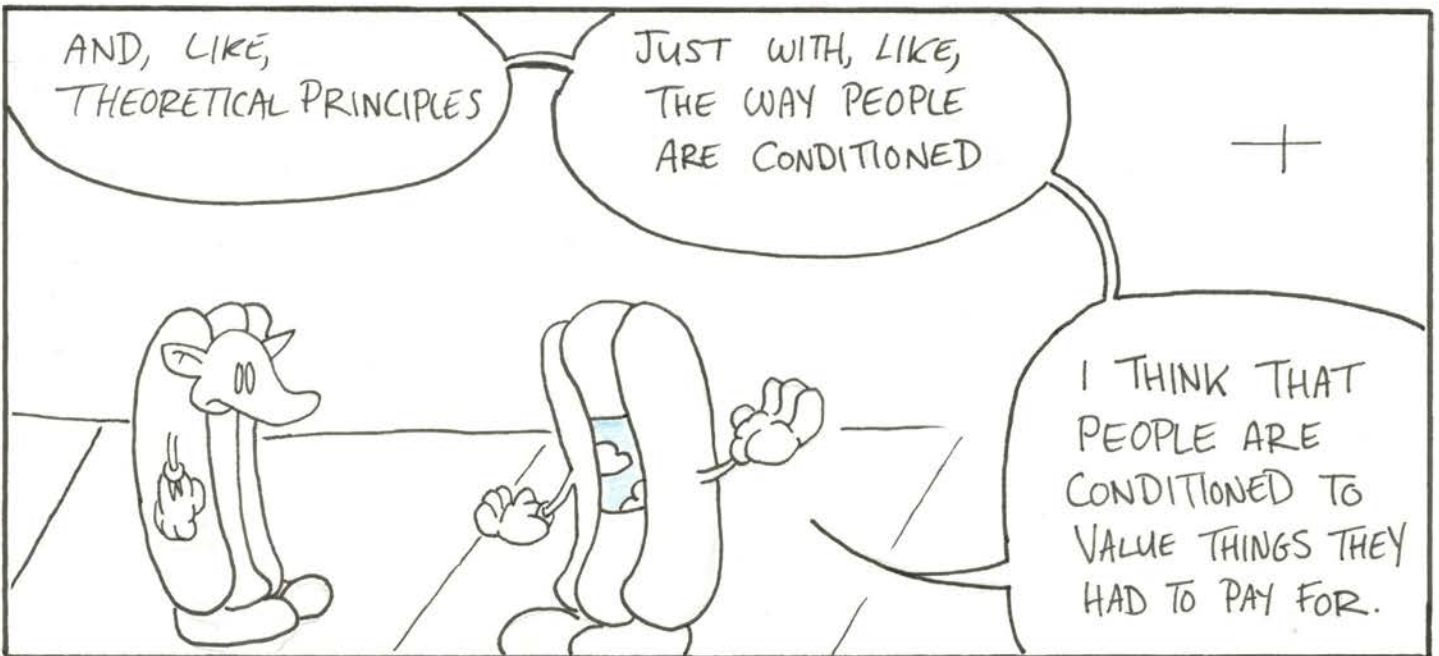
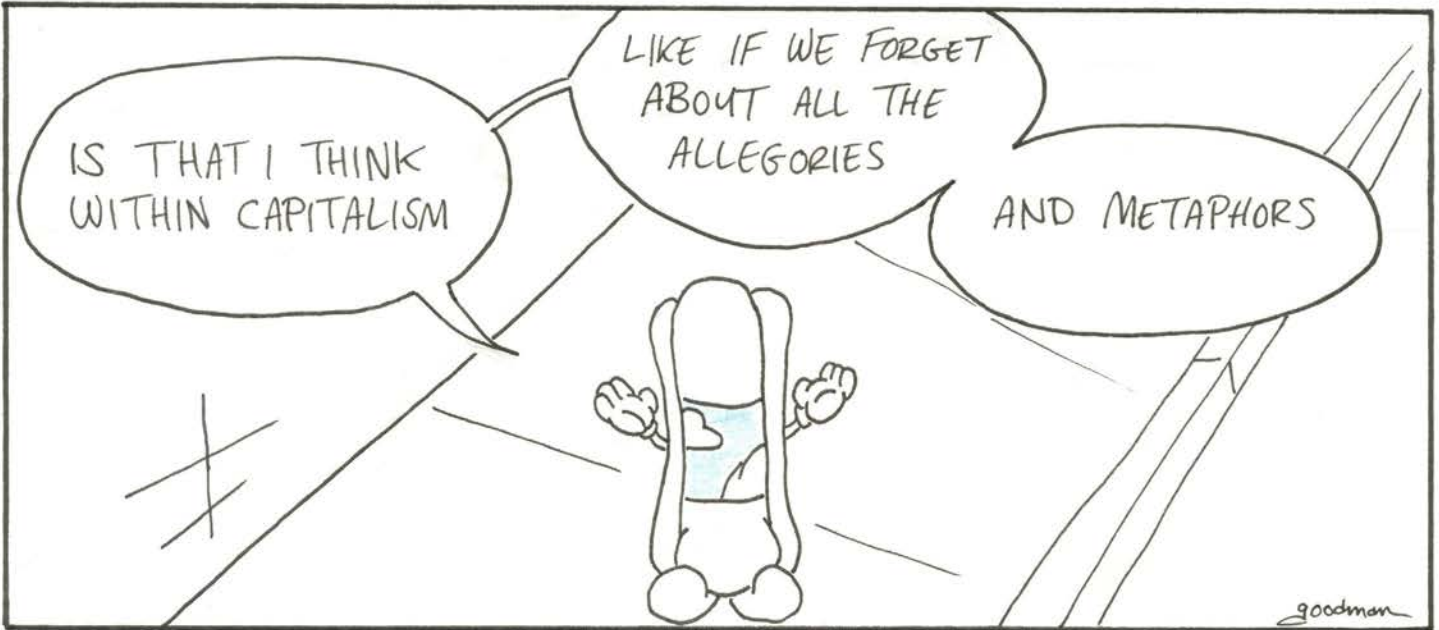
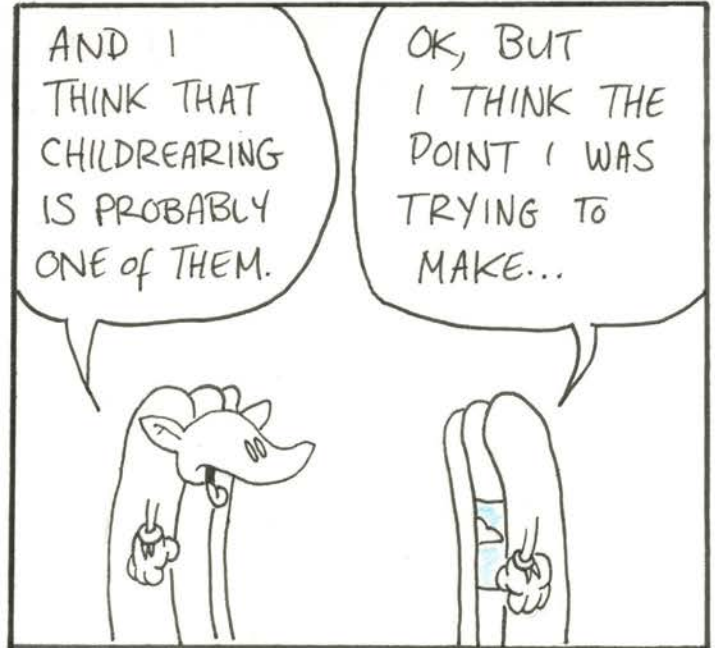
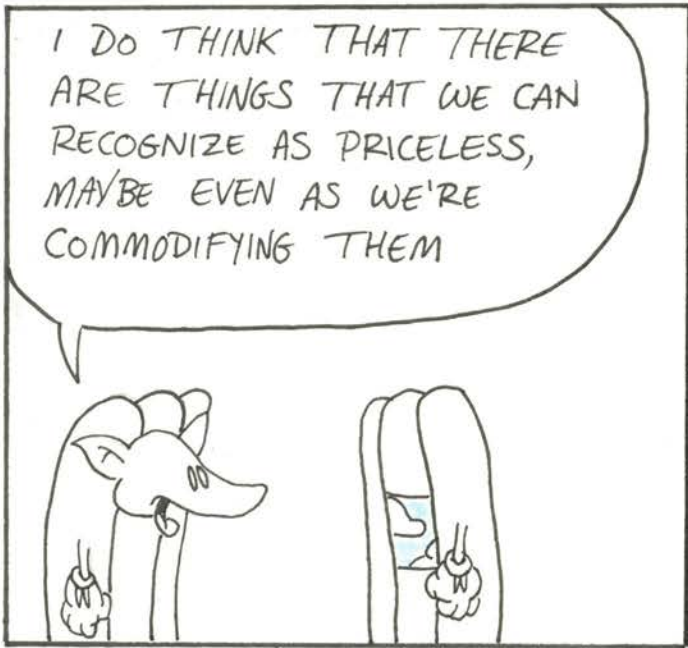
I mean, this is why you see people who can
afford to pay someone to watch their kids
agonizing over whether they're spending enough
time with their kids.

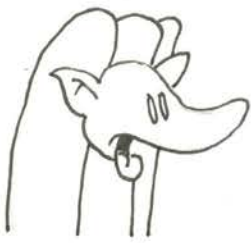
We have this sense that there is something
invaluable
about being raised by your family
rather than by an employee.











I think that's true for things, objects, though, at the same time, I think we're conditioned to try to get a good deal, to get more than we give.

Ideally, if we can afford it, we'd like to pay a lot of money for something that's worth a lot more.

So, even if you get something for free, you want to be able to say that it would normally be expensive.

THESE HEADPHONES
NORMALLY GO FOR,
LIKE, SIX HUNDO
PER PAIR



BUT BECAUSE I'M BUDDIES
WITH THE GUY AT THE
RECORD STORE, AND HE KNOWS
I KNOW HOW TO APPRECIATE
QUALITY SOUND, HE GAVE
ME THE PAIR THE COMPANY
SENT HIM FOR, LIKE,
PROMOTIONAL PURPOSES
OR WHATEVER.

But, I think things are very different when it comes to services, things we get from other people, at least for the sort of person who really craves social connection.



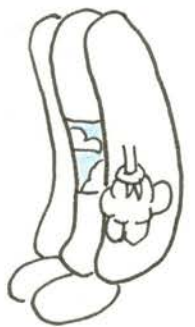


So, we try to pretend we are friends
(or family)
with the people we pay to do things every day,
whether we're paying them to drive us somewhere
or do our nails
or feed us
(either at a restaurant
or a coffee shop
or a grocery store).

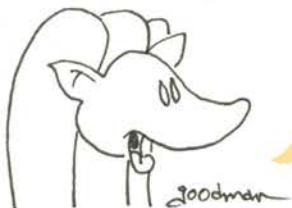
This is why hotels
(and a lot of other businesses these days)
call their customers guests.
We would rather feel like guests than customers.
But we don't behave like guests.
We don't make the bed when we leave.
We don't offer to help cook.
We don't do the dishes.
Instead of the things a guest does to say thank you,
we pay to be treated like a guest.
If we really want to say thank you,
we leave a big tip.


Or like our conversation yesterday about tv Chauffeurs.

YEAH, I DON'T KNOW.
I STILL THINK THERE'S
NOTHING WRONG WITH
BEING FRIENDLY WITH
SOMEONE WHO WORKS
FOR YOU.

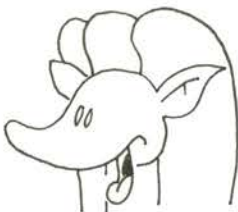
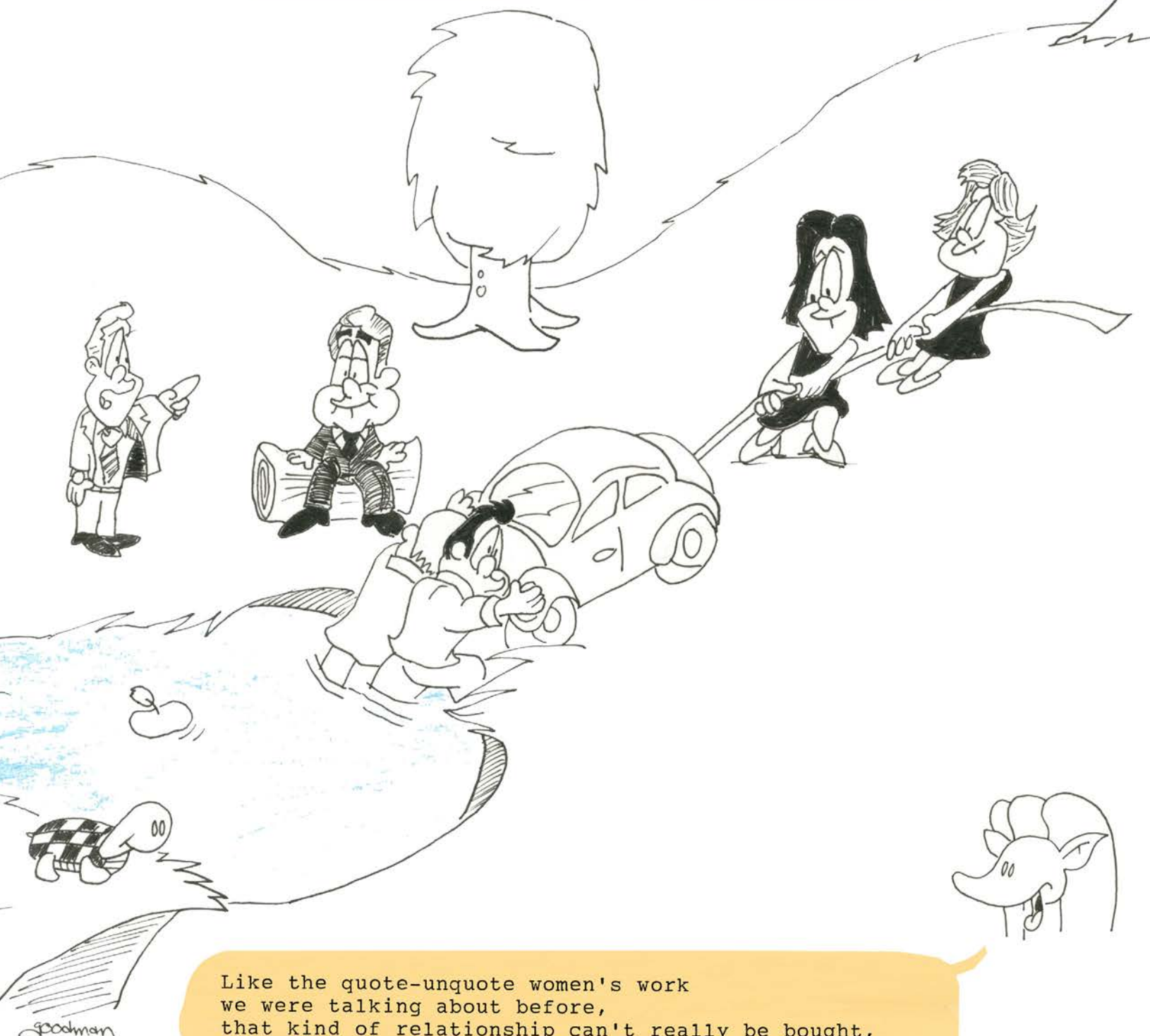


Of course not.
But my point was that part of the fantasy
that these tv shows are selling
is this idea that you can buy
the kind of friendship and love
that really only comes from the free exchange
of gifts and favors and compassion
among equals.





This idea that not only is your chauffeur always there to bail you out of your wacky high jinks, but he might also assist in said high jinks or offer sage advice. But that's a one-way street. There is no episode of *How I Met Your Mother* in which the gang give Ranjit relationship advice or helps him out of a bind.



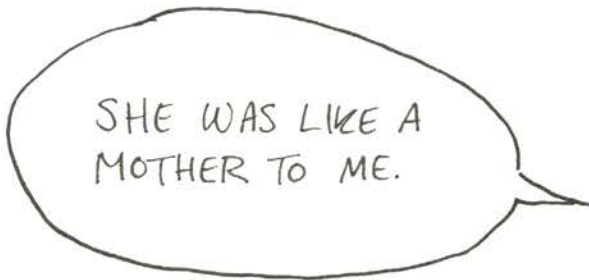
Like the quote-unquote women's work we were talking about before, that kind of relationship can't really be bought, or at least it can't be bought without being devalued.



Because then we're taking something that someone would do out of love or friendship and we're paying them for it. And because it's capitalism, we're underpaying them for it. You can't pay someone to watch your kids unless your time is worth more than theirs, otherwise it wouldn't be worth it. You have to be earning enough to justify not watching your kids yourself.

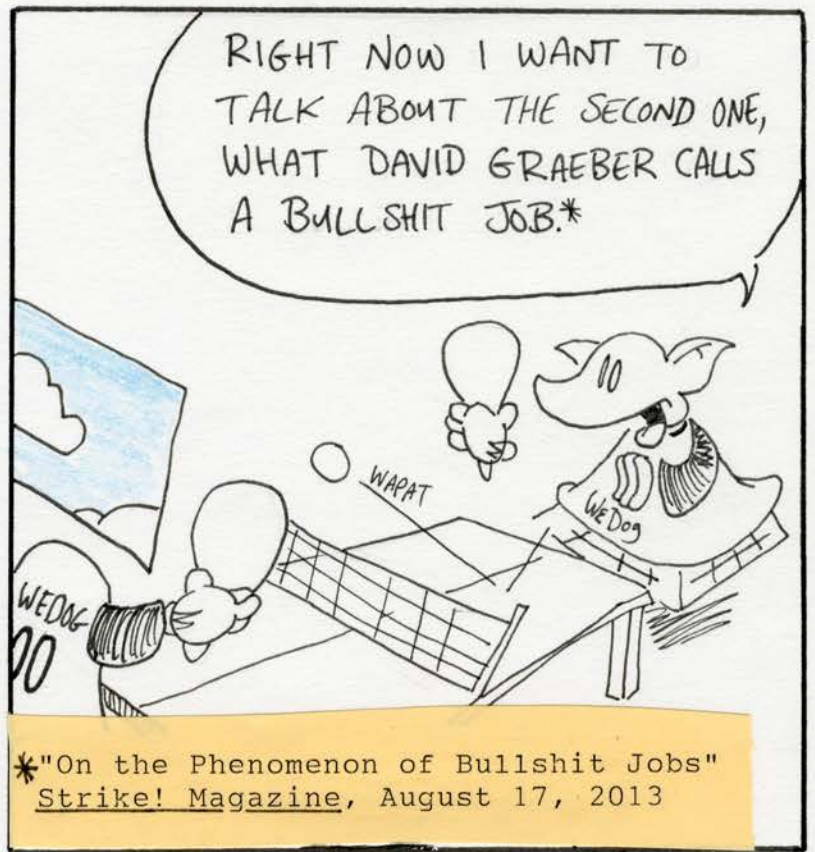
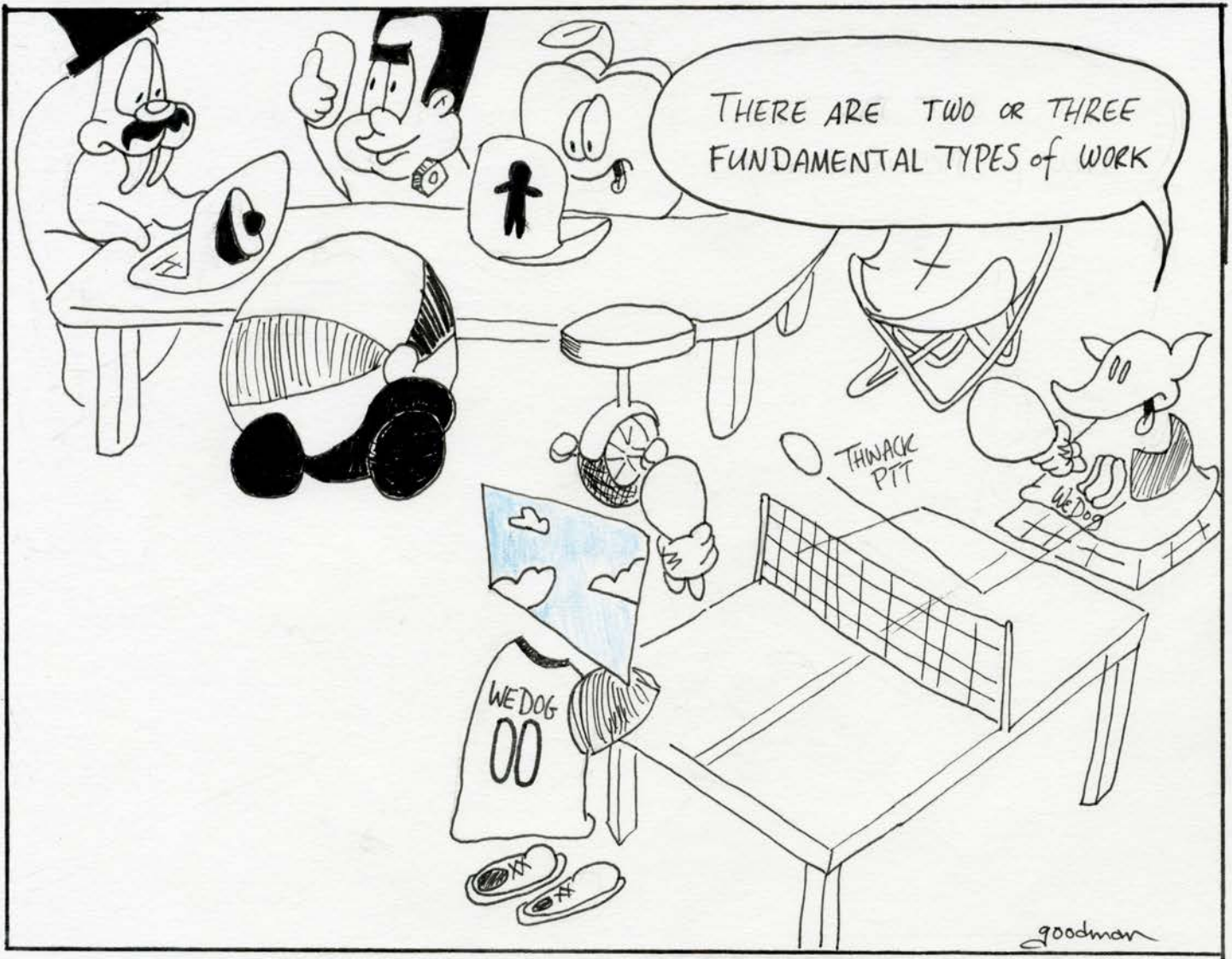
So that's the problem, in a nutshell, with asking, What if every caregiver and housekeeper went next door? is that plenty of caregivers and housekeepers are already getting up at the crack of dawn to leave their kids with a relative so that they can go clean other people's houses and take care of other people's kids.

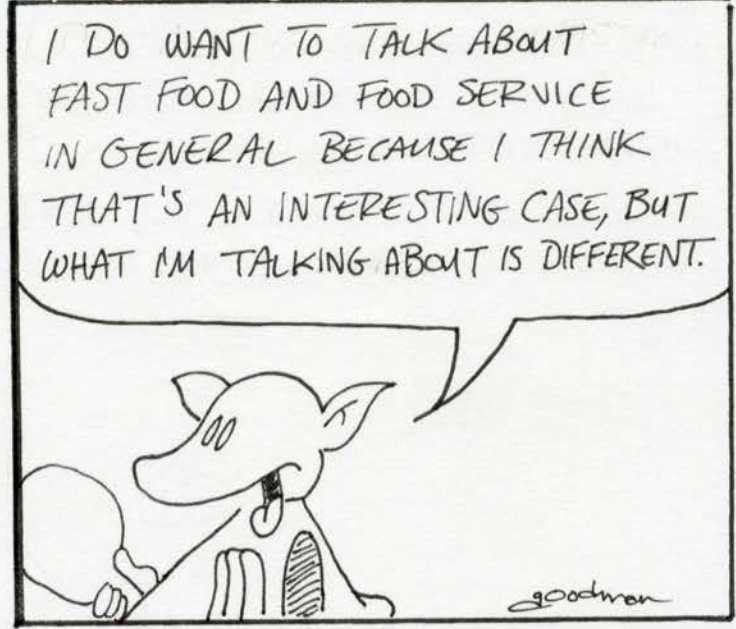
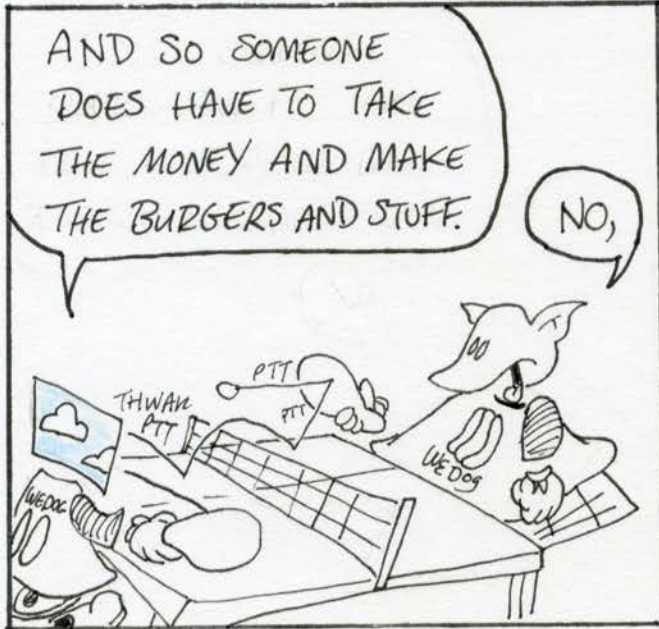
And, to put it bluntly, if one of those other people's kids can grow up and say

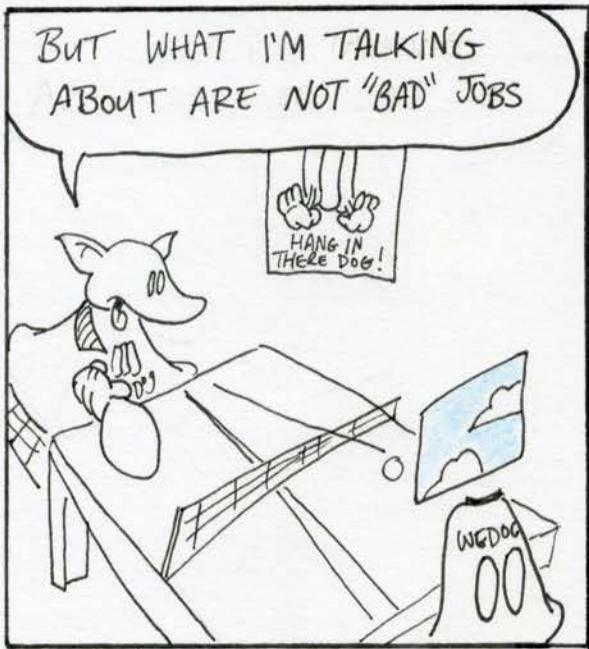
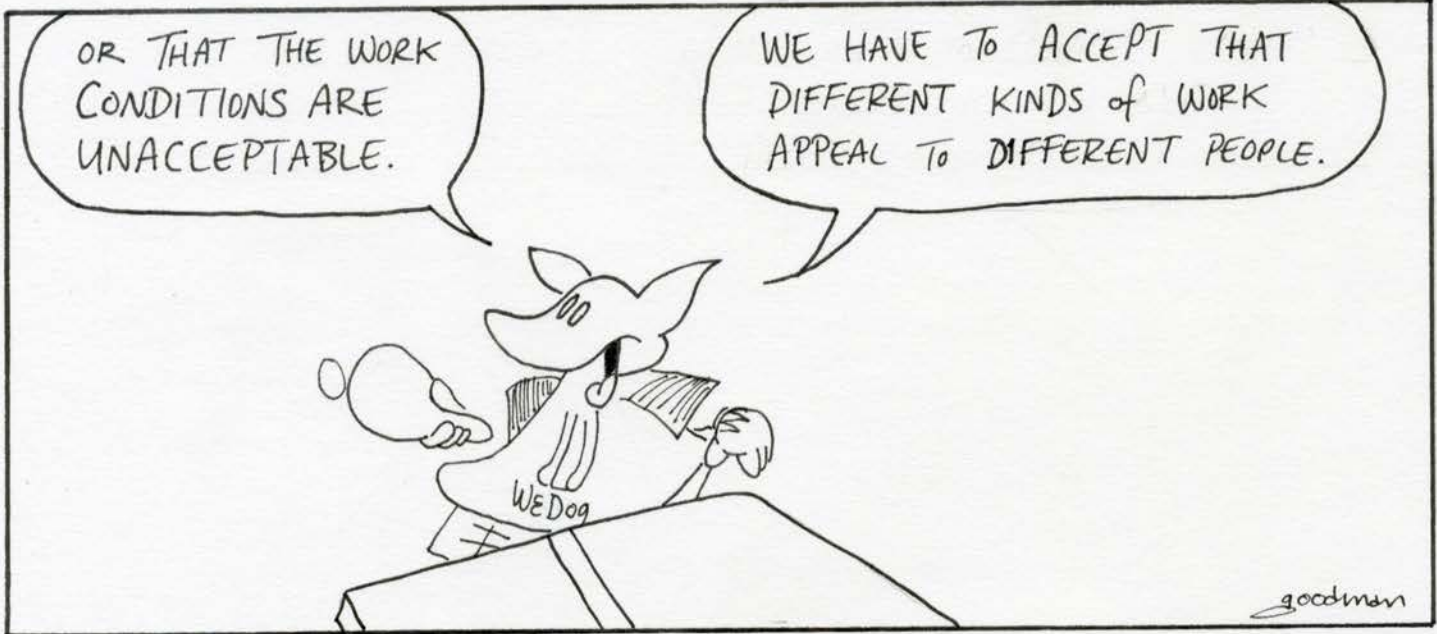
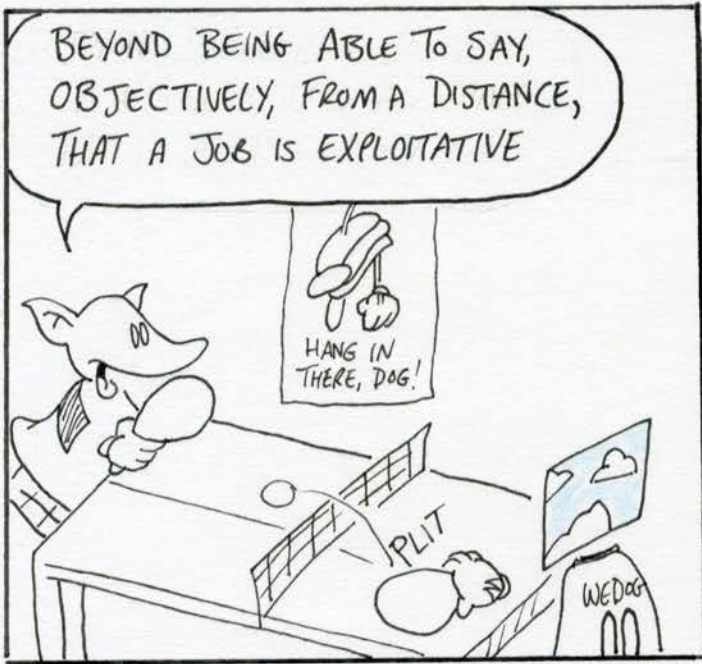


then that nanny was probably getting underpaid. Because you don't pay your mother in money.











Bullshit jobs,
in the sense that the phrase is most typically used,
are actually mostly white collar jobs.

These are jobs that have emerged from a convergence
of a couple of factors,
one of which is what we might call education inflation
—a bachelor's degree has about the value on the job market
that a high school diploma had fifty years ago,
so more and more people are going to grad school
just to get entry-level jobs.

So, you have all of these heavily-educated people
who need somewhere to go in the workforce.

And then you have this rich-get-richer corporate economy
where companies have realized that they can make more money
by focusing on figuring out how to make more money
(if that doesn't sound tautological)
than they can by figuring out how to make a better product
or how to offer a better service.

So, you get to this place
where the leading job for a young person coming out of
a competitive college or grad school is,
for lack of a better term,
corporate money-maker,
whether it's called consulting or marketing or advertising
or what have you,
the job is essentially to be smart and invent new ways
of increasing profitability.
And the problem is
that because there's no added product, independent of the profit,

Ok, but there has to be
a product somewhere, right?
Even if you're working
in marketing or advertising
it's with the goal of
moving more units or
selling more of the
service being offered
so, in the end,
there is a product, right?

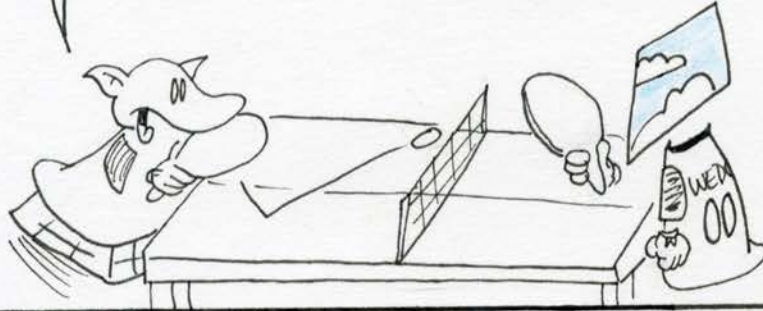


godman

SOMETIMES,
I MEAN, YES,
IN THE CASES
YOU'RE DESCRIBING
THERE IS.

BUT, AGAIN,
I THINK WE'RE
REACHING A POINT
WHERE

THE IDEA THAT THE GOAL
OF ADVERTISING & MARKETING
IS TO GAIN A LARGER SHARE
OF A FINITE MARKET
IS A LITTLE OUTDATED.



I MEAN, YOU CAN
LOOK AT STARBUCKS
WHICH THIRTY YEARS
AGO ESSENTIALLY JUST
CREATED AN ENORMOUS
NEW COFFEE MARKET
WHICH HAS CONTINUED
TO GROW.



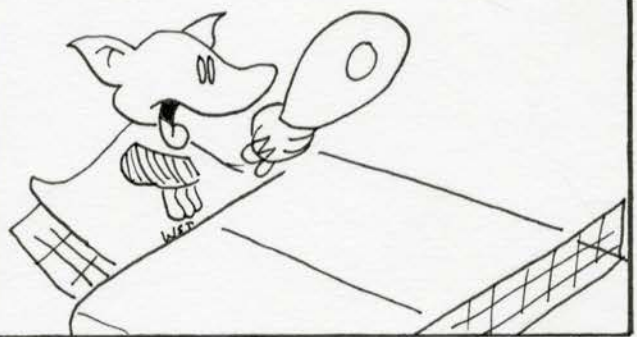
IT WAS NEVER ABOUT
CORNERING THE RELATIVELY-
SMALL PRE-STARBUCKS
TAKE-OUT COFFEE MARKET.
I MEAN, DRIP COFFEE
CONTINUES TO BE NEXT
TO FREE AT MOST OF
THE PLACES WHERE COFFEE
WAS AVAILABLE FOR SALE
PRE-STARBUCKS.

SO ADVERTISING AND MARKETING
TODAY ARE MORE ABOUT
CONVINCING PEOPLE THAT
THEY NEED SOMETHING THEY
DIDN'T KNOW THEY NEEDED



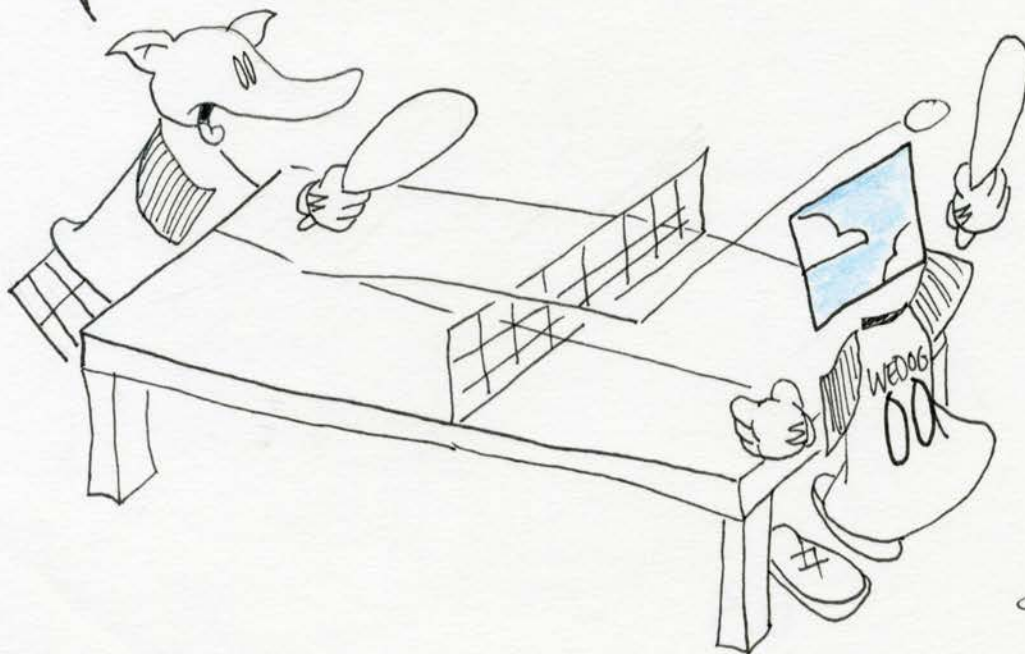
goodman

THAN CONVINCING THEM
TO BUY YOUR PRODUCT
INSTEAD OF SOMEONE ELSE'S.

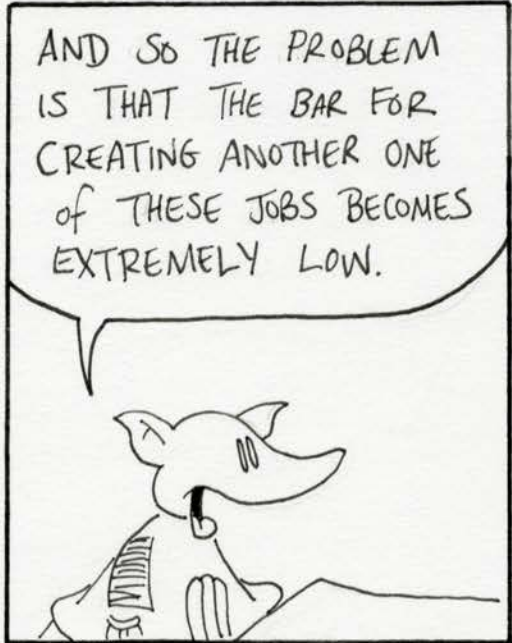
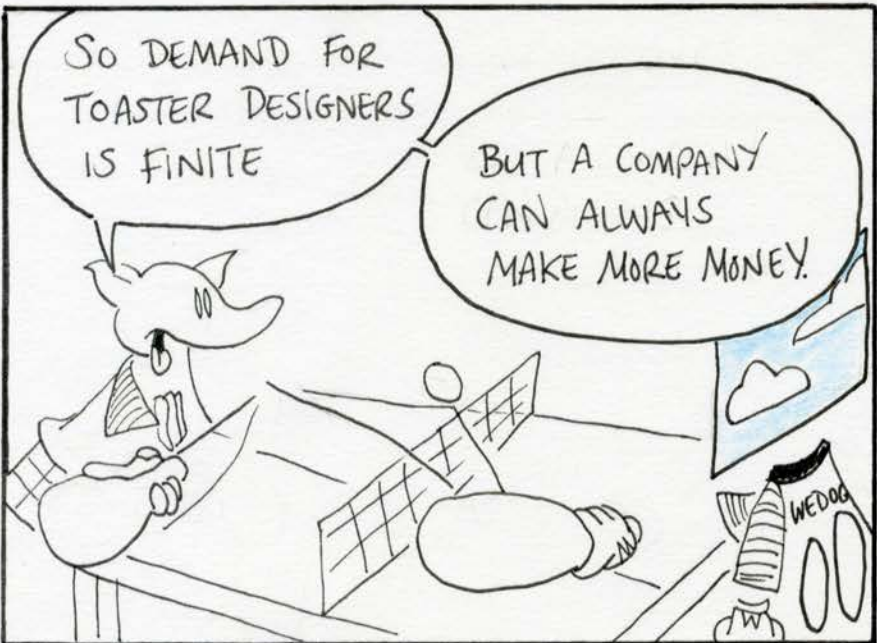
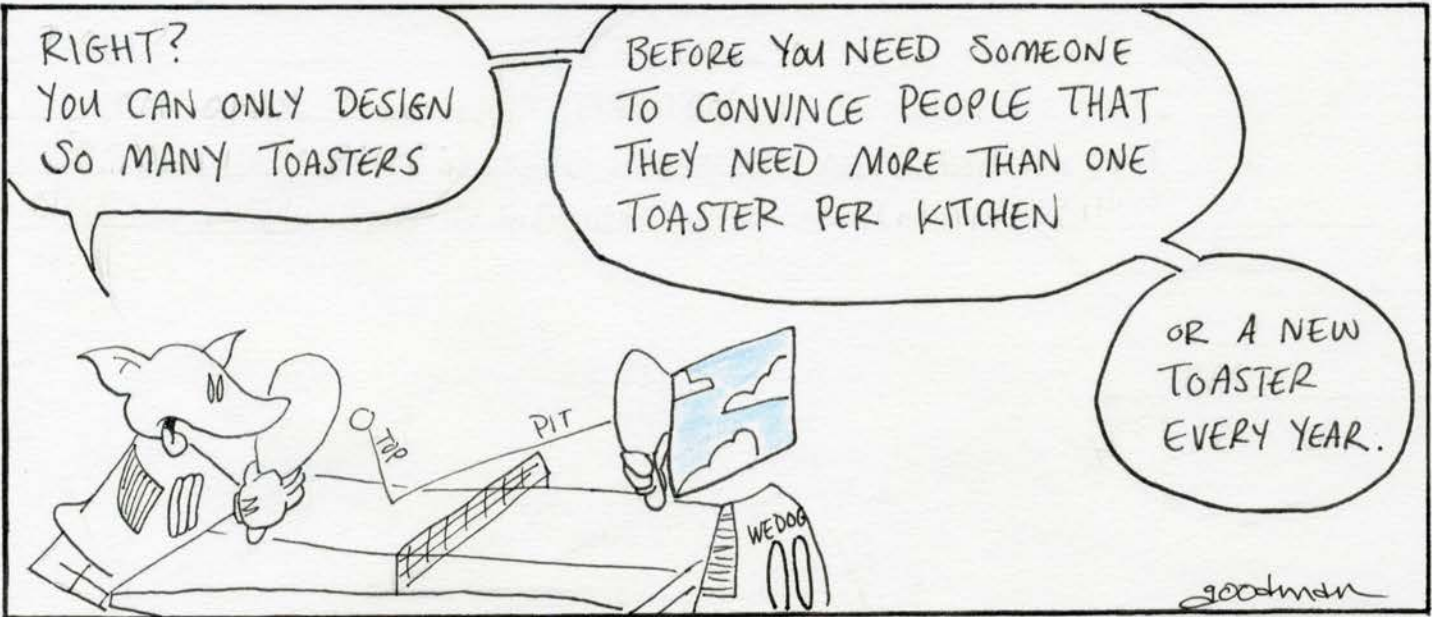
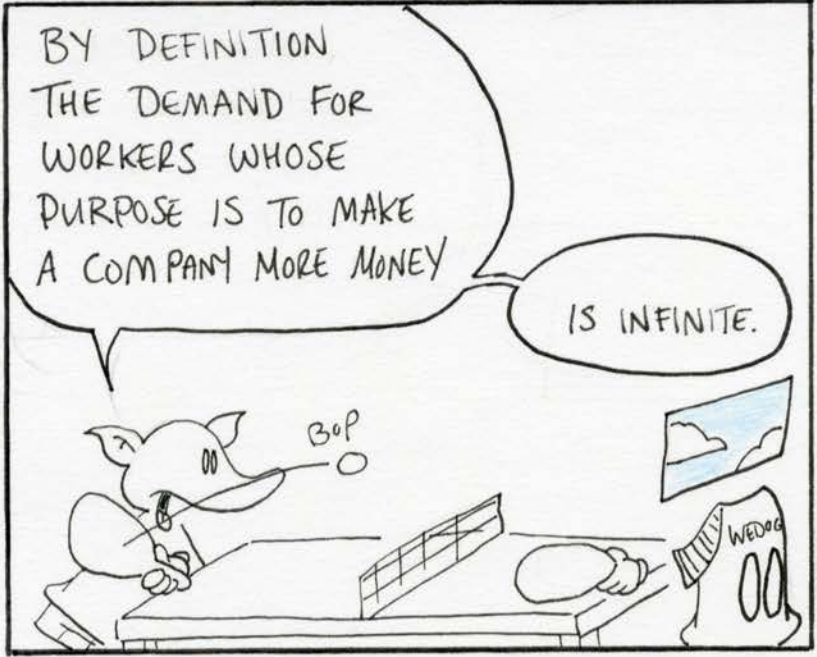


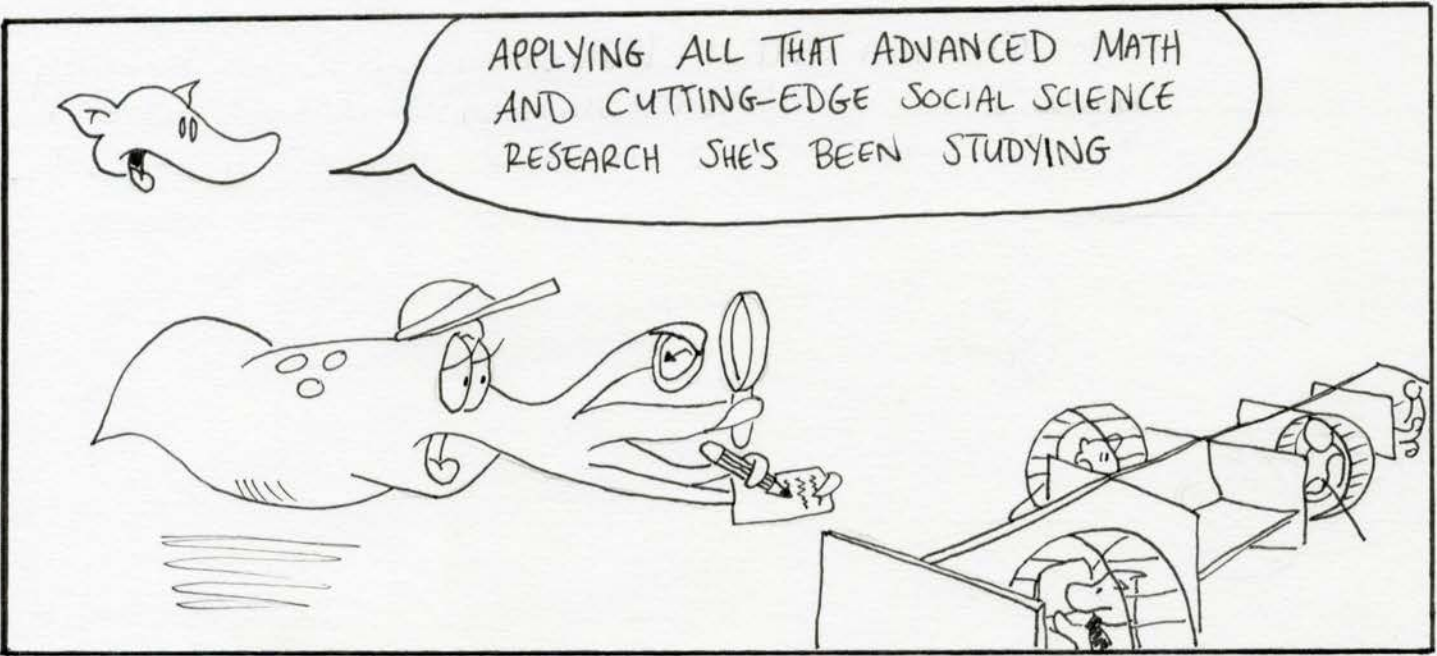
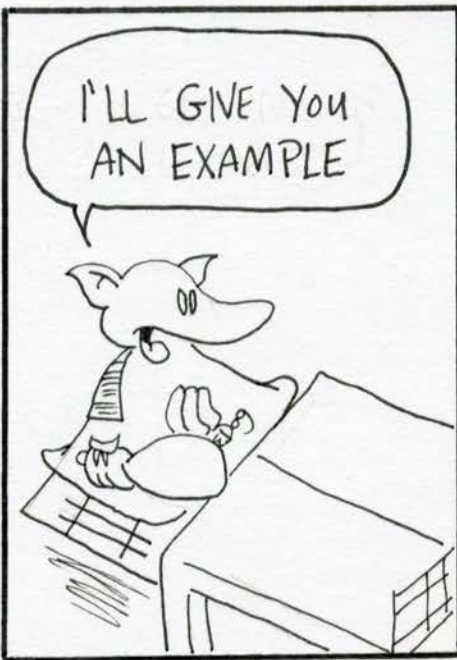


AND A LOT OF THESE JOBS ARE EVEN MORE ABSTRACT. BECAUSE, AS I SAID, IT'S ALSO ABOUT MAKING MORE MONEY WITHOUT MAKING MORE PRODUCT. BECAUSE THAT'S MONEY WITH NO OVERHEAD, BEYOND PAYING THE PERSON WHO THINKS UP A WAY TO DO IT. AND SO THERE'S NO CEILING AND THE IDEA OF SUPPLY AND DEMAND GOES OUT THE WINDOW.



goodman

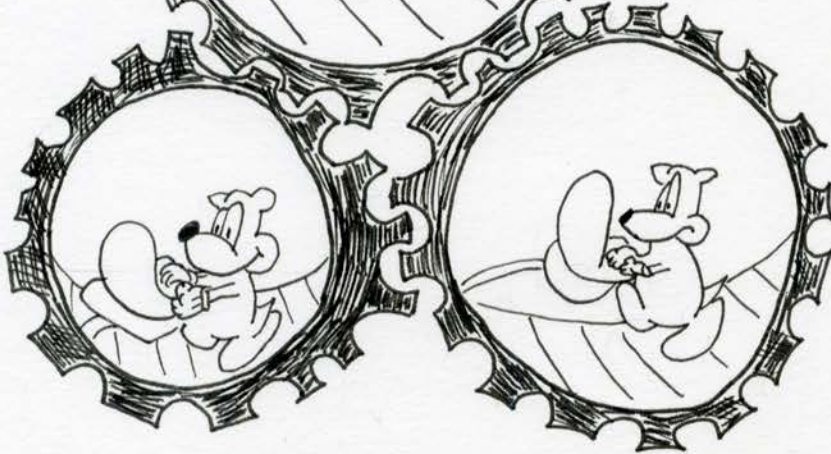
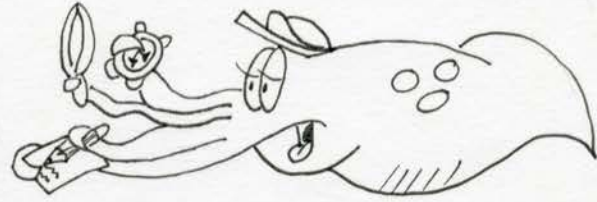






THE IRONY IS THAT THAT'S OFTEN AN INEFFICIENT JOB, OR AT LEAST ONE OF DIMINISHING RETURNS.

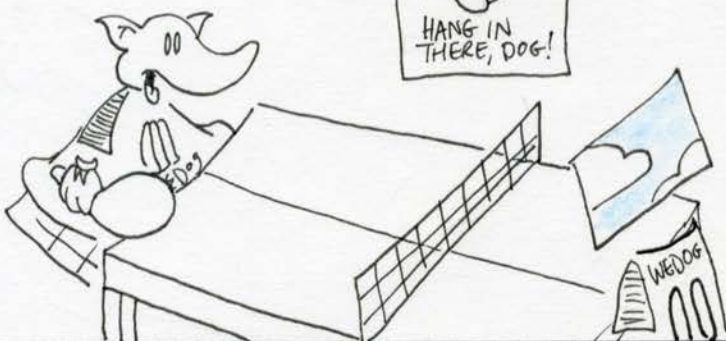
IN THE BEST CASE SCENARIO, THE EFFICIENCY EXPERT SAVES THE COMPANY A SIGNIFICANTLY GREATER AMOUNT OF MONEY THAN SHE GETS PAID TO DO THE PERFORMANCE REVIEW.



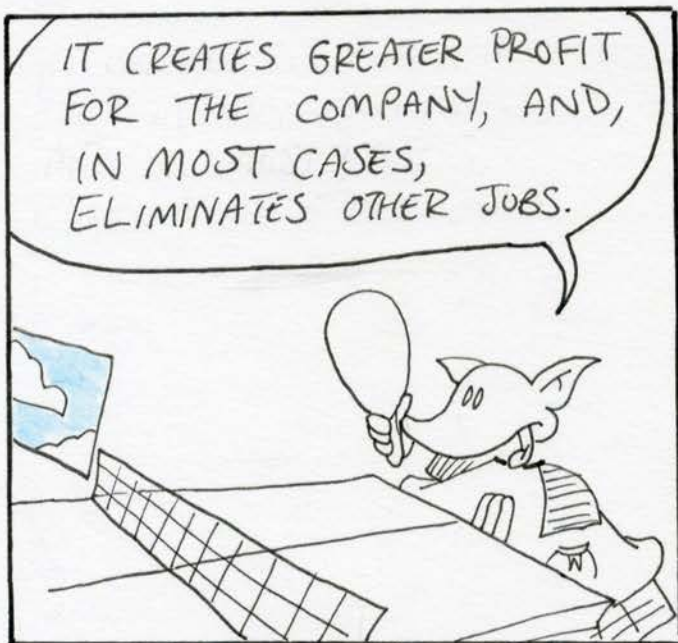
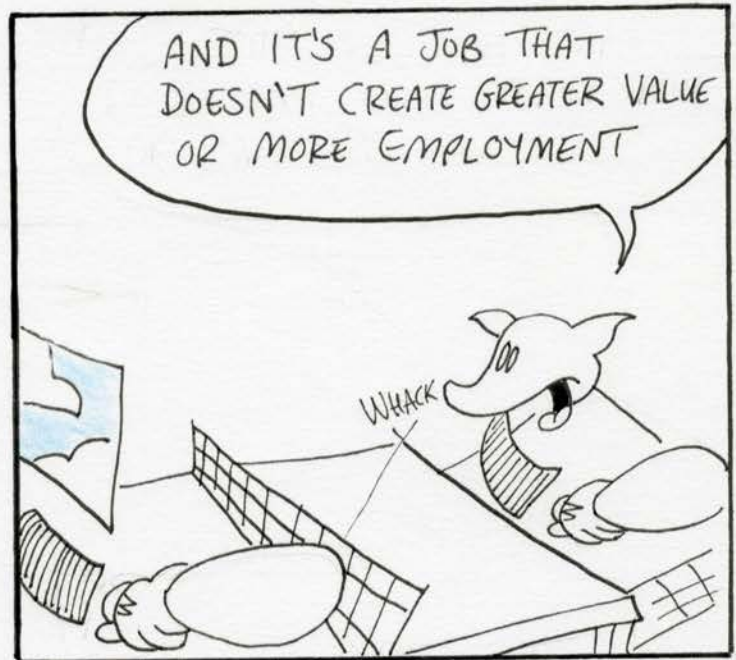
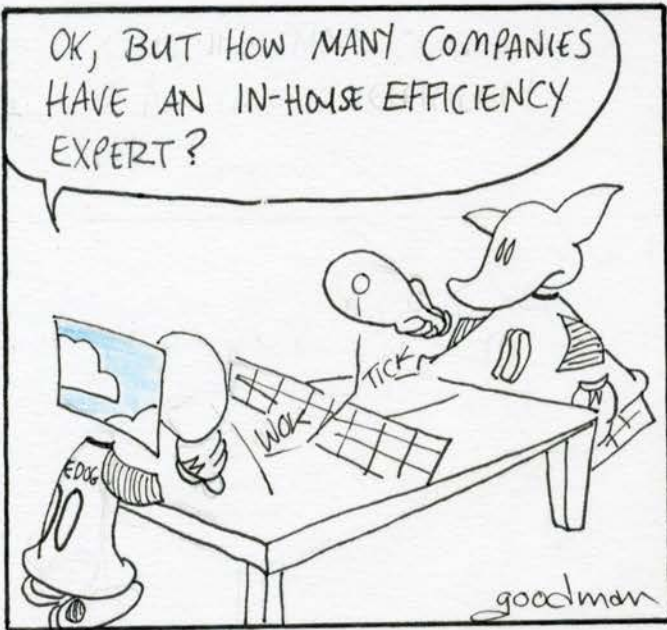
BUT THAT TRICK REALLY ONLY WORKS ONCE. THE CHANCES THAT IN HER NEXT THOUSAND HOURS YOUR EFFICIENCY EXPERT IS GOING TO MAKE THE COMPANY THAT MUCH MORE EFFICIENT ARE PRETTY SLIM.

IN FACT, BY DEFINITION, THE MORE POTENTIAL THERE IS FOR IMPROVEMENT THE SECOND TIME AROUND, THE WORSE THE PERSON DID THE FIRST TIME,

THE LESS EFFICIENT THE EFFICIENCY EXPERT WAS AT MAXIMIZING EFFICIENCY.



goodman





She doesn't have to be streamlining things
so that products are more affordable
(is that ever really the goal?)
She only has to save the company marginally more than she costs
in order to justify her employment.

But that's not a particularly meaningful job,
making a company just barely efficient enough
to justify her employment
(or her consulting firm's fee).

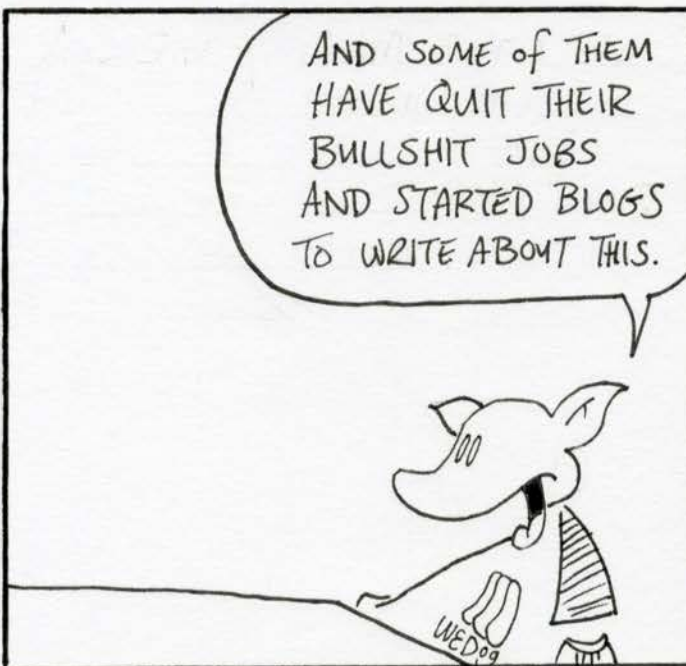
And here's the kicker.
How do we know if she's really justifying her position?
There's no real way to know,
unless someone else is reviewing her work, right?
To make sure that she's saving the company money.
So we need an efficiency expert to supervise the efficiency
of the efficiency expert.

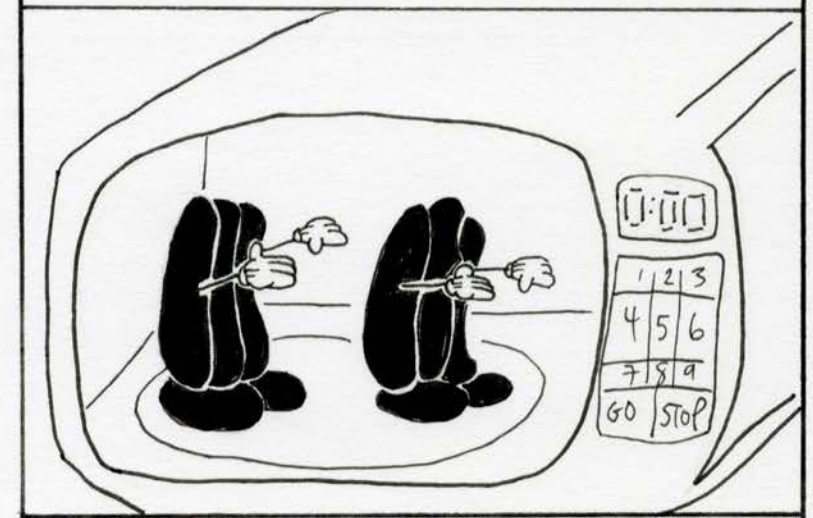
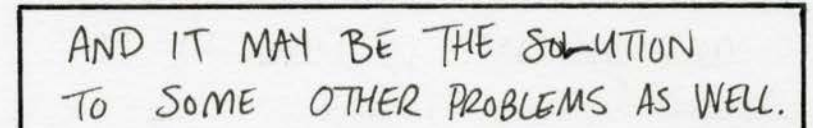
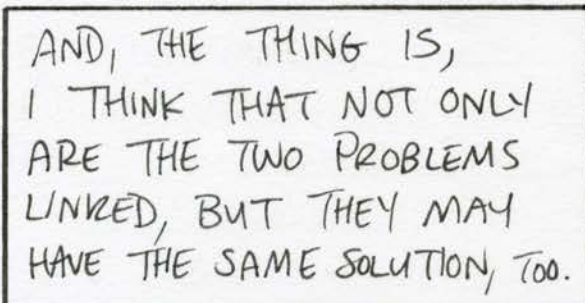
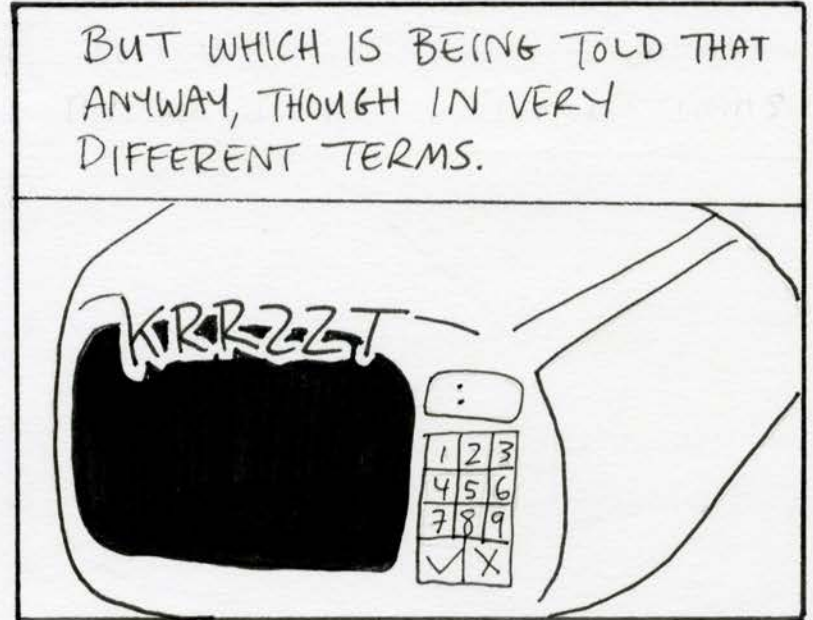
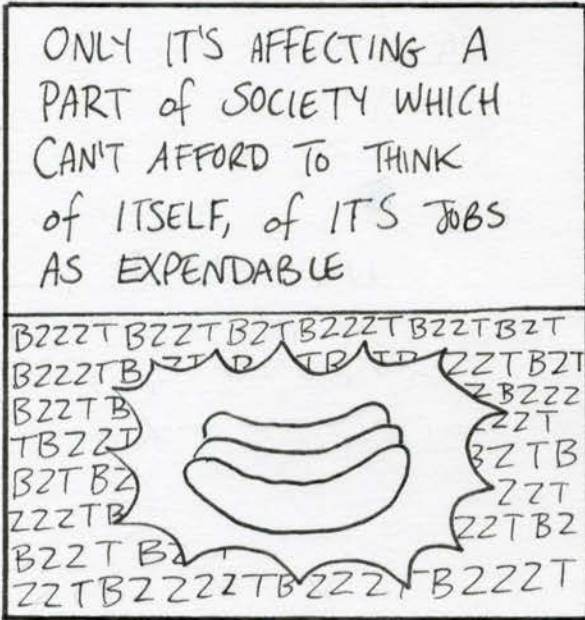
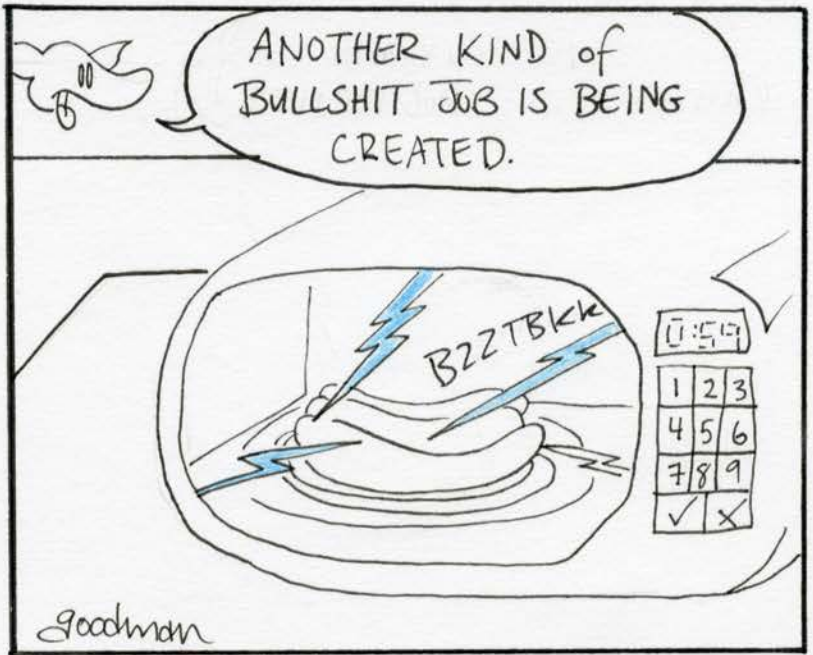
And all of these employees,
in a successful company,
are supposed to be making the company a greater profit,
whether large or small.
And remember, these are companies which are throwing
their financial weight around
to game the system to their advantage,
which is what the efficiency expert is really doing—
efficiency is almost a euphemism—
we're not talking about better typing posture,
we're talking about more money for less,
whether it's less US office space
fewer US employees
more machines
Or fewer full-time workers with benefits
and more part-time workers without benefits.
Or it's less corporate tax paid
and more tax incentives claimed.

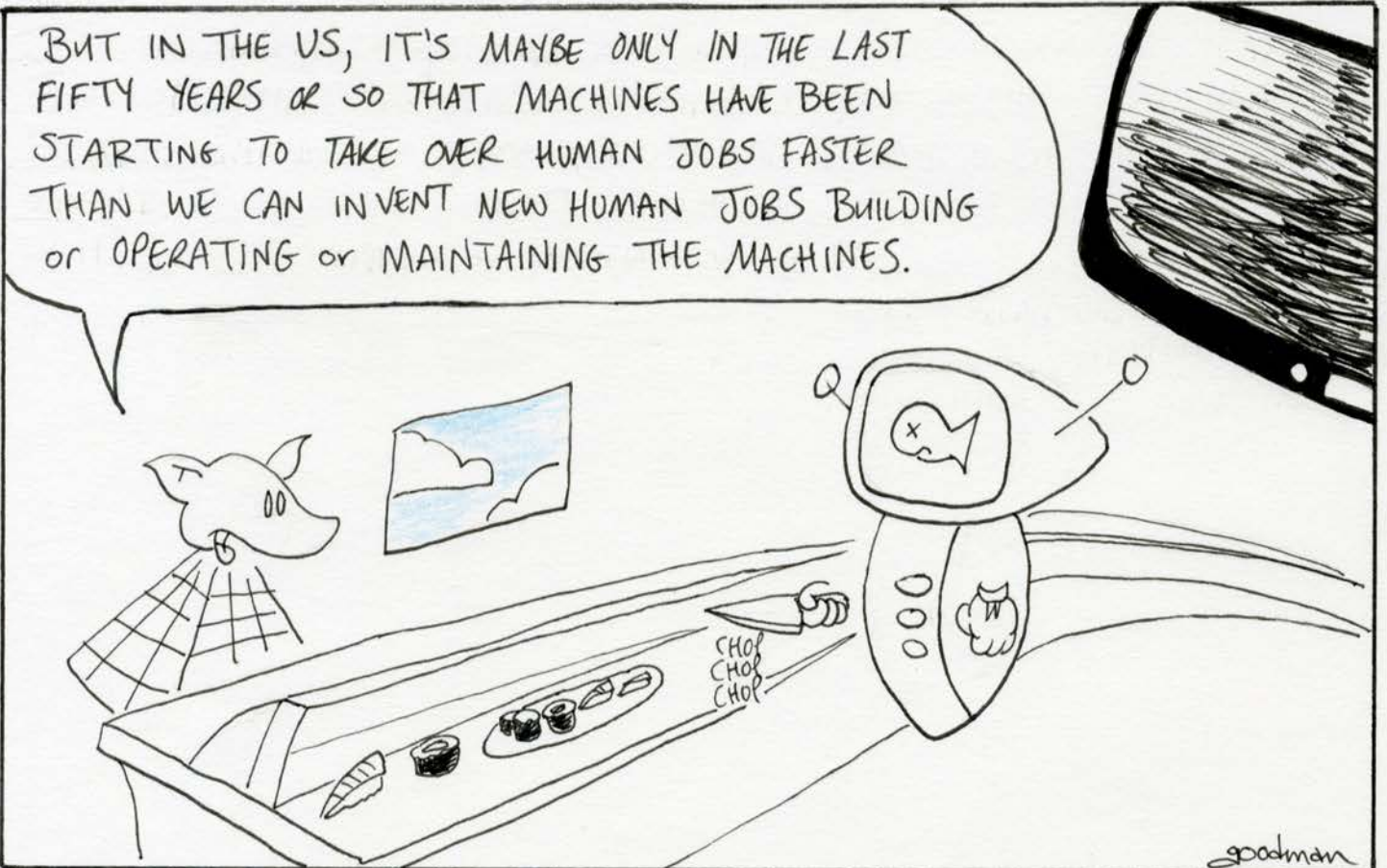
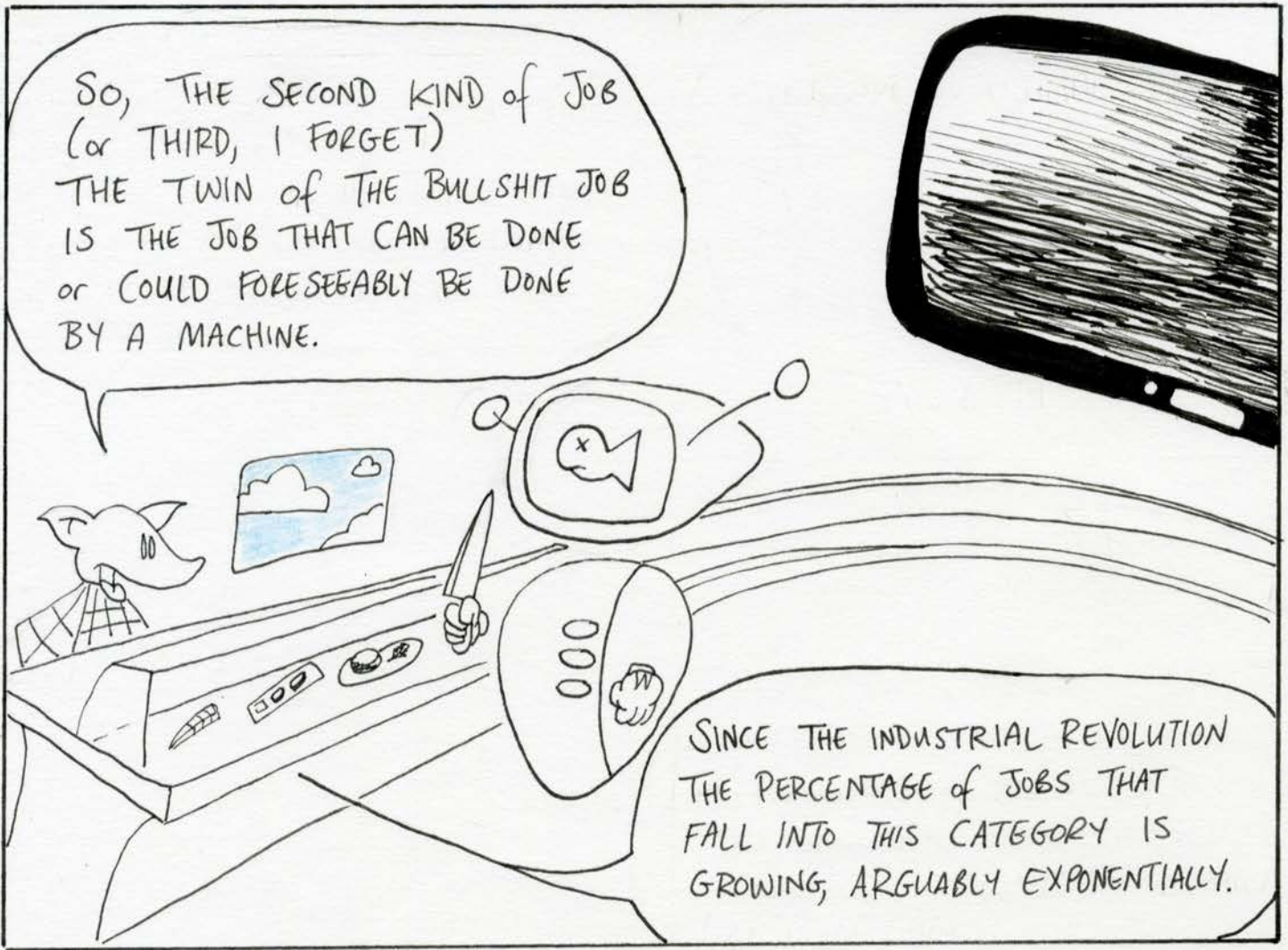
But even the people who have these jobs
are starting to feel that something is missing.
They're being paid handsomely,
but they're working all the time.
And they're not seeing their work have an effect on the world,
beyond the growing profits of the company.

This is not the proletariat that Karl Marx had in mind,
but they're alienated from the product of their labor all the same.
The work they do doesn't touch on whatever the company does or makes.

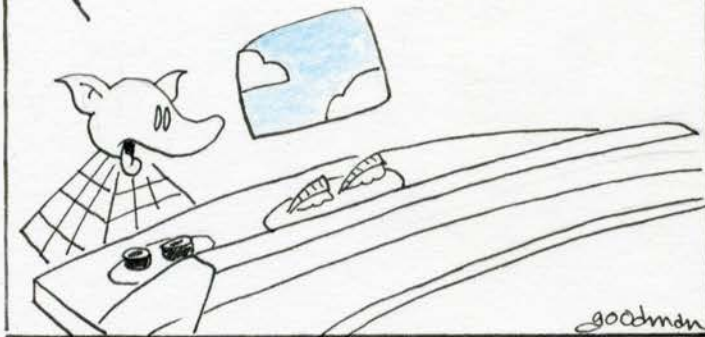
goodman



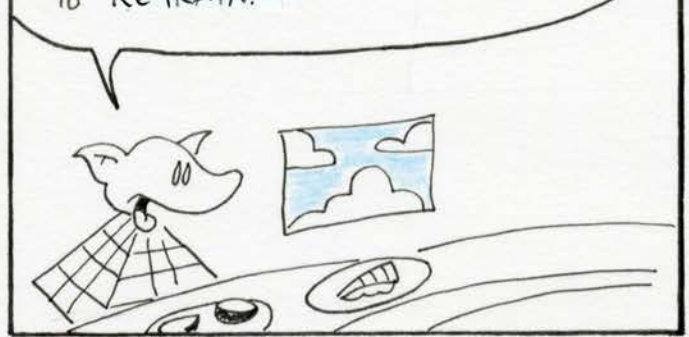




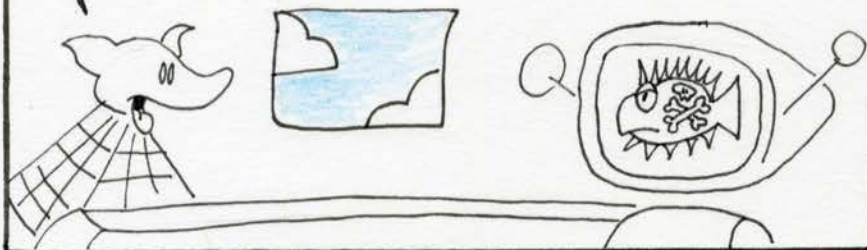
AND SO THERE'S A LOT OF THROWING UP OF HANDS SURROUNDING THE REPLACEMENT OF PEOPLE BY MACHINES IN THESE JOBS.



THE ASSUMPTION IS THAT THE MECHANIZATION OF THESE JOBS IS BAD FOR THE WORKERS WHO DO THESE JOBS NOW AND WHOM IT WILL BE HARD OR EXPENSIVE TO RETRAIN.



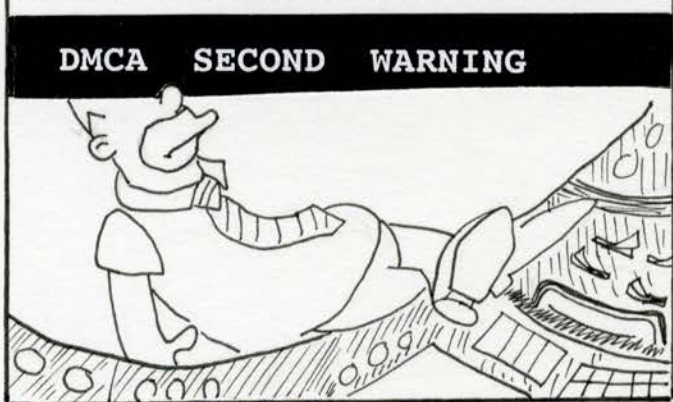
THERE'S AN ANECDOTE FROM AN EPISODE OF THE SIMPSONS THOUGH, WHICH I THINK REVEALS THE FAULTY ASSUMPTION ON WHICH THE ARGUMENT THAT MECHANIZATION IS BAD FOR WORKERS IS BASED.



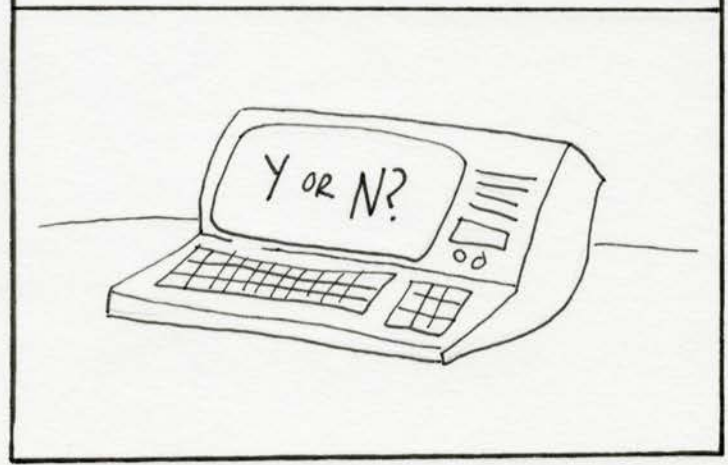
IN "KING-SIZE HOMER," HOMER BECOMES SO OBESE THAT HE IS CONSIDERED DISABLED AND ALLOWED TO WORK FROM HOME.



THE JOB HE DOES FROM HOME IS SOME VERSION OF THE JOB HE'S ALWAYS FALLING ASLEEP ON AT THE PLANT.



BUT WORKING FROM HOME THE JOB ESSENTIALLY BOILS DOWN TO PRESSING Y OR N ON HIS COMPUTER.

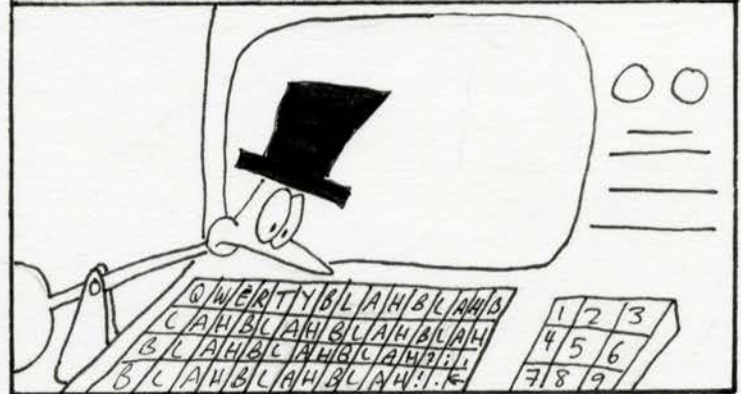


FOR A WHILE HE IS CONTENT WITH THE INCREDIBLE EASINESS OF THE JOB AND SITS AT HOME EATING AND PRESSING THE Y KEY ON HIS KEYBOARD.

WE'RE SERIOUS! CUT IT OUT!



BUT HE BORES OF THE JOB EVENTUALLY SO, HE RIGS UP A DRINKING BIRD TOY TO PRESS THE KEY AND GOES TO THE MOVIES.

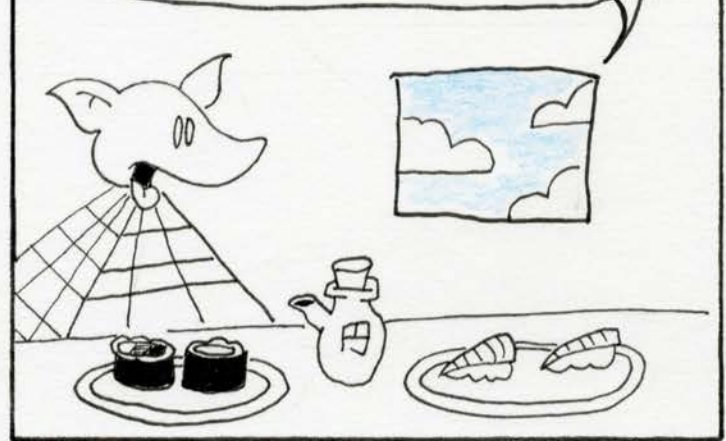


IN THIS EXAMPLE, HOMER SAVES HIMSELF LABOR AND TIME BY MECHANIZING HIS OWN JOB.

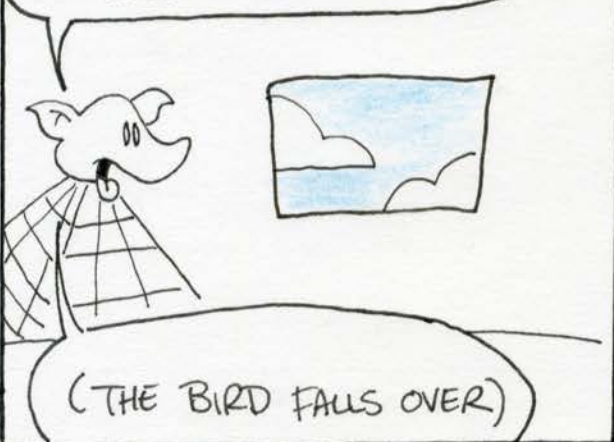
OK, BUT...



IF I'M REMEMBERING CORRECTLY, DOESN'T HE CAUSE A MELTDOWN AT THE POWERPLANT?



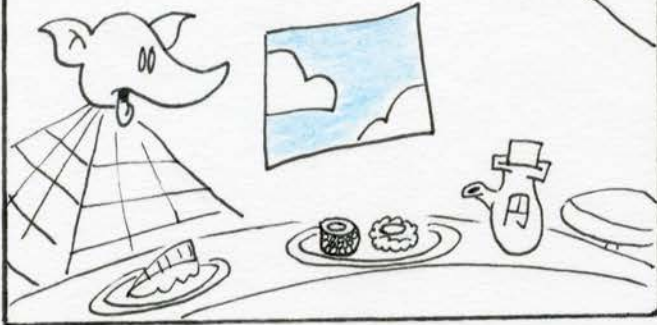
SURE, BUT THAT'S ONLY BECAUSE THE MACHINE HE USES TO DO HIS JOB IS PRETTY CRUDE



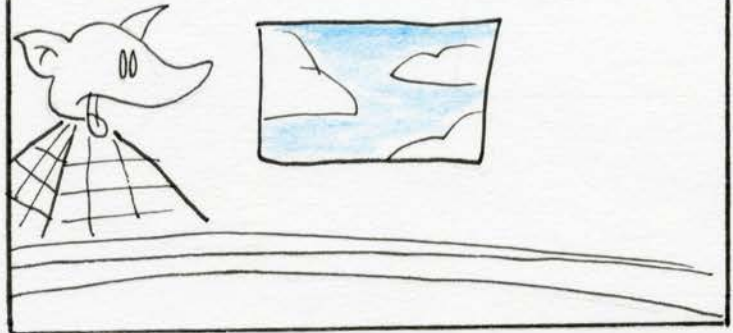
BUT IT'S NOT HARD TO IMAGINE A MACHINE WHICH COULD EFFECTIVELY REGULATE WHATEVER IT IS THAT HOMER IS SUPPOSED TO BE REGULATING, GIVEN THAT HOMER DOESN'T SEEM TO BE EXERCISING MUCH JUDGMENT;



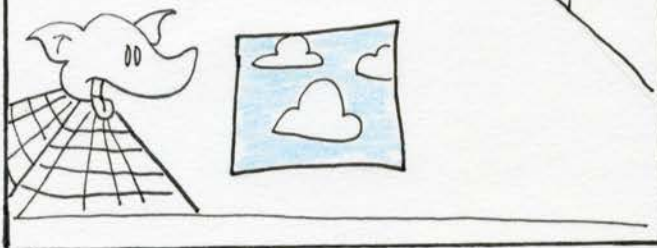
THE POINT IS THAT THIS CASE UPENDS THE ASSUMPTION THAT IT'S THE EMPLOYER WHO BENEFITS FROM MECHANIZATION.



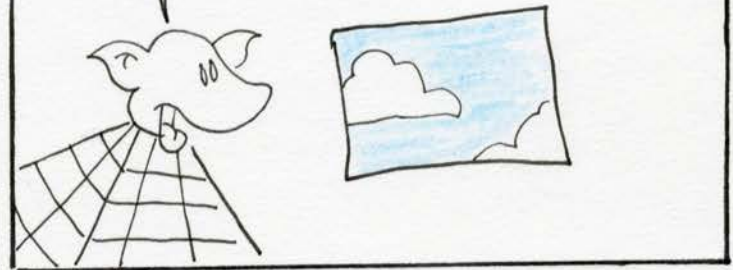
THE FACT IS THAT MECHANIZATION ALWAYS SAVES THE EMPLOYEE LABOR.



THE PROBLEM IS THAT WE'RE OPERATING IN A SYSTEM WHERE THE RIGHT TO SUSTENANCE AND SHELTER IS PREDICATED ON THE ABILITY TO PERFORM LABOR.



SO, A WORKER WHO DOESN'T HAVE TO LABOR AS MUCH TO PRODUCE THE SAME OUTPUT LOSES INCOME AND SO LOSES ACCESS TO SUSTENANCE AND SHELTER.

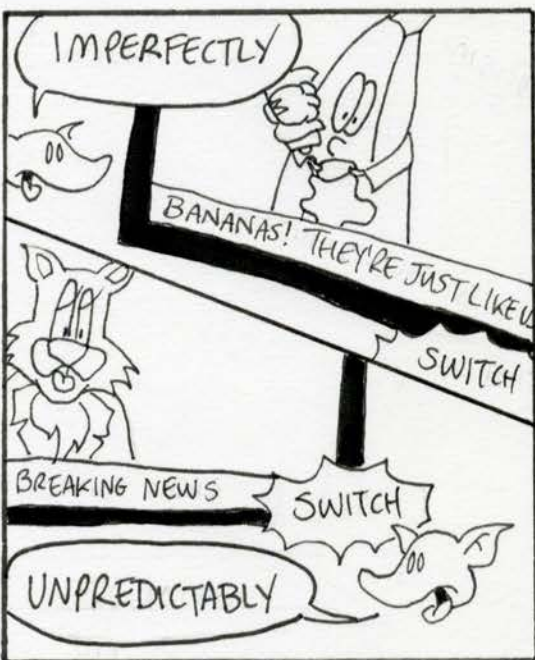
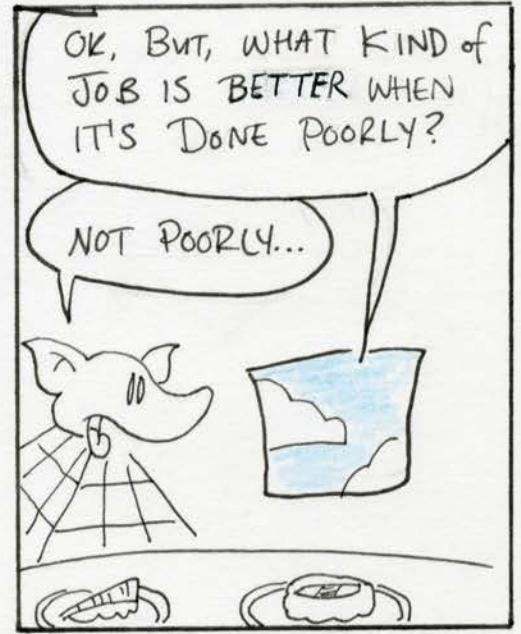
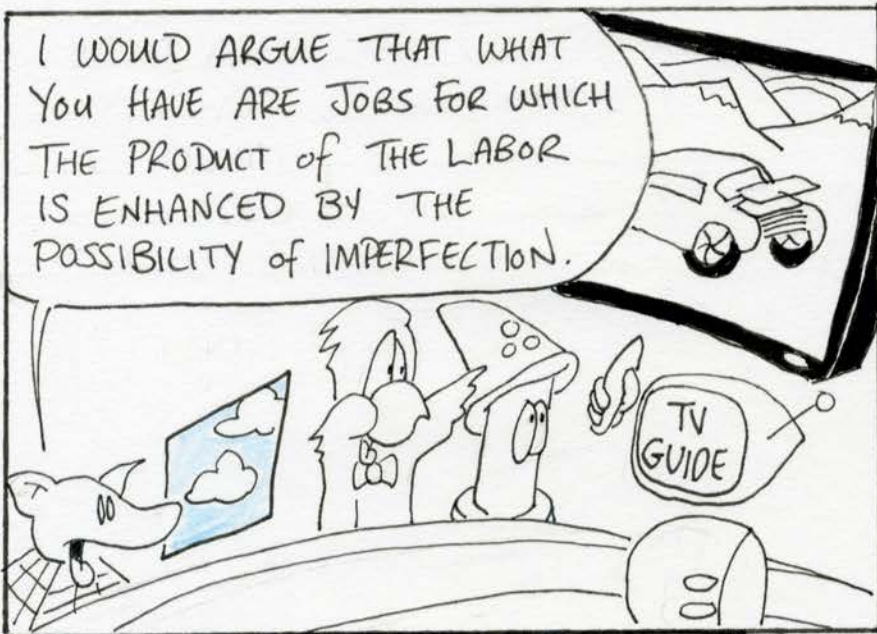
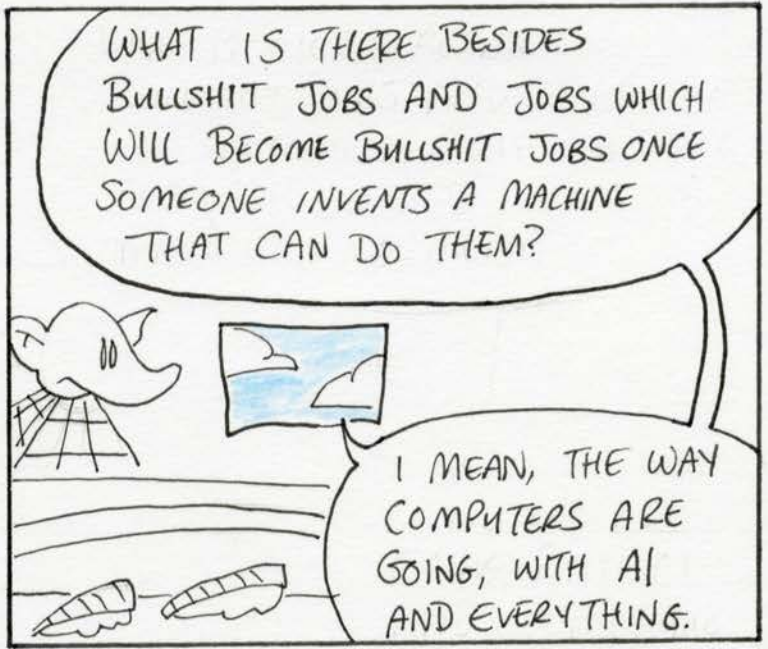


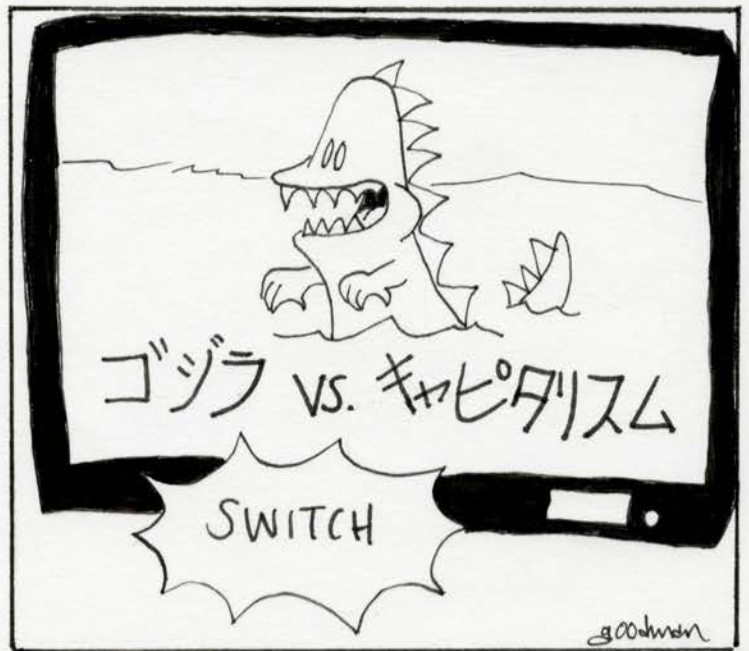
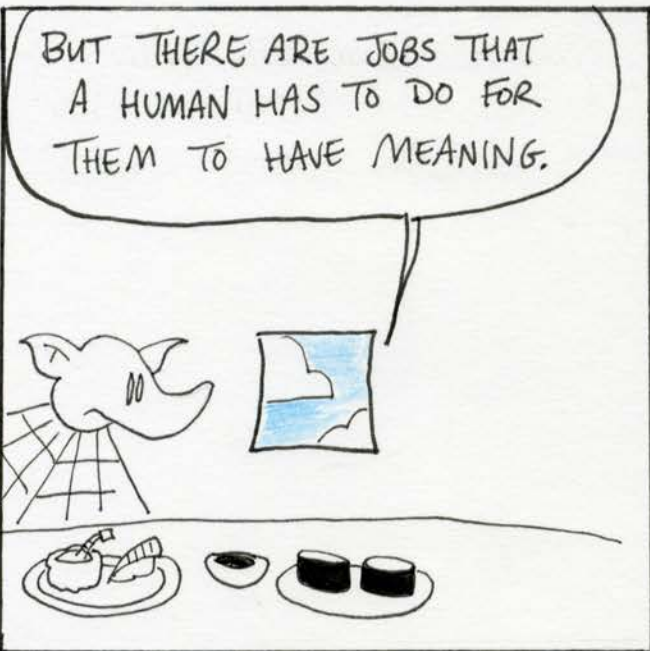
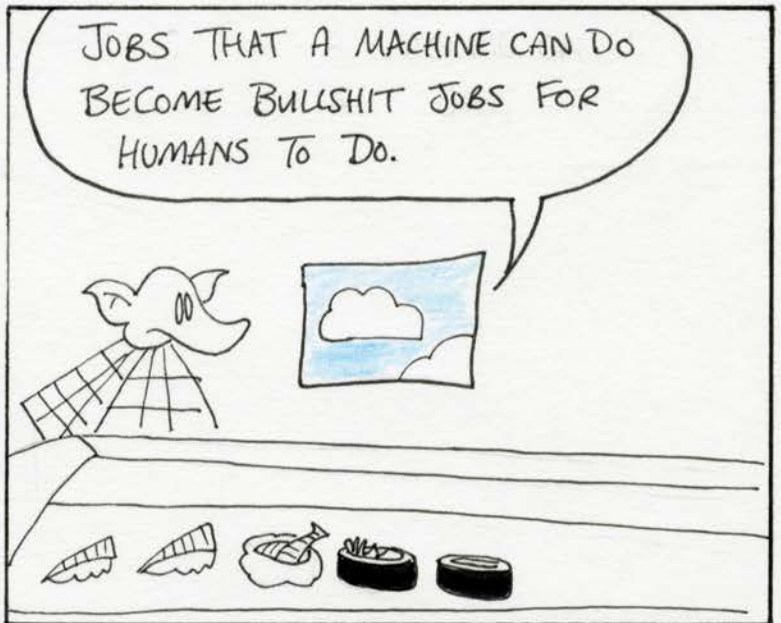
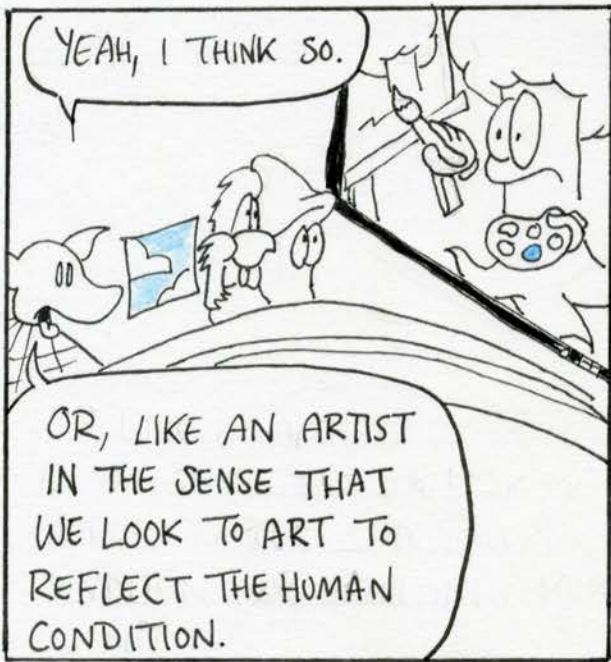
IN HOMER'S CASE, THOUGH, HE'S STILL GETTING PAID FOR THE LABOR THE BIRD DOES FOR HIM.

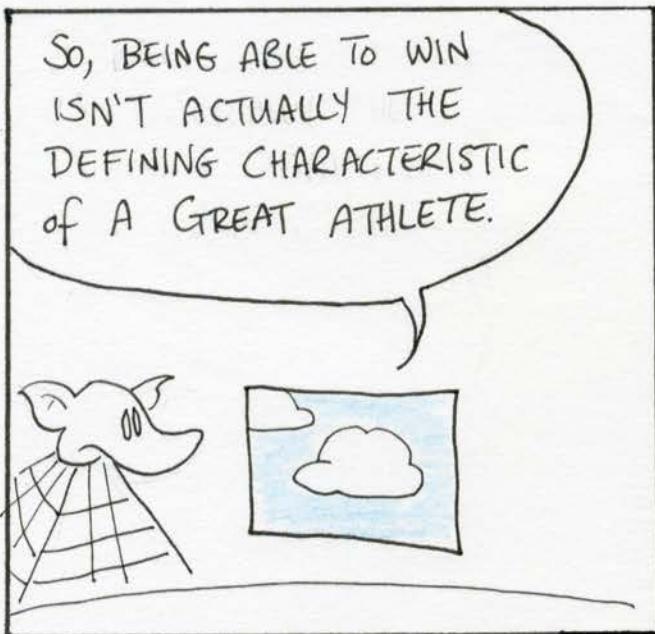
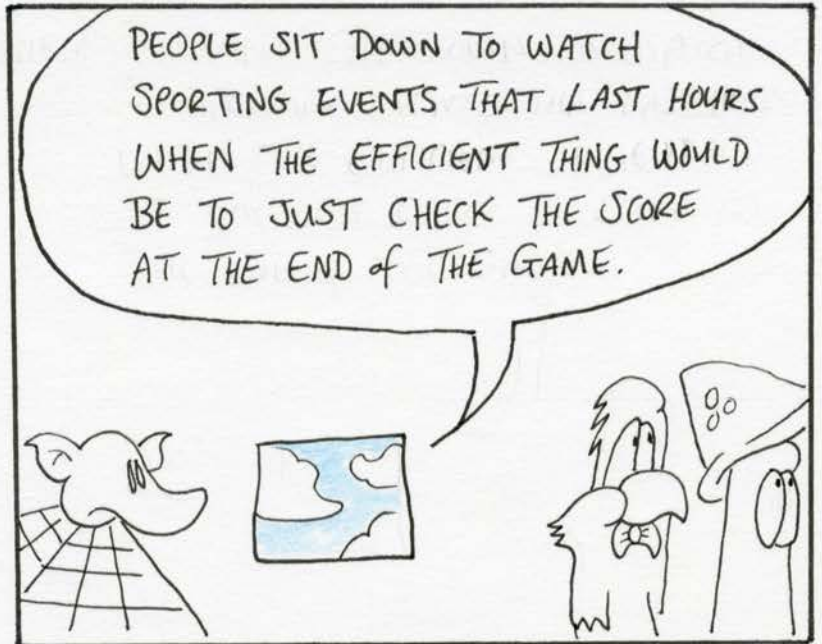
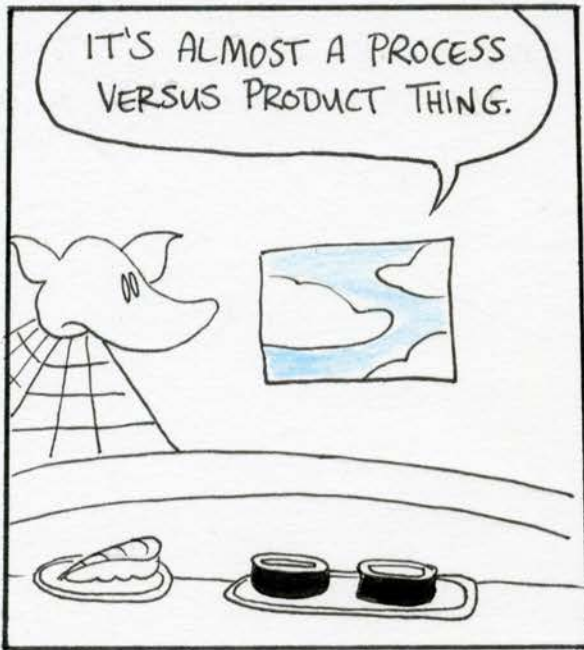


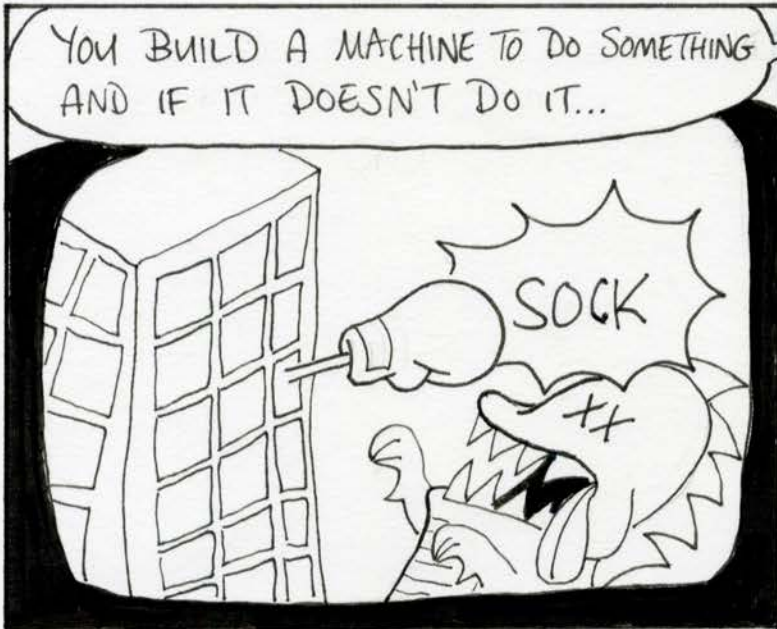
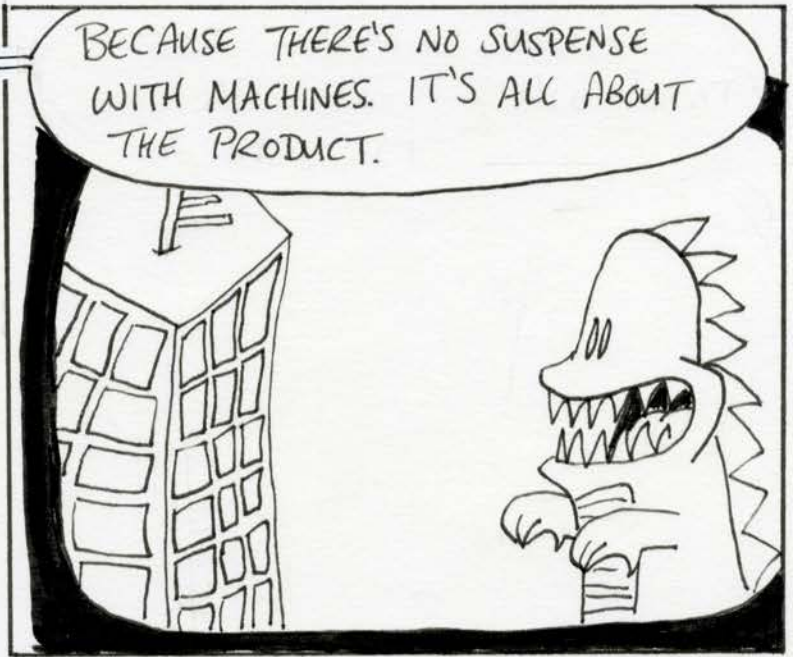
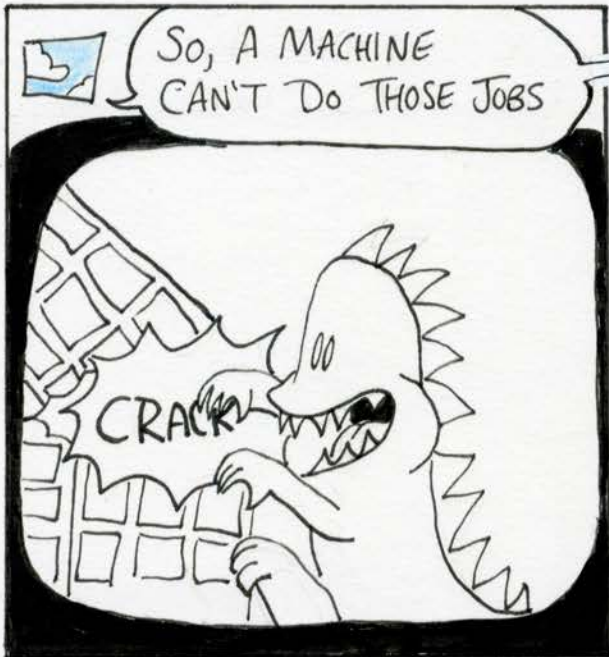
HE'S HAPPY, MR. BURNS IS GETTING THE WORK DONE HE'S PAYING FOR, AND HOMER DOESN'T HAVE TO DO WHAT IS NOW A BULLSHIT JOB.

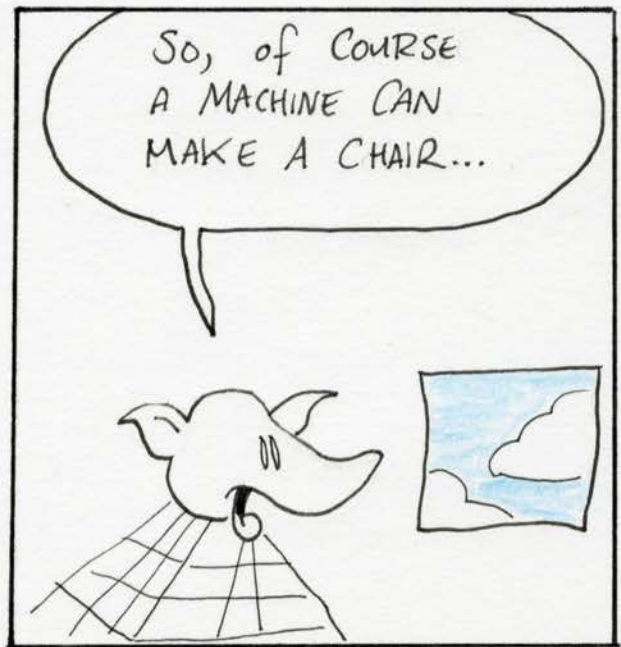
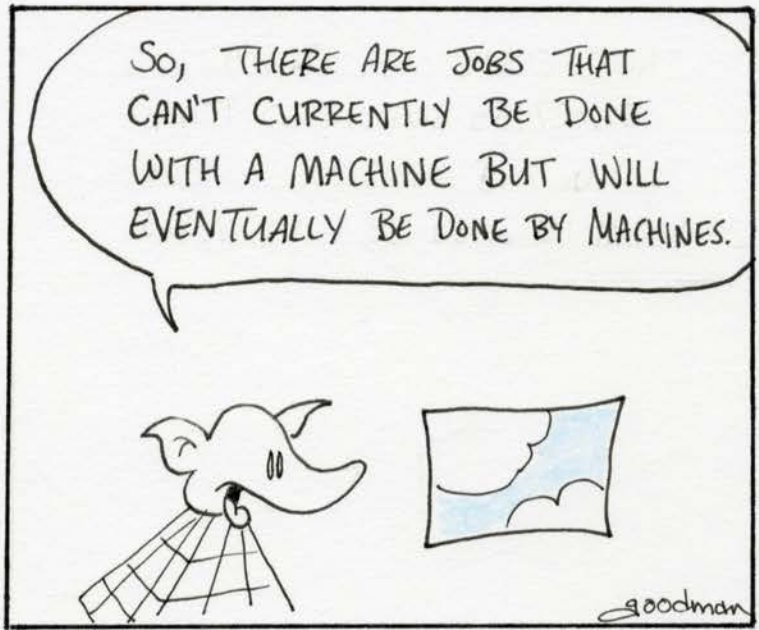
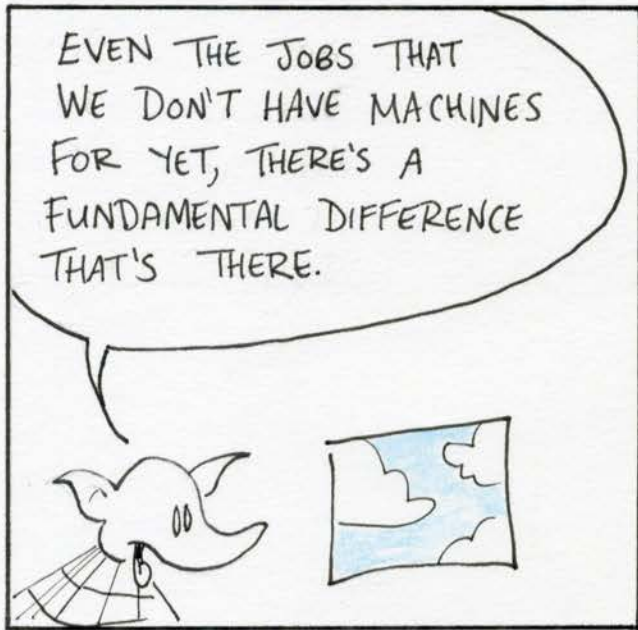
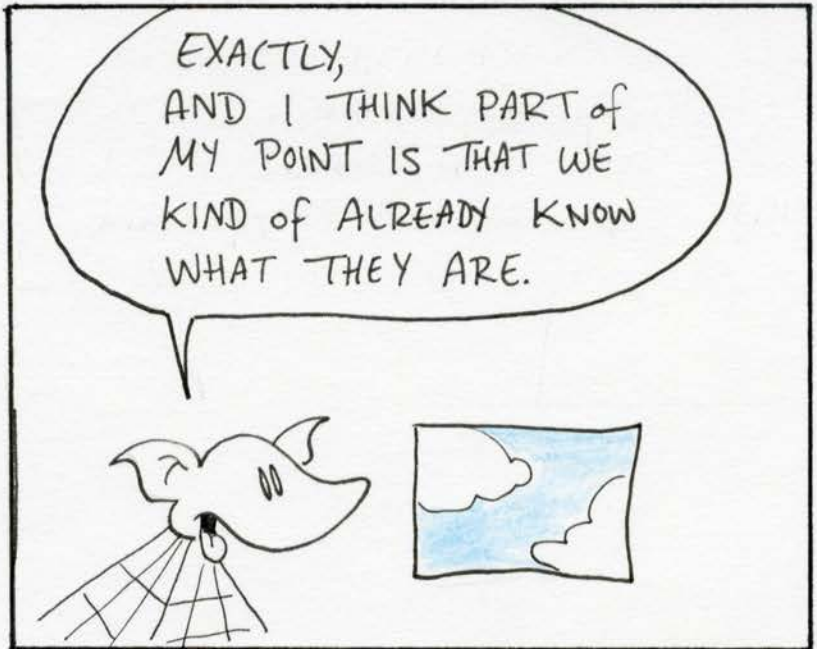
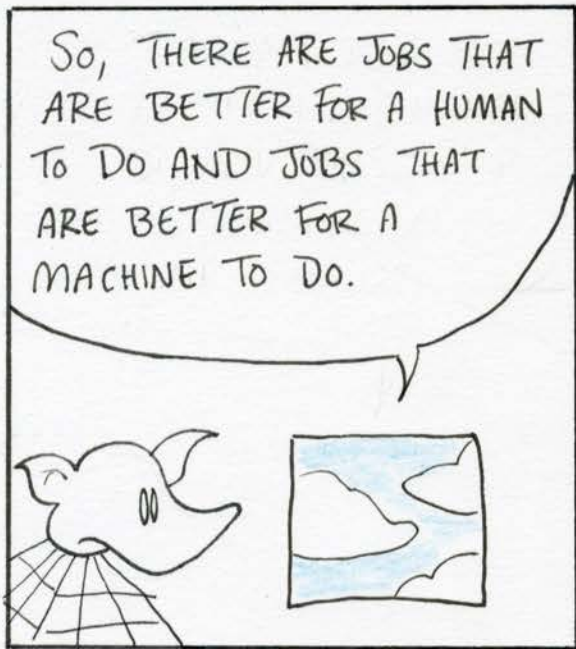










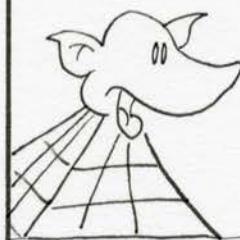


BUT A PERSON CAN MAKE A KIND OF CHAIR WITH A PERSONAL QUALITY THAT A MACHINE CAN'T NECESSARILY REPLICATE,

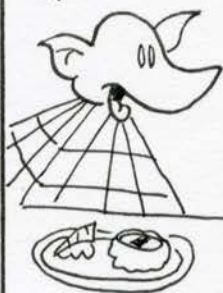


THOUGH A MACHINE MAY PLAY SOME PART IN THE PROCESS.

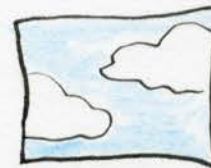
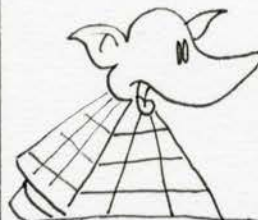
SO, THERE ARE ACTUALLY, AND THIS WILL BECOME CLEARER IN TIME, THERE ARE OR THERE WILL BE TWO KINDS OF CHAIRS.



THERE IS THE CHAIR AS A PRACTICAL OBJECT WHICH KEEPS YOU FROM SITTING ON THE FLOOR.



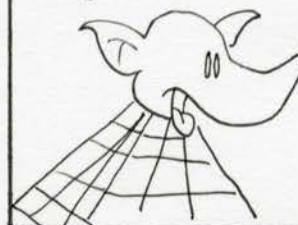
AND, WITH TIME, THIS WILL BE A BETTER AND BETTER CHAIR, MORE ERGONOMIC AND LESS EXPENSIVE.



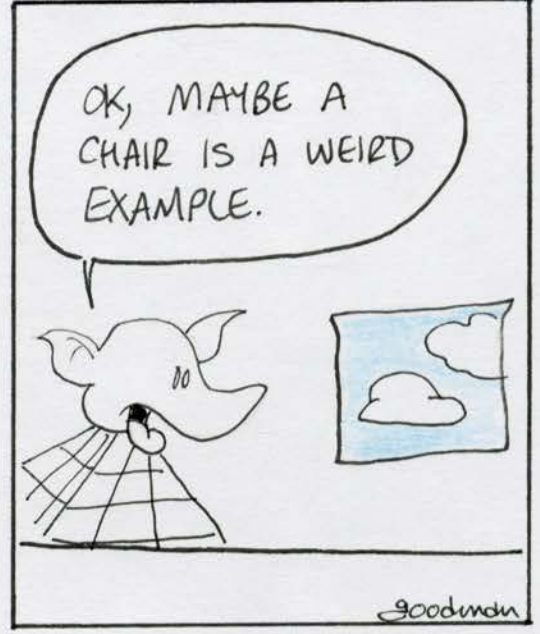
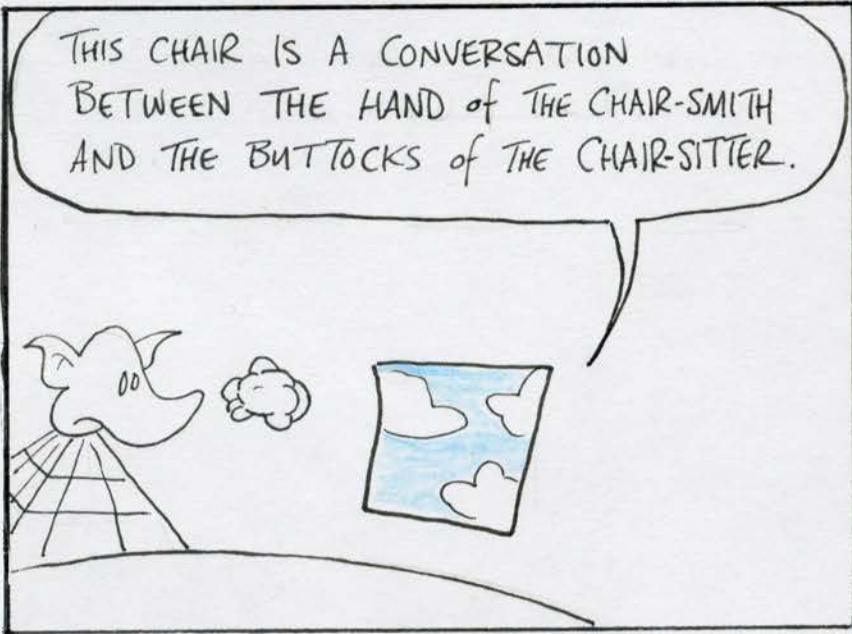
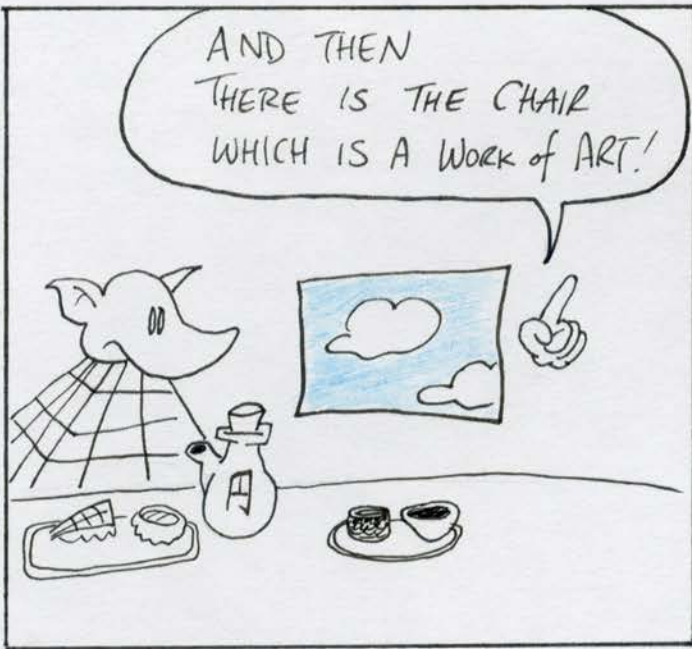
OFFICES NEED THESE CHAIRS. SCHOOLS NEED THESE CHAIRS.



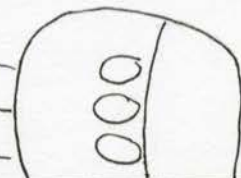
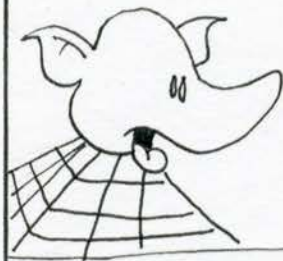
AND IF THEY CAN BE AS INEXPENSIVE AS POSSIBLE, THE SCHOOLS CAN SPEND MORE MONEY ON TEACHERS AND THE NGO CAN HAVE LOWER OVERHEAD AND DO MORE GOOD.



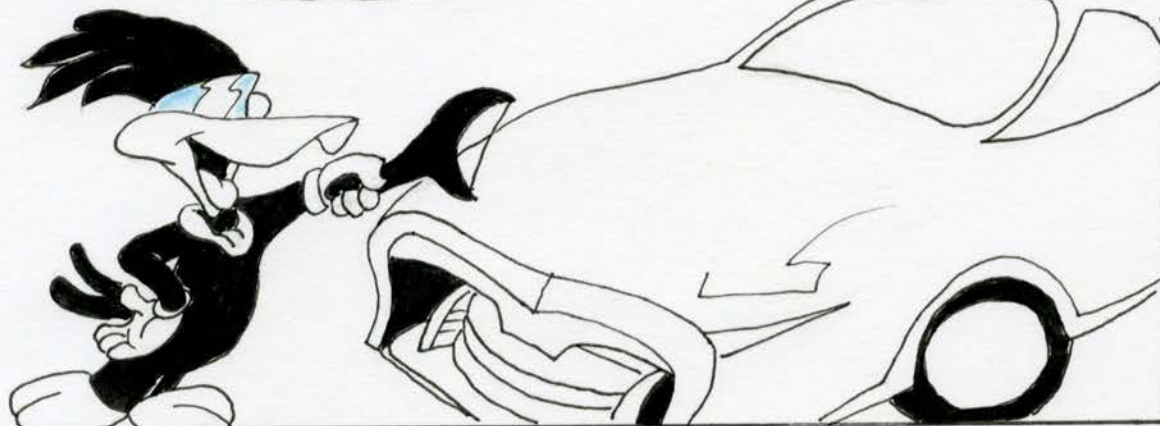
goodman



WE LIKE THE IDEA THAT
THE COMMODITIES WE BUY
HAVE A PERSONAL TOUCH.



LIKE THOSE CAR COMMERCIALS
WHERE THEY'RE LITERALLY CARVING
A CAR OUT OF CLAY.



OR A CHEF IN A WHITE HAT
IS COOKING OUR FROZEN DINNER



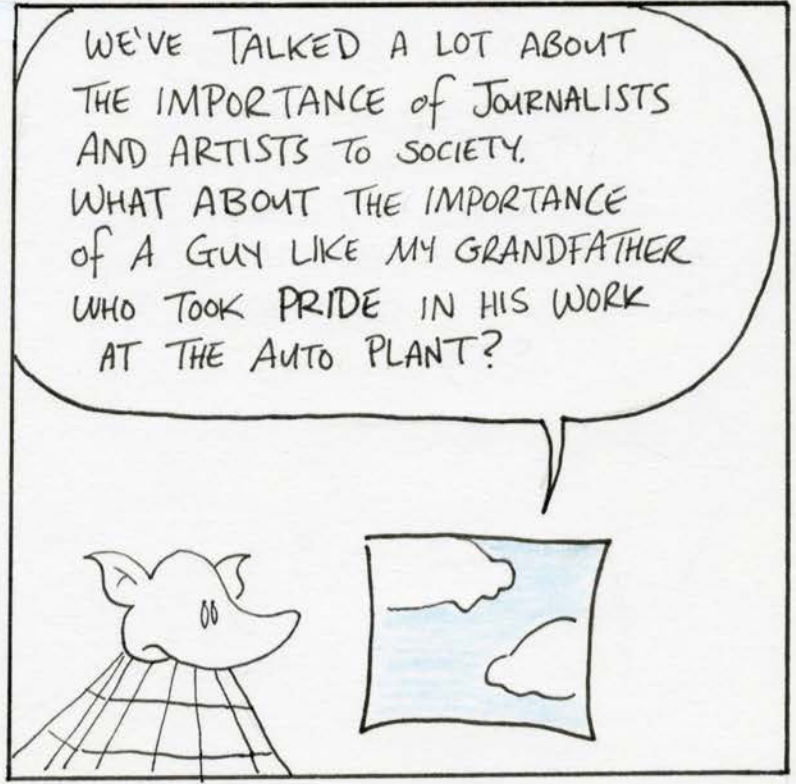
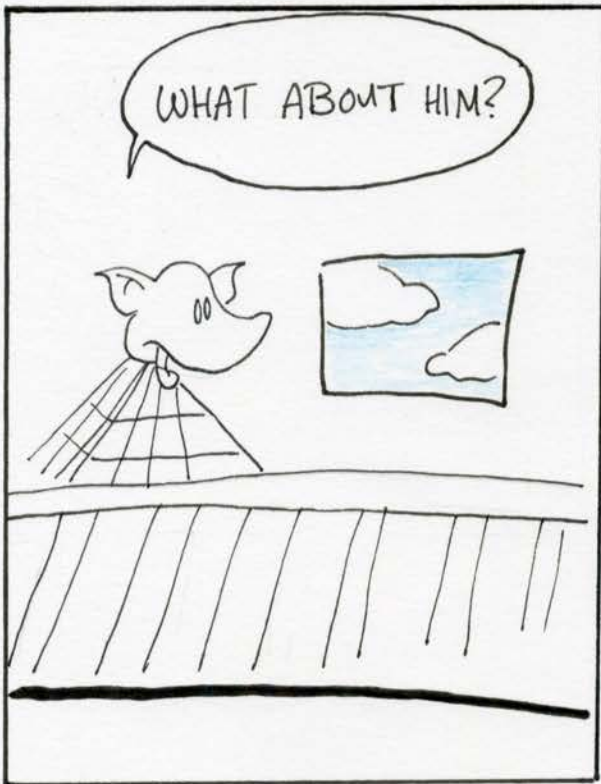
goodman

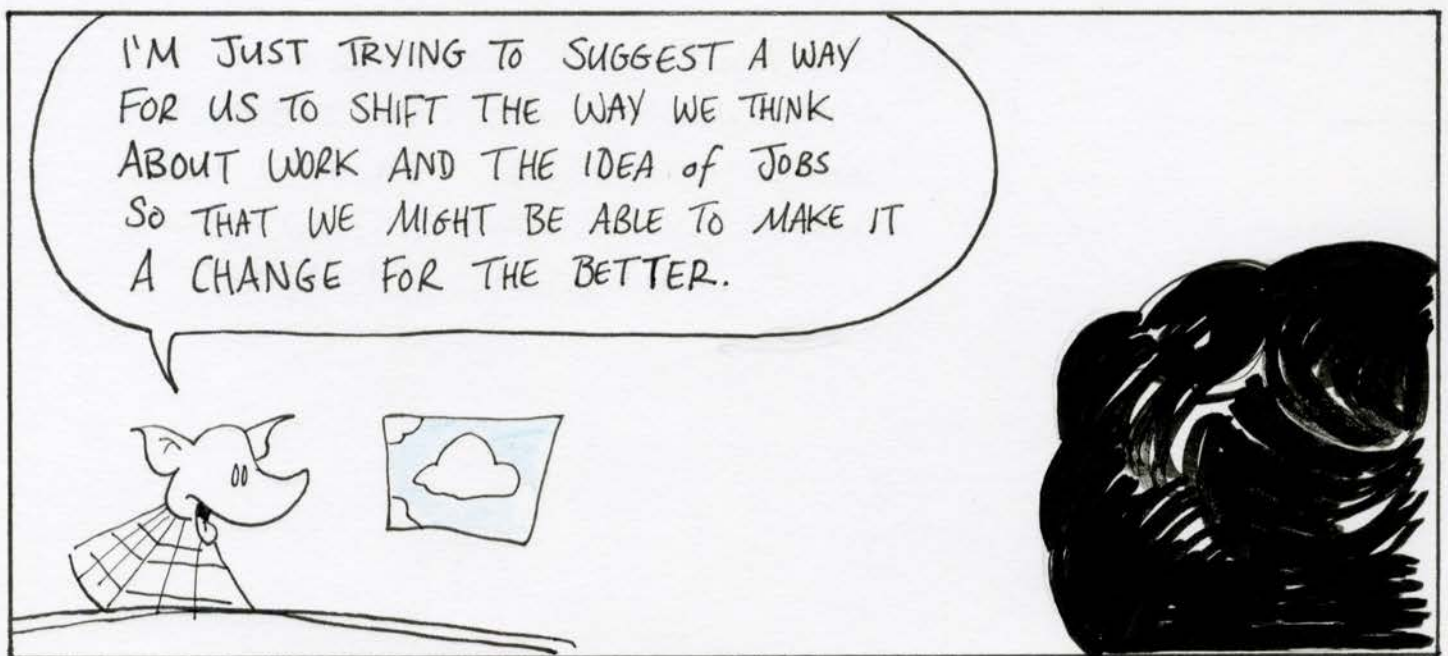
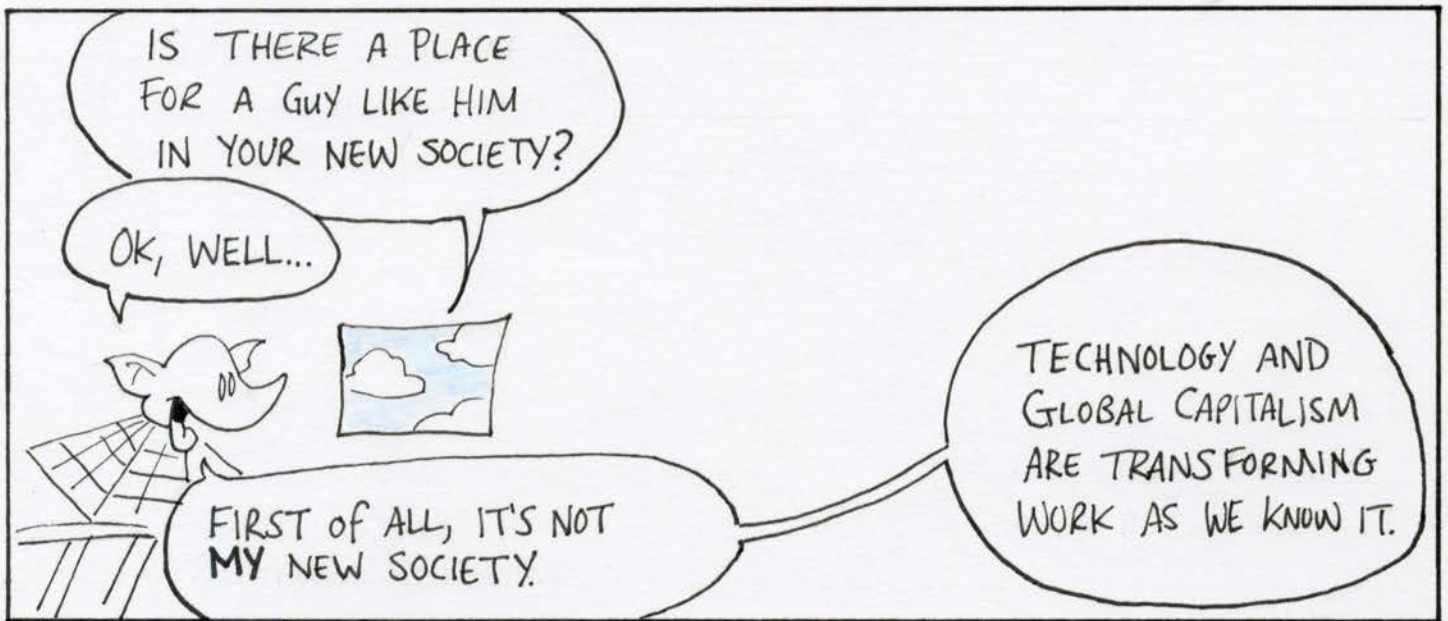
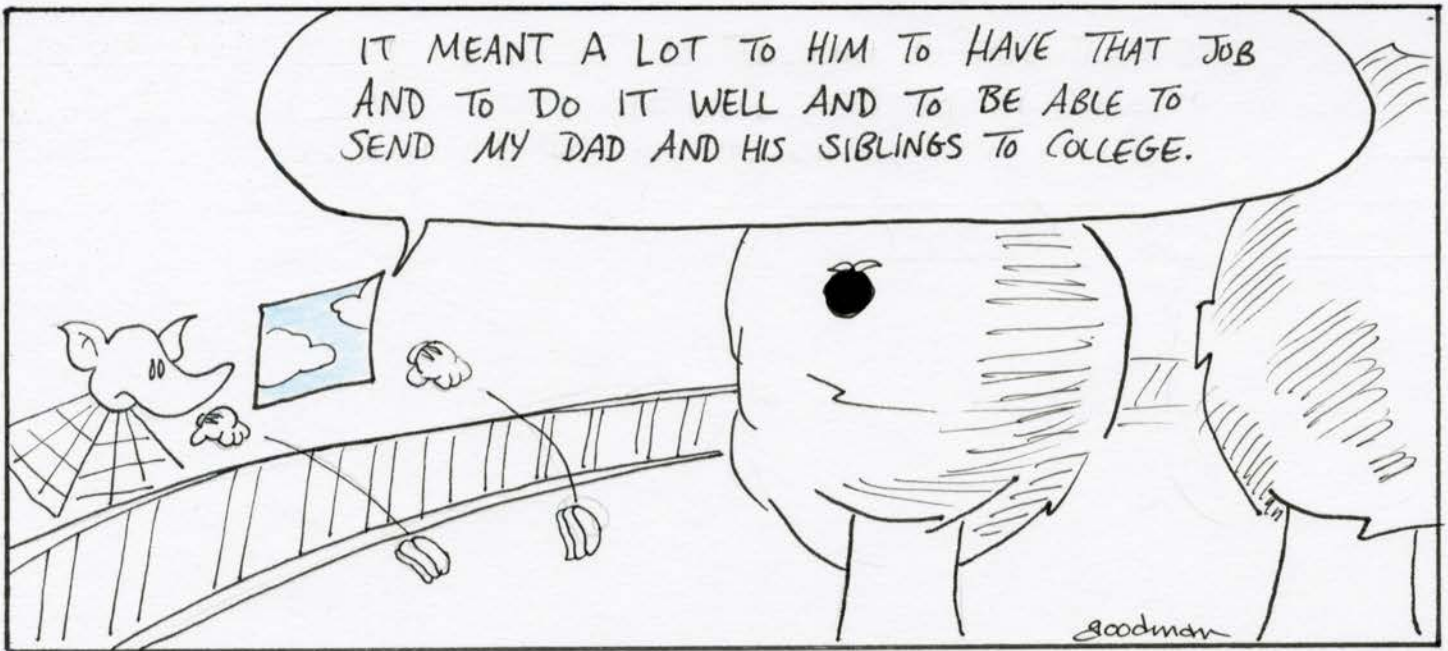


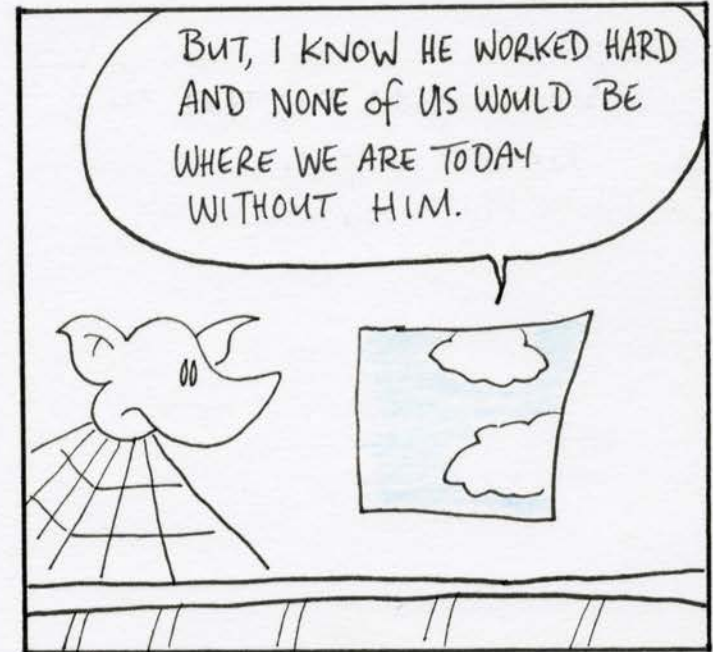
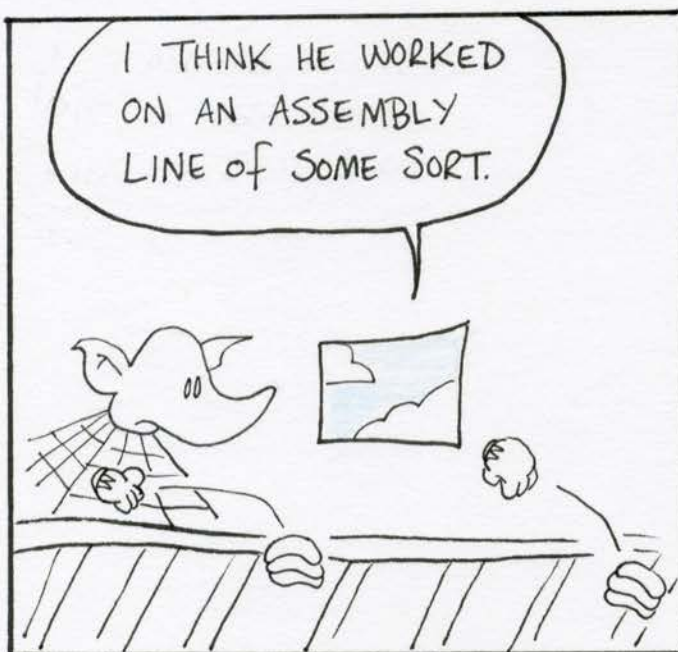
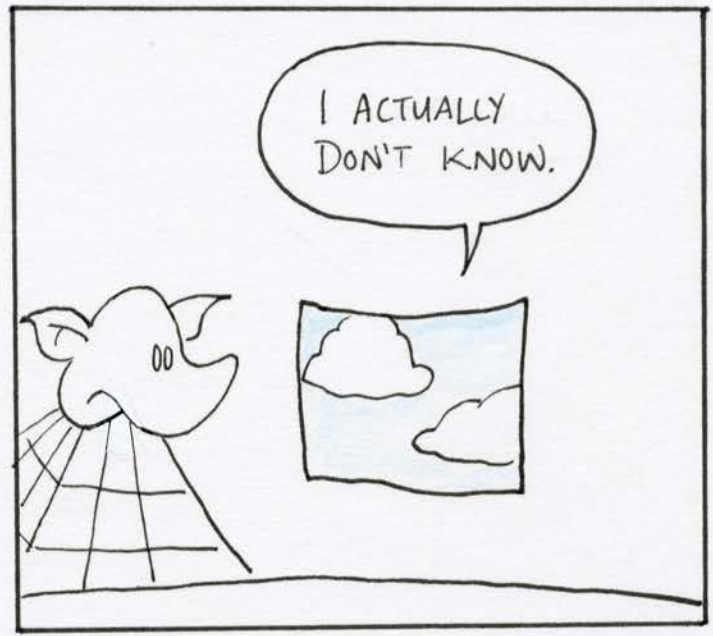
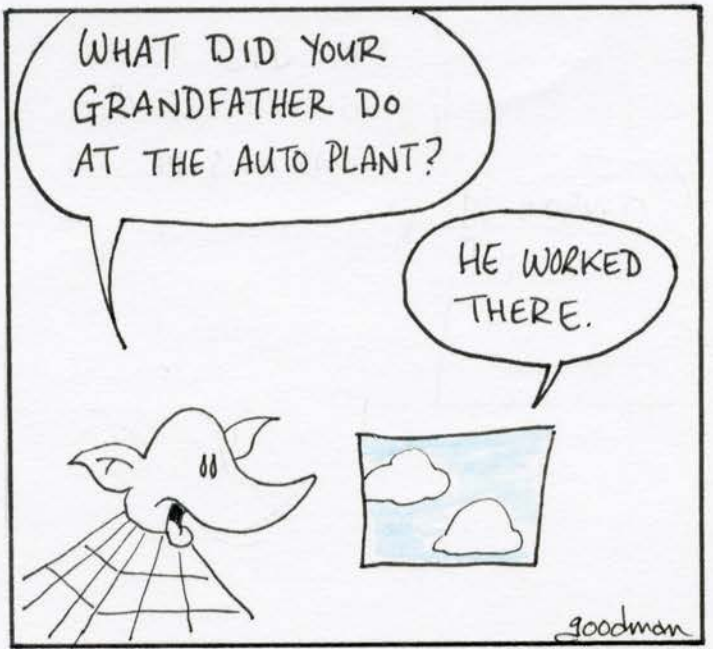
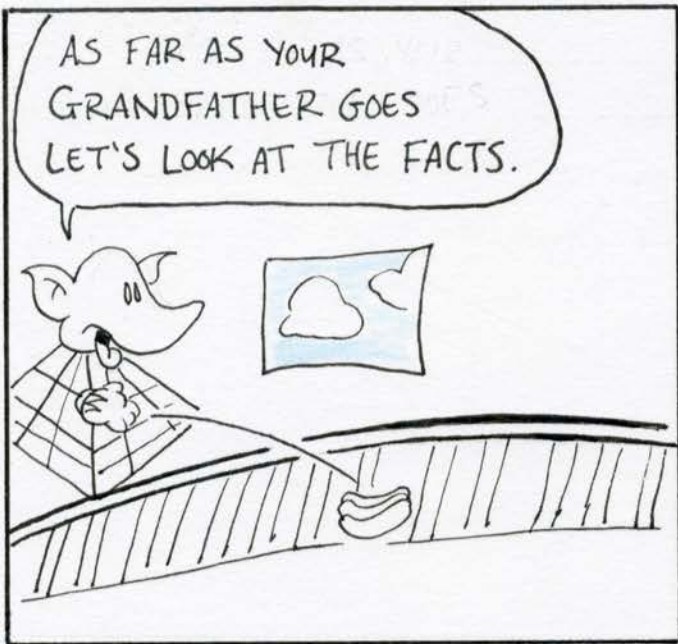
We like that idea,
but I think that
just like we'd rather pay
to be treated like a guest
without the reciprocal responsibility
of actually being a guest,
we're happy to settle for buying
the illusion
of a handmade car
or frozen dinner.

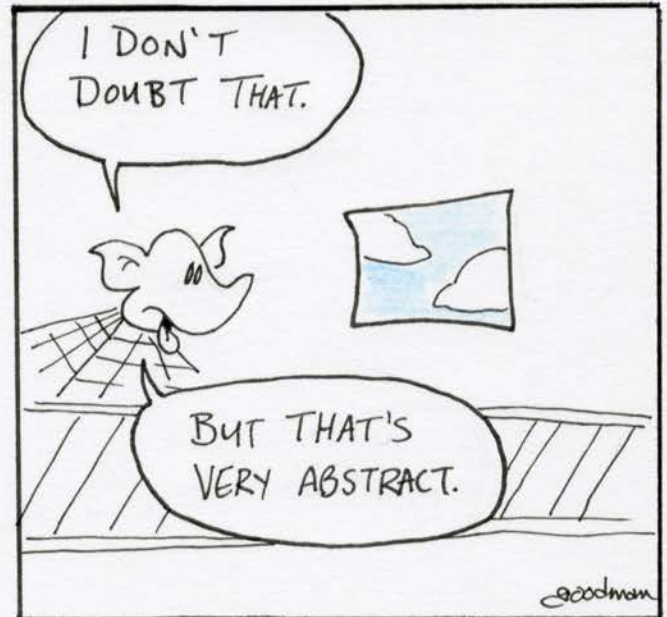
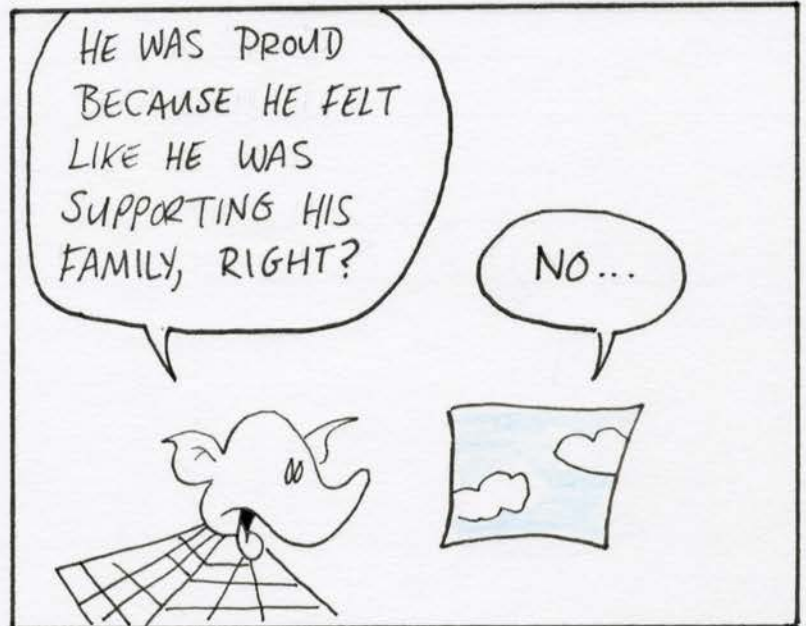
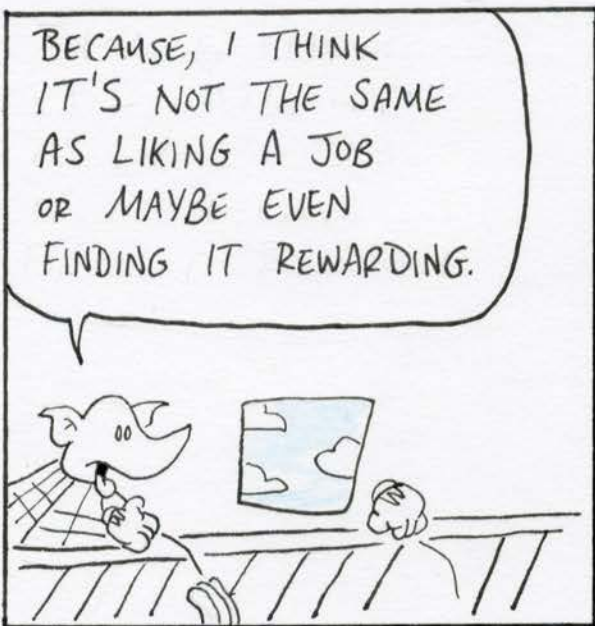
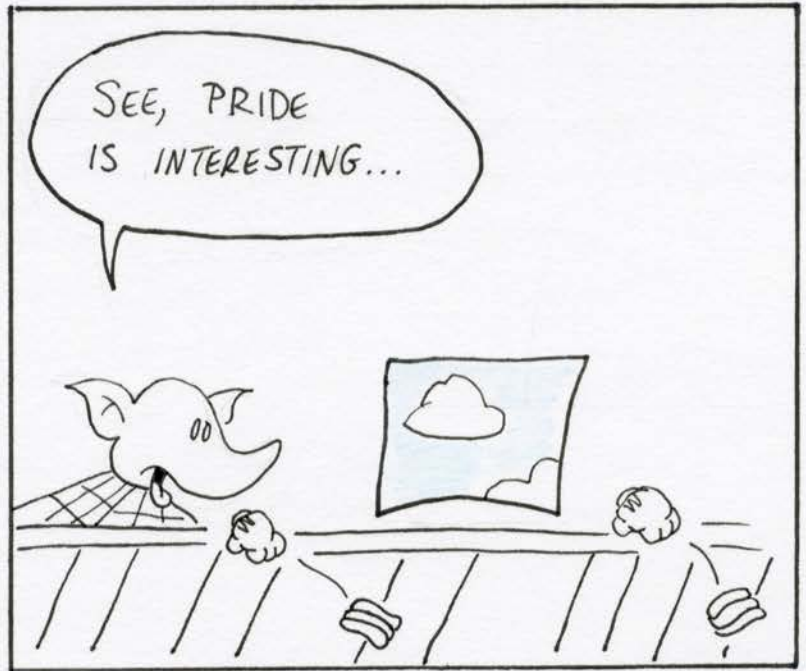
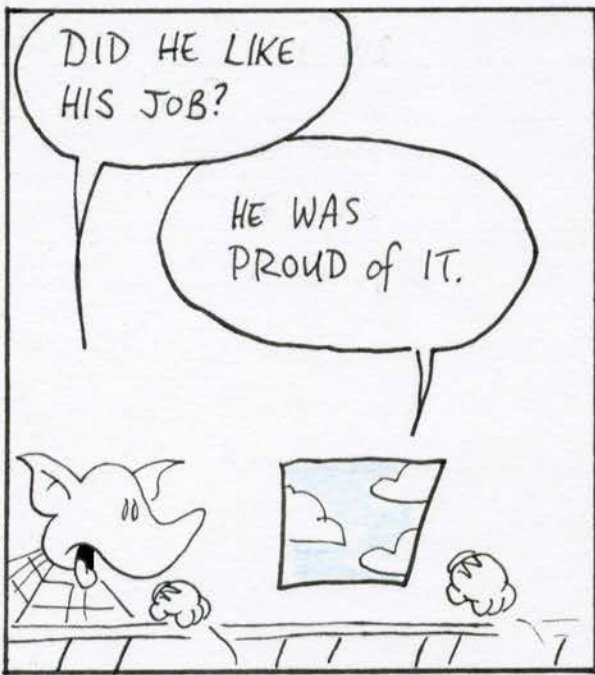
So, I think my point is
that we're going to have to be
very careful
on both ends
in determining which are the things
that a human does better
and which are the things
that a machine does better,
so that, on the one hand,
we're not holding onto things
that we can let machines do,
and on the other hand, we're not
rushing to have machines take over
tasks that are better
as human tasks.

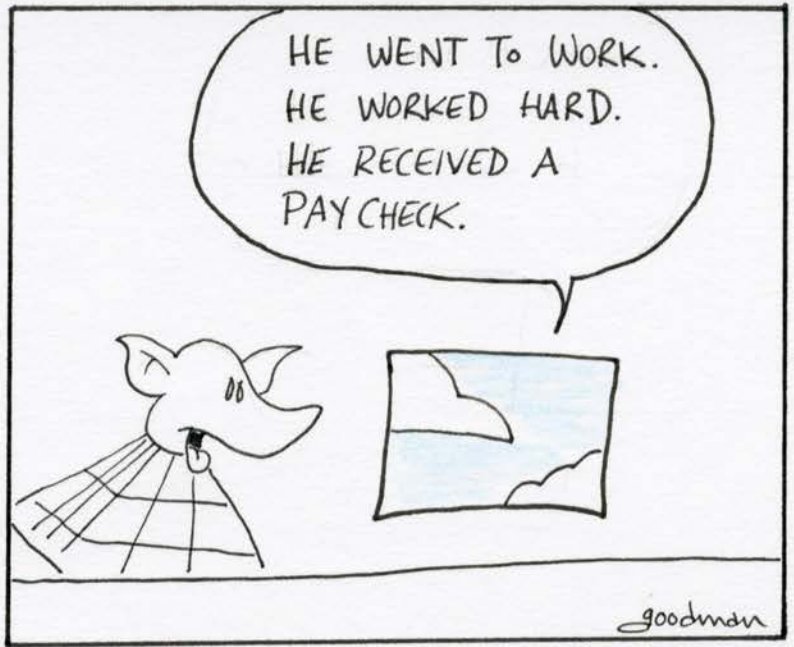
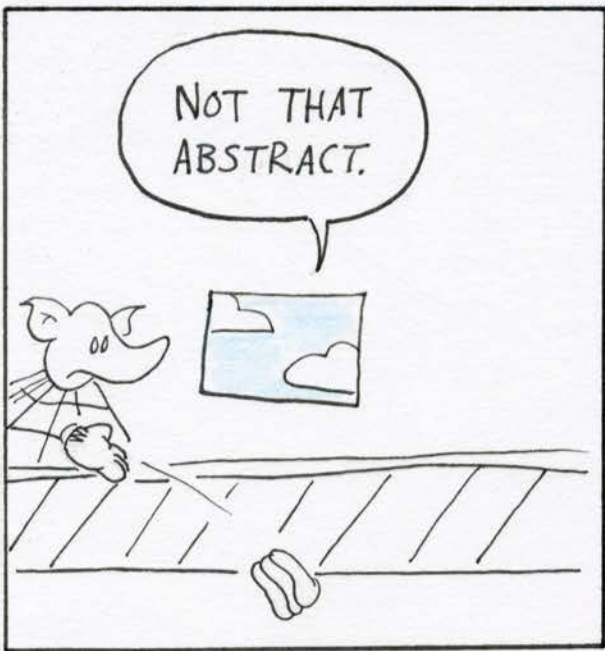
goodman



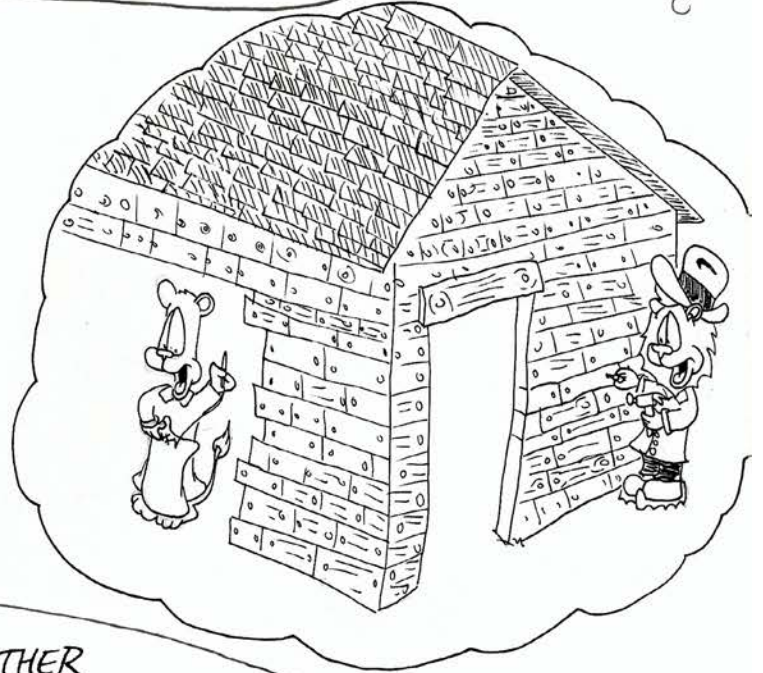
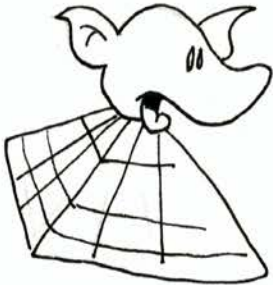
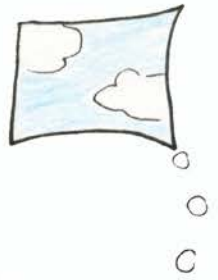








YOUR GRANDFATHER WOULD HAVE BUILT THE HOUSE,
GROWN THE FOOD, RAISED THE ANIMALS.
YOUR GRANDMOTHER WOULD HAVE SEWN THE CLOTHES.

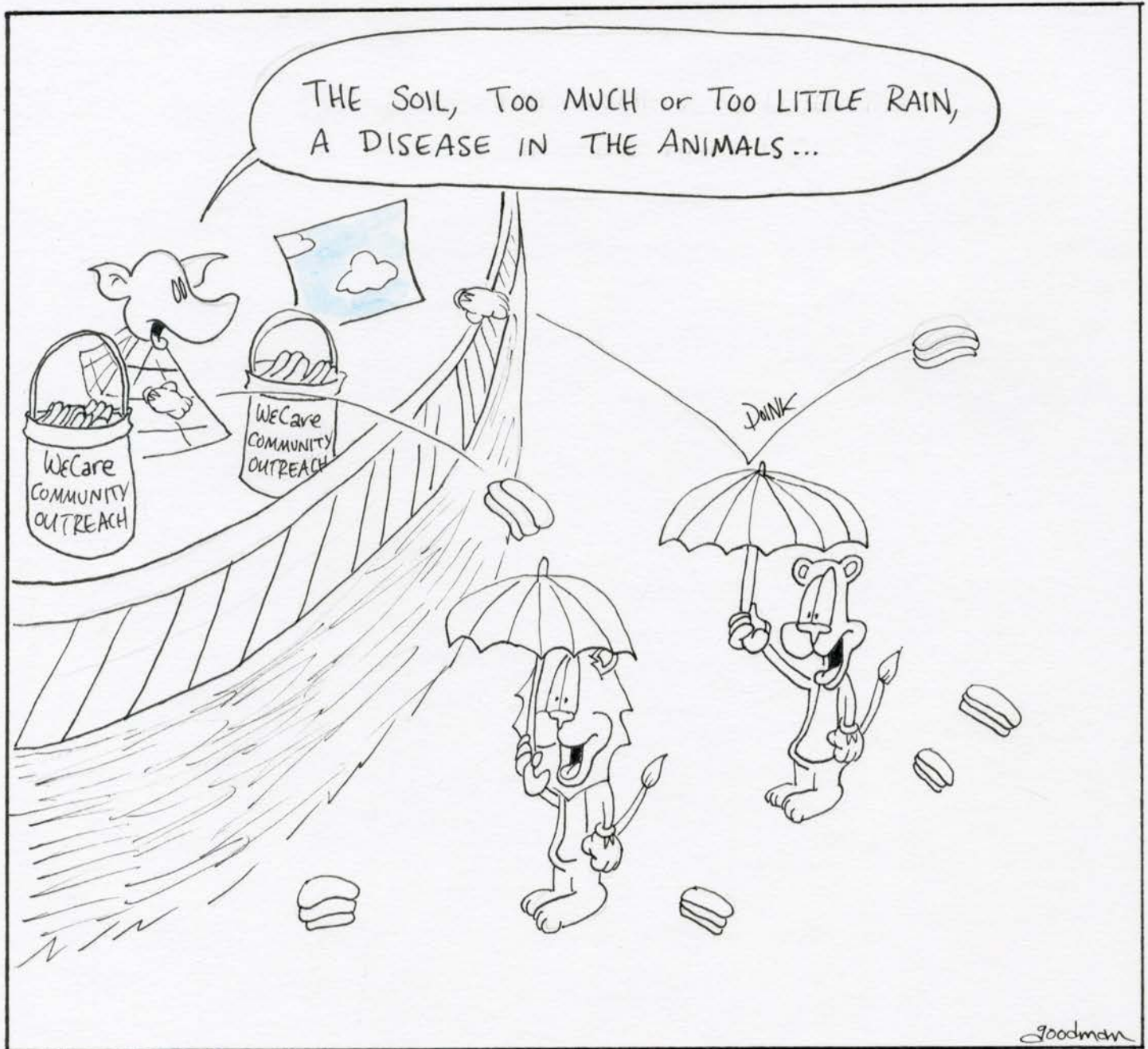
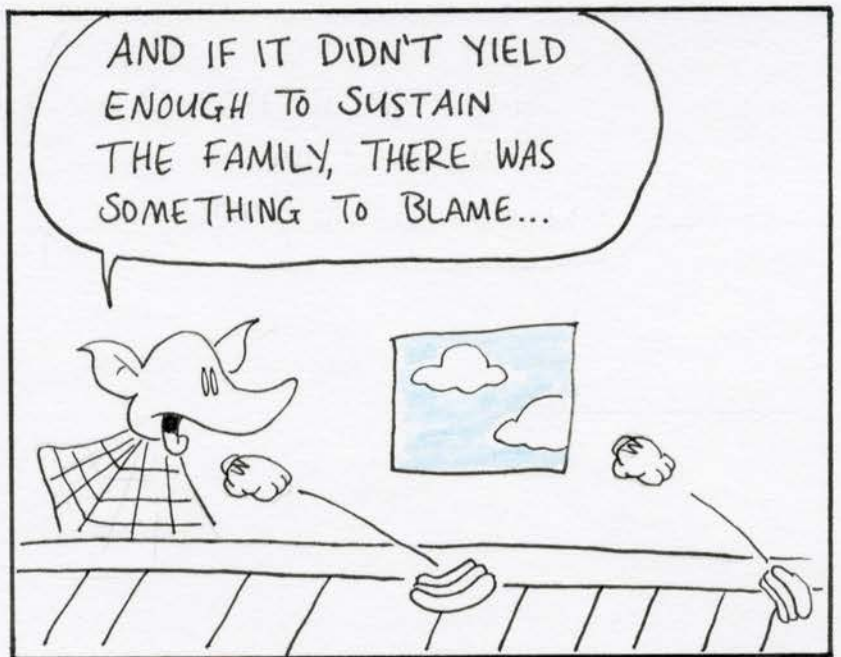


INSTEAD, YOUR GRANDFATHER
PERFORMED ONE STEP IN ASSEMBLING
AUTOMOBILES FOR OTHER PEOPLE TO DRIVE.

IN EXCHANGE FOR DOING THAT WORK
FOR A CERTAIN NUMBER OF HOURS A WEEK
HIS UNION NEGOTIATED FOR HIM TO BE PAID
ENOUGH FOR HIM TO BUY ALL THOSE OTHER THINGS...

A HOUSE, FOOD, COLLEGE TUITION,
A CAR OF HIS OWN.

BUT HIS CONNECTION TO THOSE THINGS
WAS LESS DIRECT.



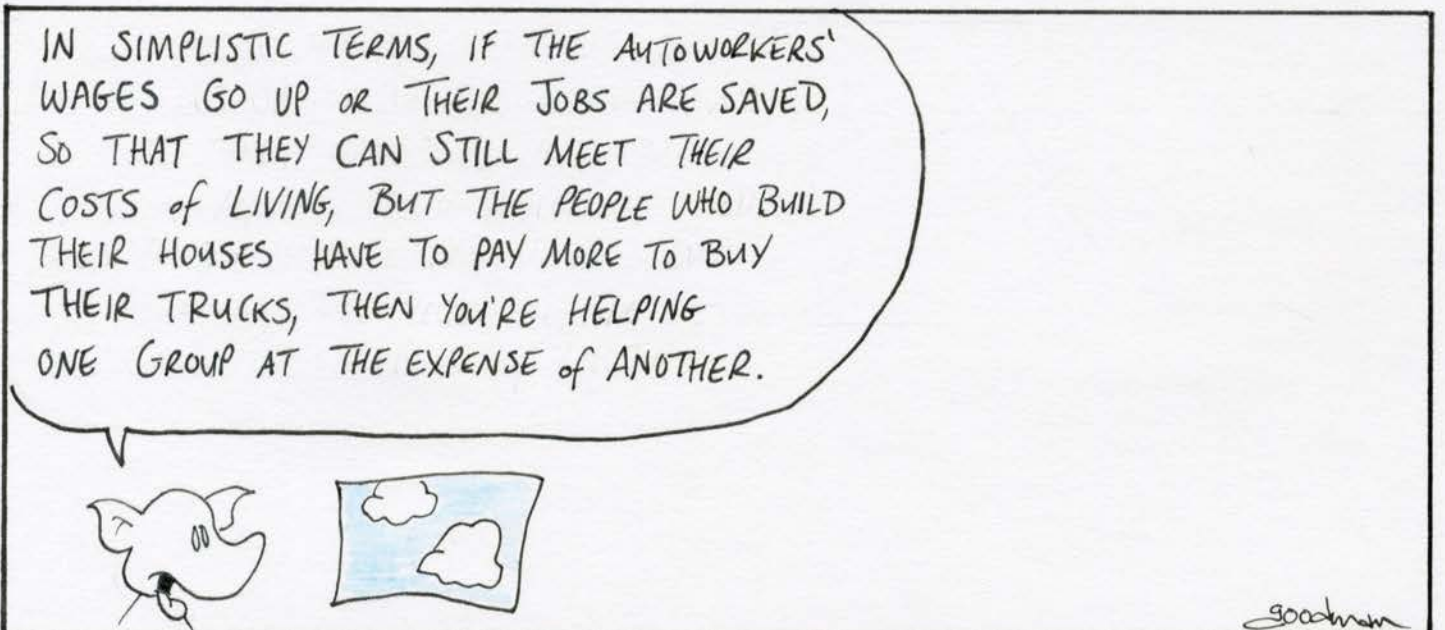
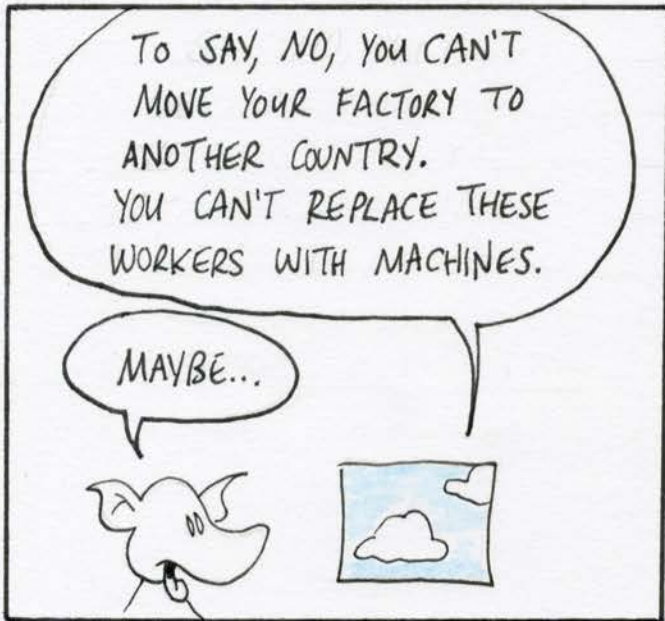
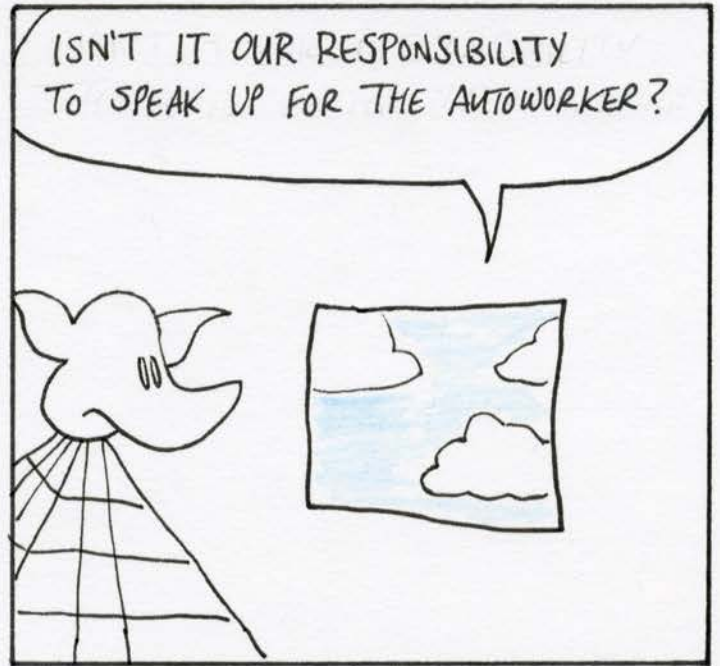


I don't know that pride entered into it.

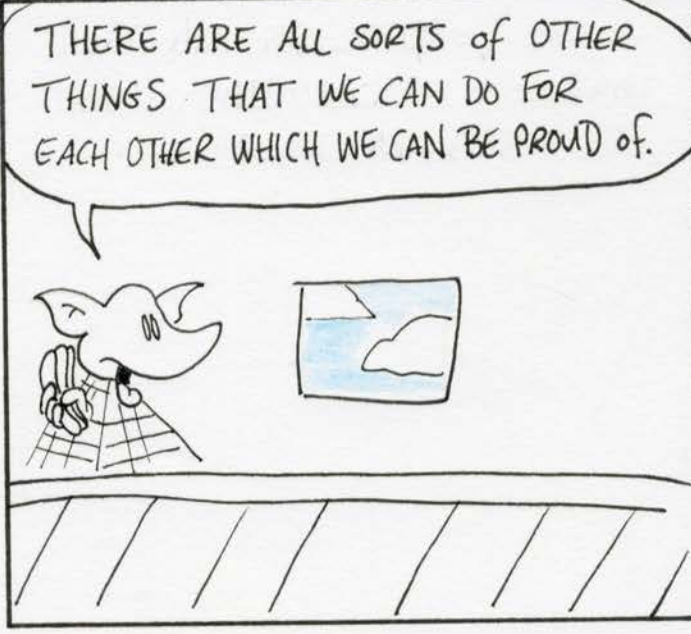
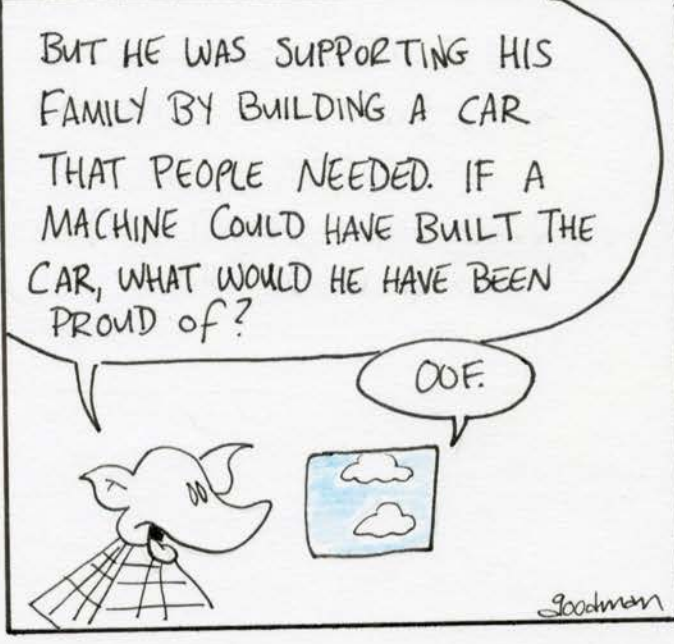
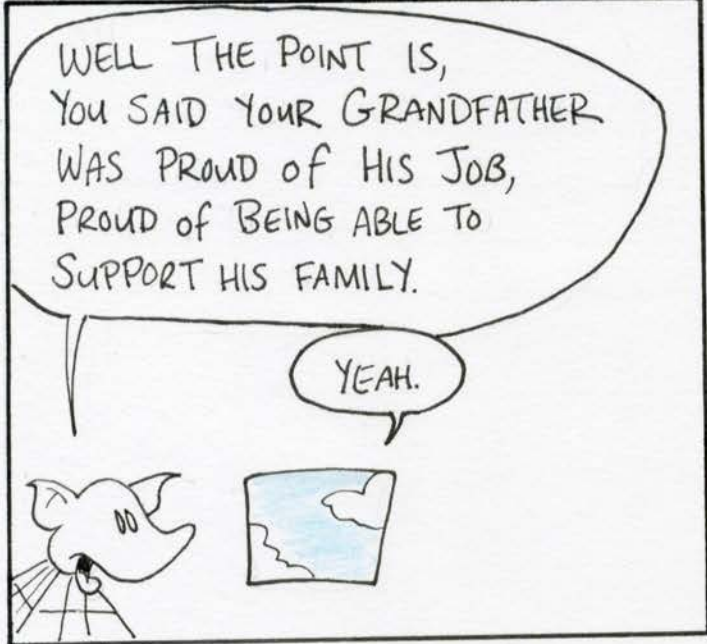
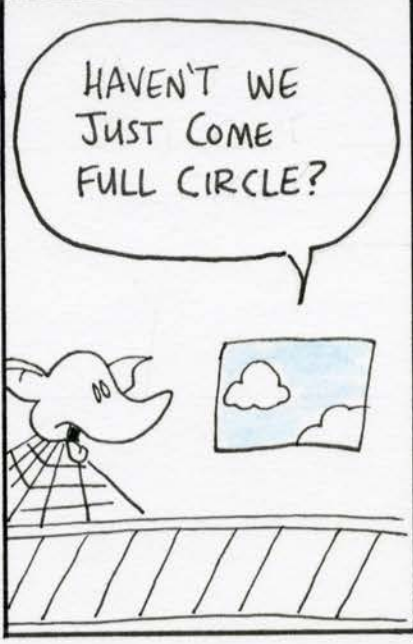
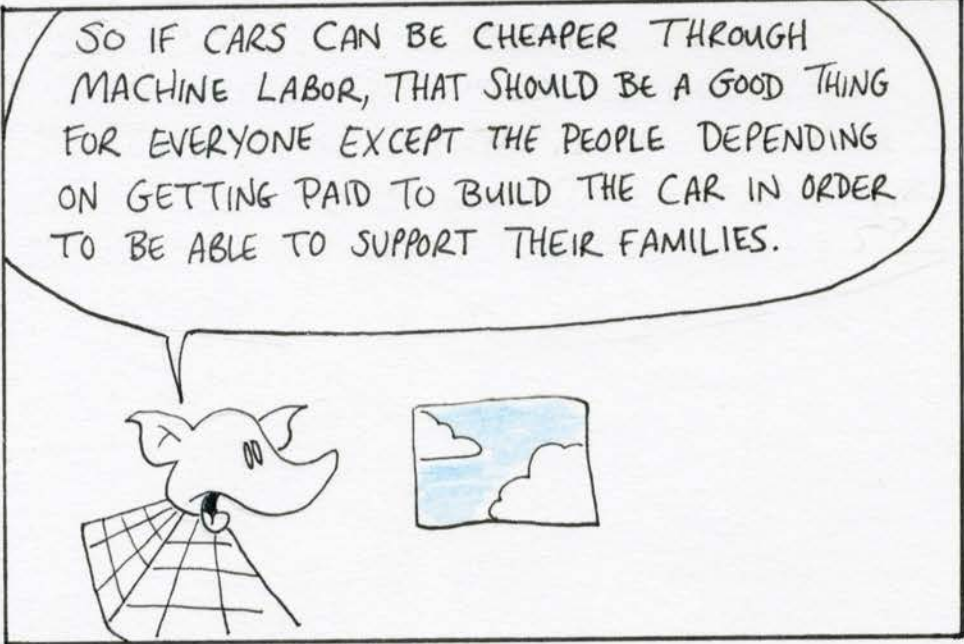
But as those layers
between the labor and the product
started being added—
and don't get me wrong,
I don't think it's inherently
bad for people to specialize
and for different roles
to be carried out by different people
in a community (though I do think
that our community bonds are incredibly
weak in terms of that being able to function
in any sort of healthy enriching way)—
as those layers started being added,
I think this idea of pride in work started to emerge.
Because the laborer was alienated,
as Marx would put it,
from the product of the labor,
because your grandfather couldn't eat the car,
he had to be proud of the number of hours he worked
and the wage he earned.

And the problem is that wages really are abstract.
The conversion of his wages
into the material needs of his family
didn't really have to do with the value of his work
or the effort that he put in.
It had to do with the market
value of the car and the market
value of the food and the house.
And those things had to do with all sorts of other factors.
And, on top of that, like I said,
the wage depended on the negotiating strength of the union.

But society sold him that pride
and now it's taking it away, not from him,
but from those who have followed him into that business.
It's telling them that their job can be done better
or cheaper by someone else or by a machine.



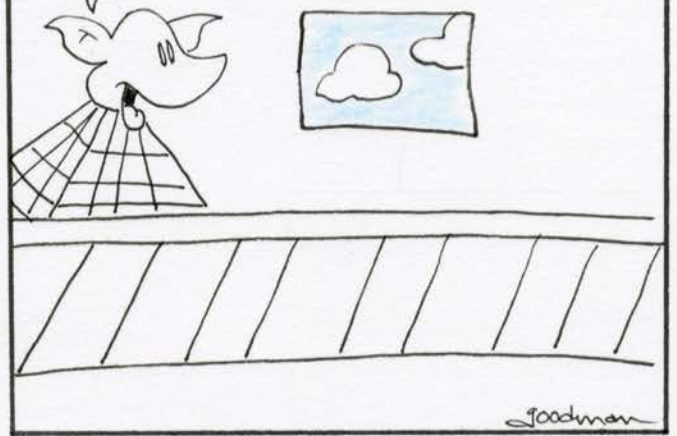
goodman



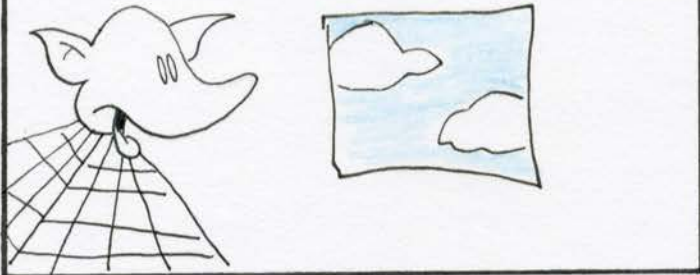
WHETHER IT'S THE THINGS THAT YOUR GRANDMOTHER WAS PRESUMABLY DOING FOR HER FAMILY WHILE YOUR GRANDFATHER WAS AT THE FACTORY...



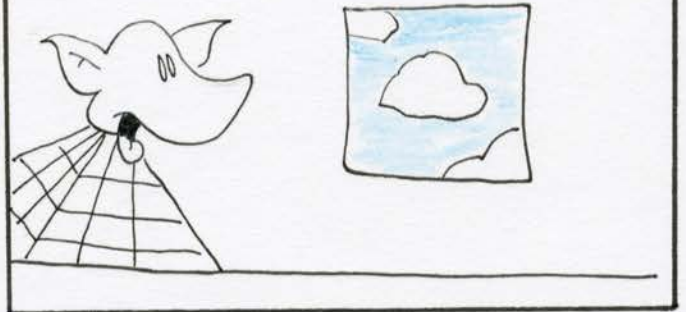
OR MAKING ART OR COACHING A YOUTH SOCCER TEAM OR WHATEVER.



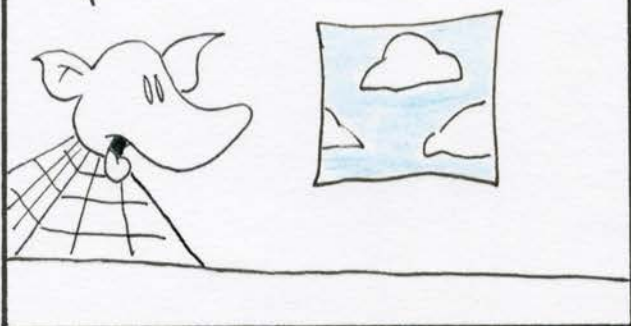
IT'S WHEN WE CONNECT THOSE THING TO A WAGE WHICH IS ITSELF CONNECTED TO SURVIVAL THAT THINGS START TO GET MESSY.



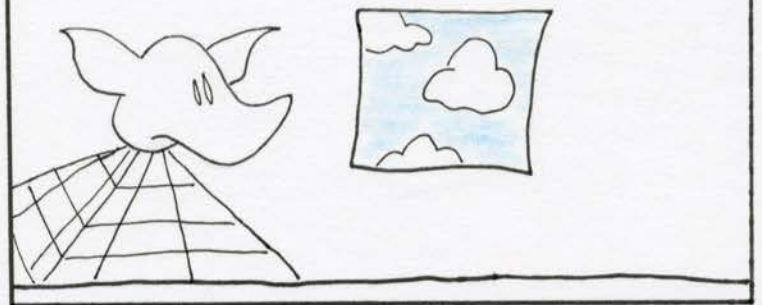
BECAUSE THEN WE FEEL LIKE IF THE WAGE GOES AWAY, THE VALUE GOES AWAY.

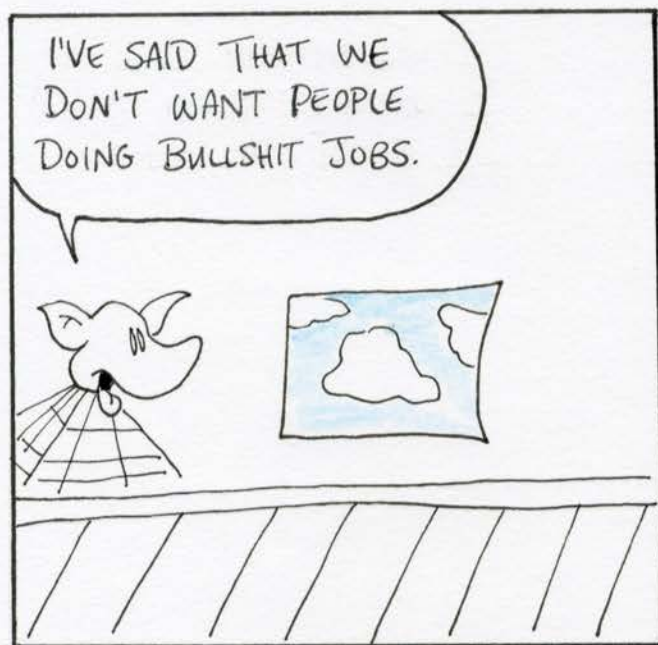
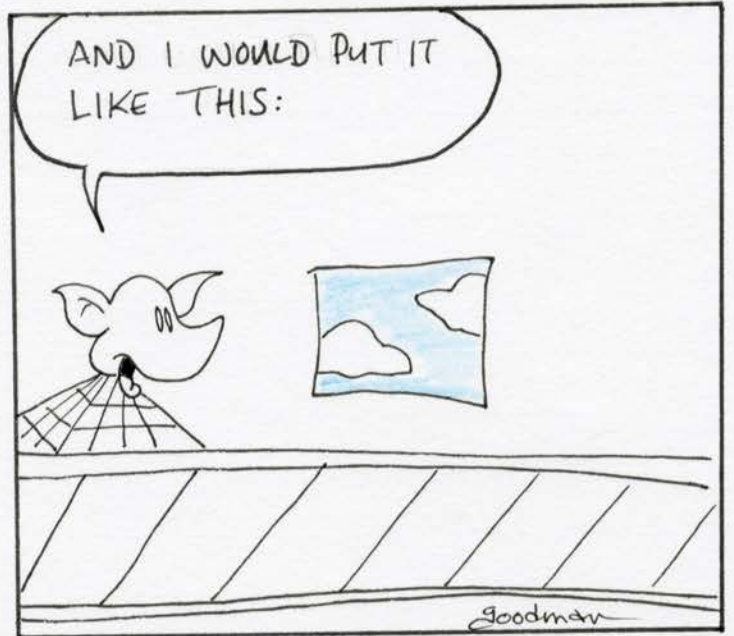
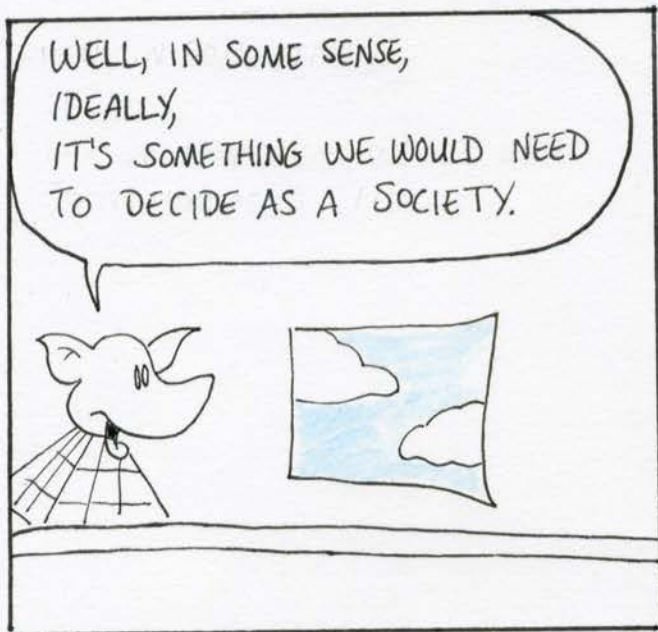
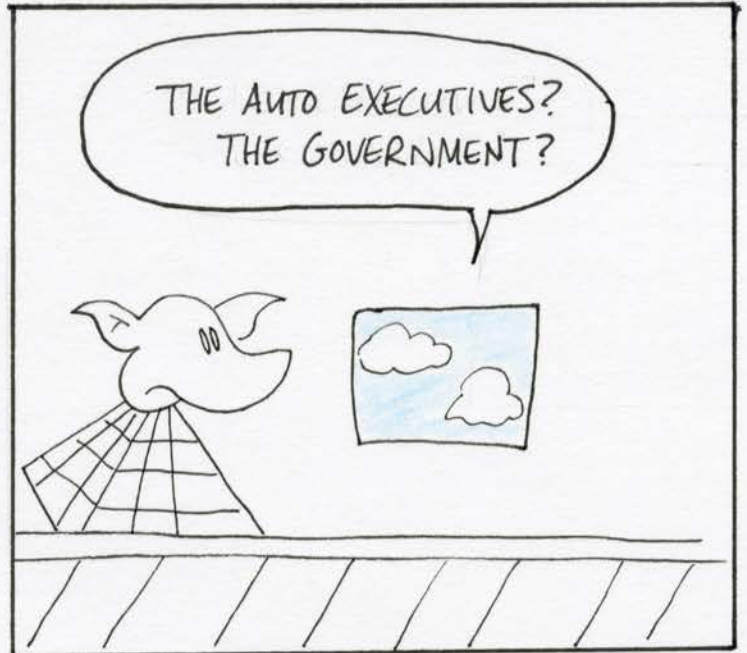


BUT THERE CAN STILL BE VALUE THERE EVEN IF IT'S NOT FINANCIAL.



OK, BUT WHO GETS TO DECIDE THAT?







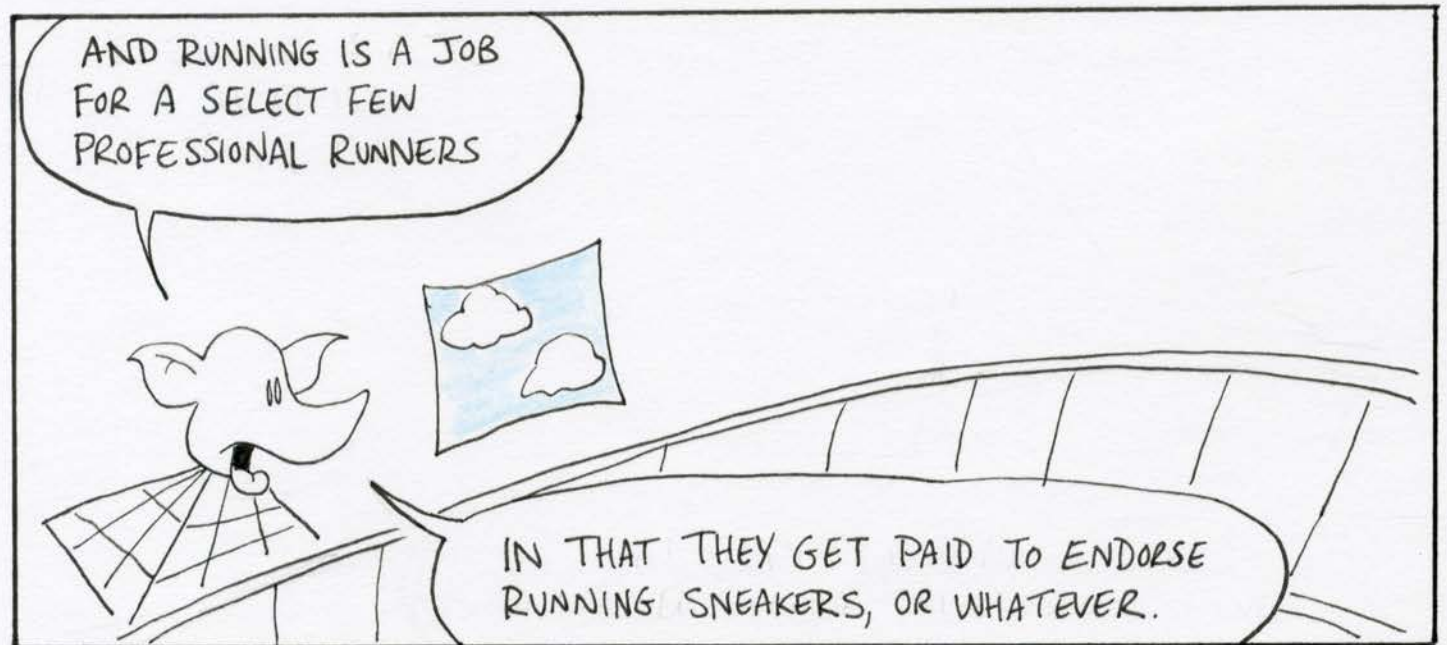
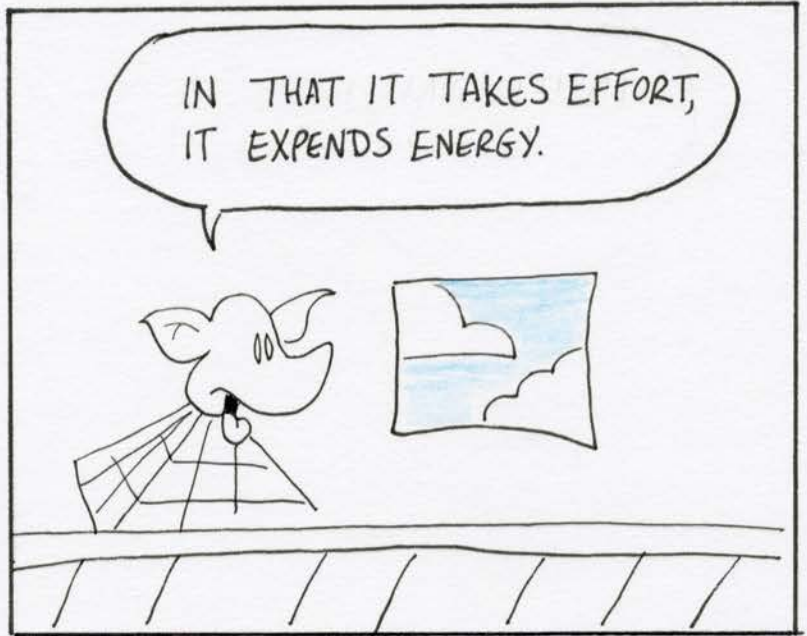
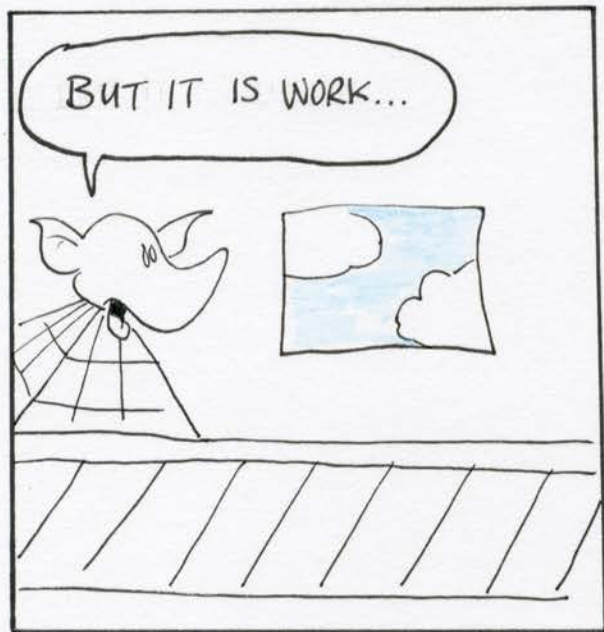
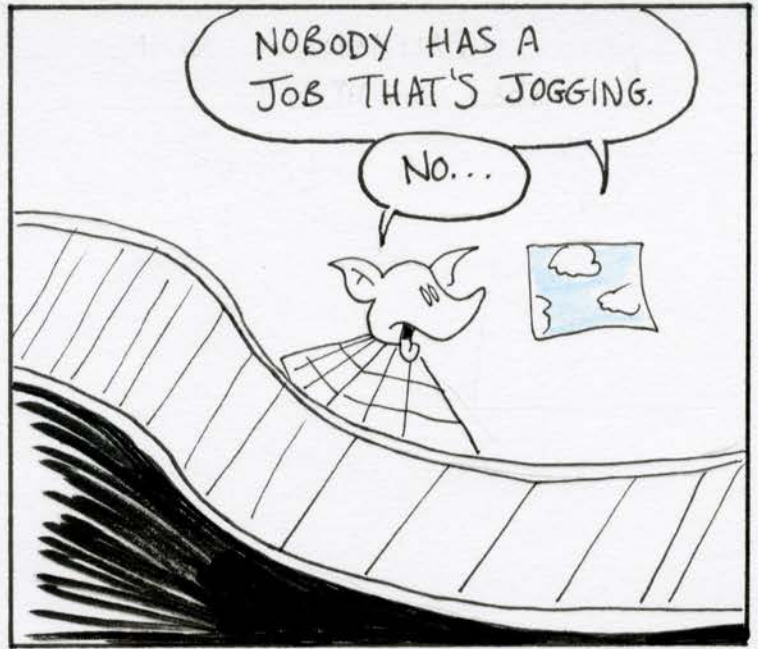
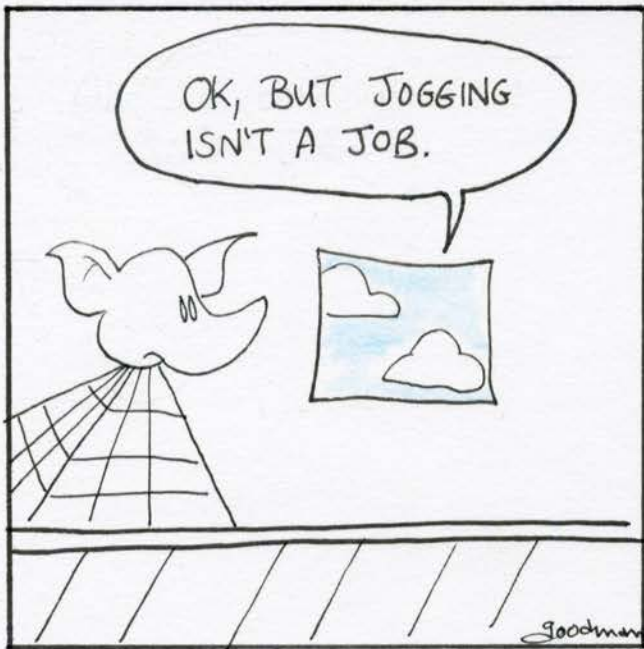
So, for a job to be
a bullshit job
it both has to be true
that the person who has the job
doesn't see the point of it
(independent of the paycheck)

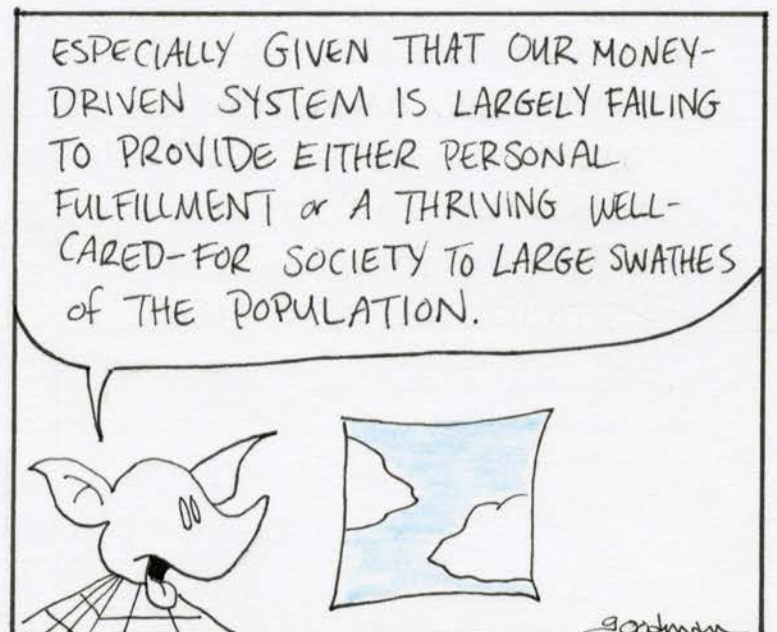
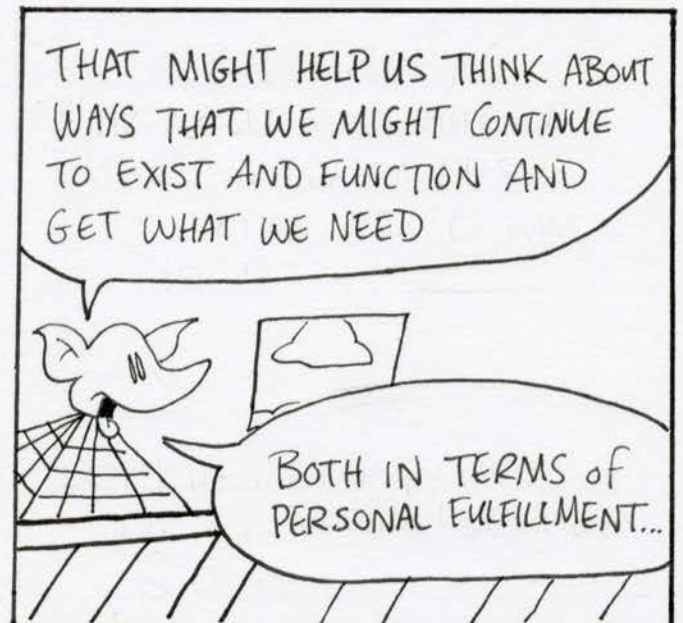
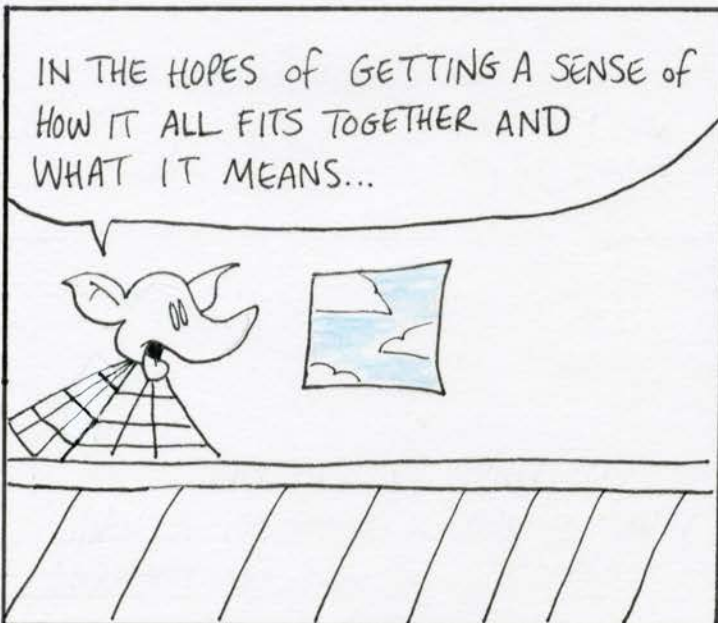
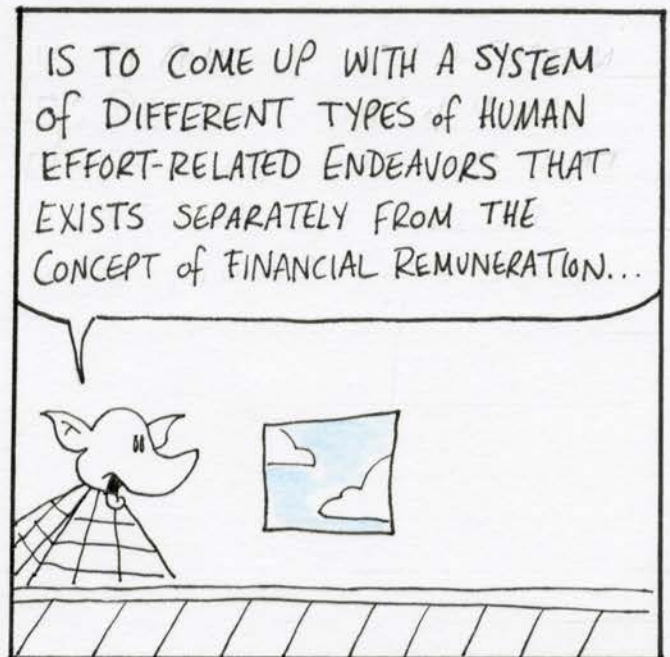
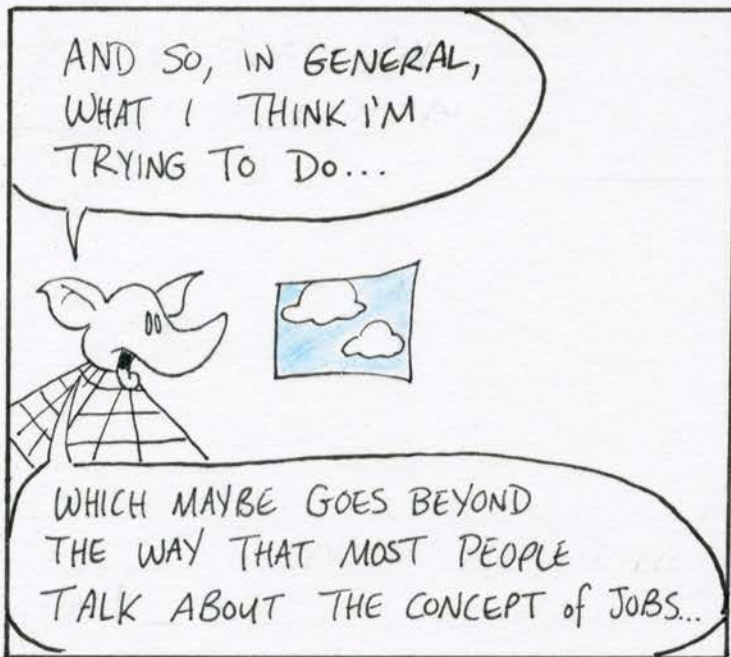
And it has to be true
that if the job holder
stopped doing the job,
society as a whole
wouldn't lose much of value.

If just the first part is true,
if the person doing the job doesn't
see the point of it,
but society needs it,
then maybe we should be working on automating it.
If it can't be automated,
then we need to find people who do see the point
of doing it, or we need to find some sort of
incentive system, financial or otherwise
to make it more appealing,
whether it's money or some sort of privilege
or prestige, to make people want to do it
in order to make sure it gets done.

If just the second part is true,
if the person doing the job
sees a point in it,
but it's not contributing to society
in any meaningful way,
well, this is kind of a funny one,
because I'm inclined to believe
that if one person sees the point
of something other people will too.
But, then there are some things
that are inwardly directed,
where the purpose is clear,
but it's not societal,
like jogging;
I can go jogging every day
and other people can see the point
and they can go jogging, too
if they want,
but I can't go jogging on behalf of someone else,
and short of maybe saving people money
in insurance or health care or emergency room
costs or whatever by staying healthy,
I'm not really serving society by doing it.

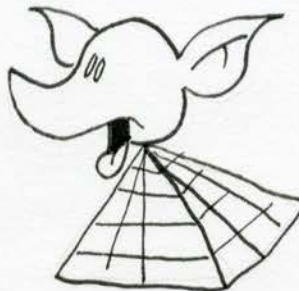
goodman





So, in brief,
there are things
that society needs
that people might not
want to do
or see the point in doing
that we either have to
mechanize or
incentivize in order
to get enough people
doing them.

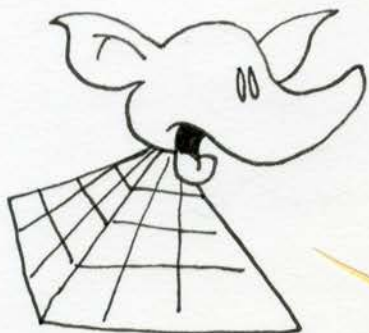
I won't give examples,
because it's subjective
and, as you point out,
there's probably
an element of class prejudice
inherent in my perceptions
of the desirability of
undesirability of certain
jobs.

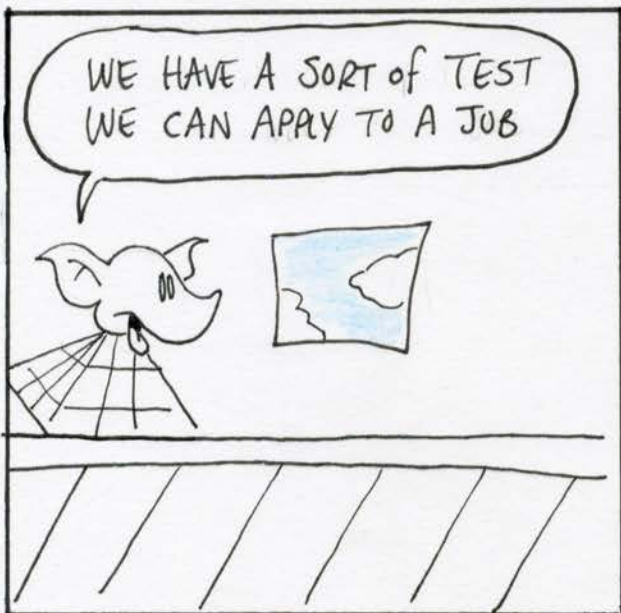
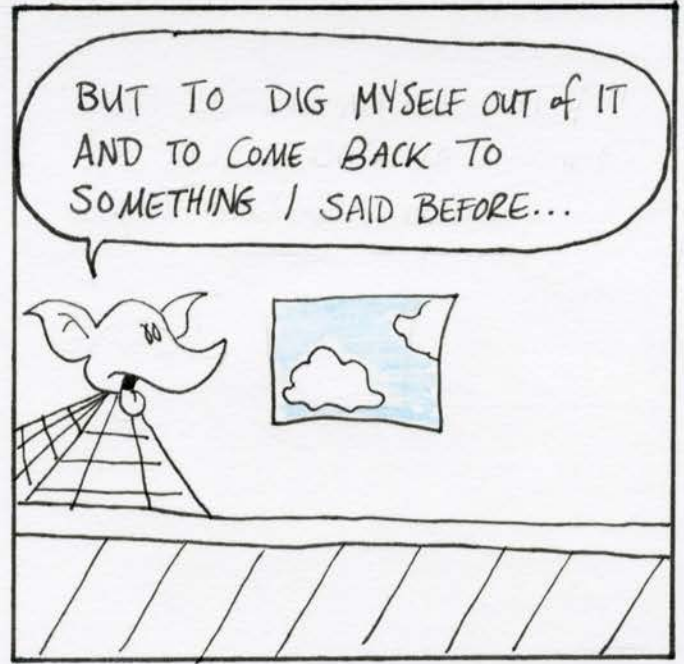


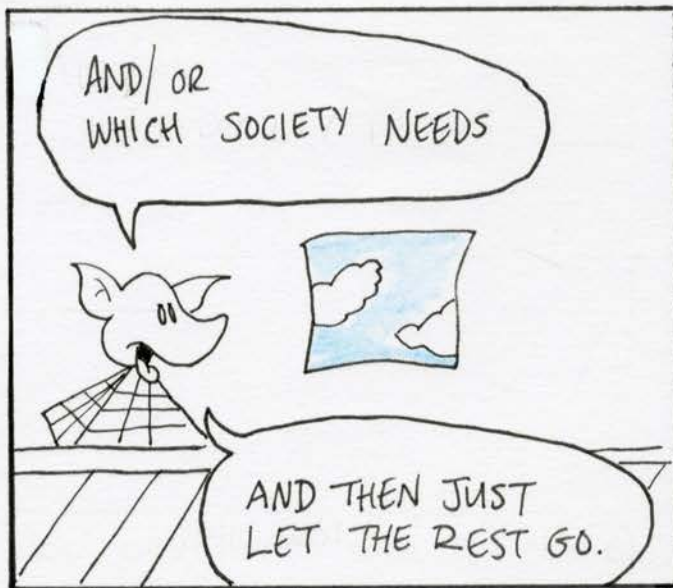
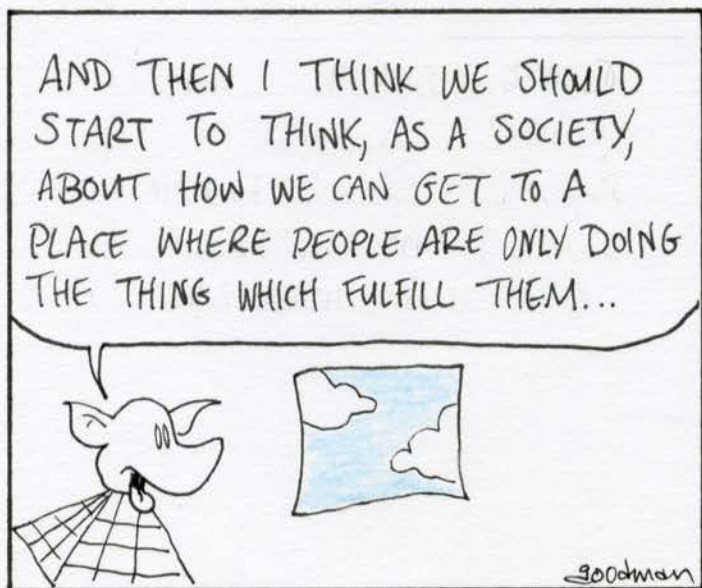
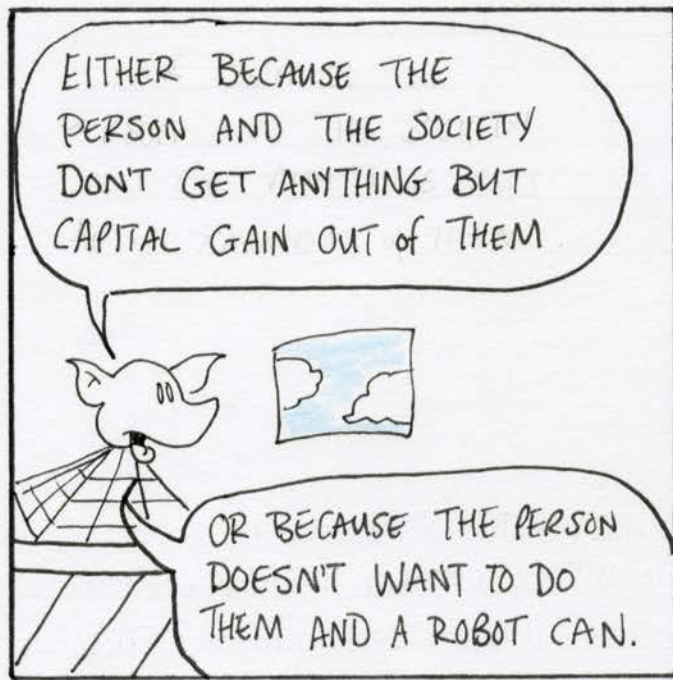
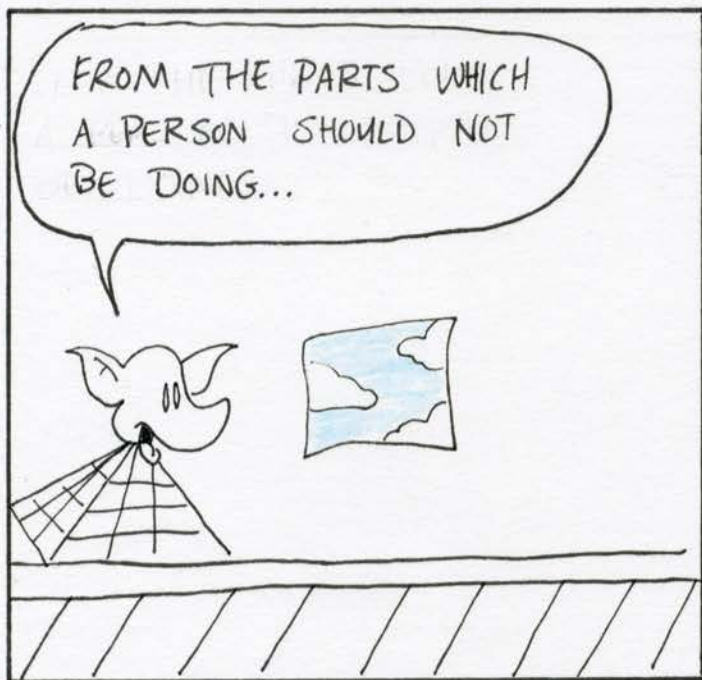
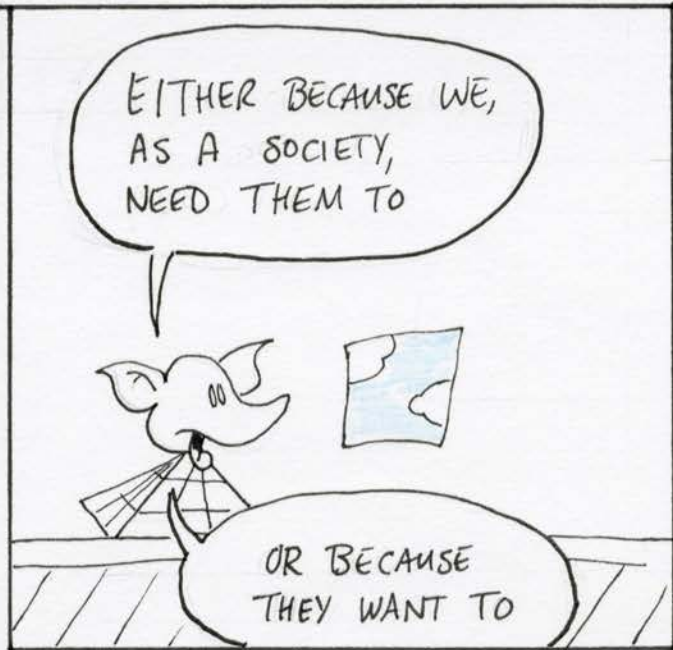
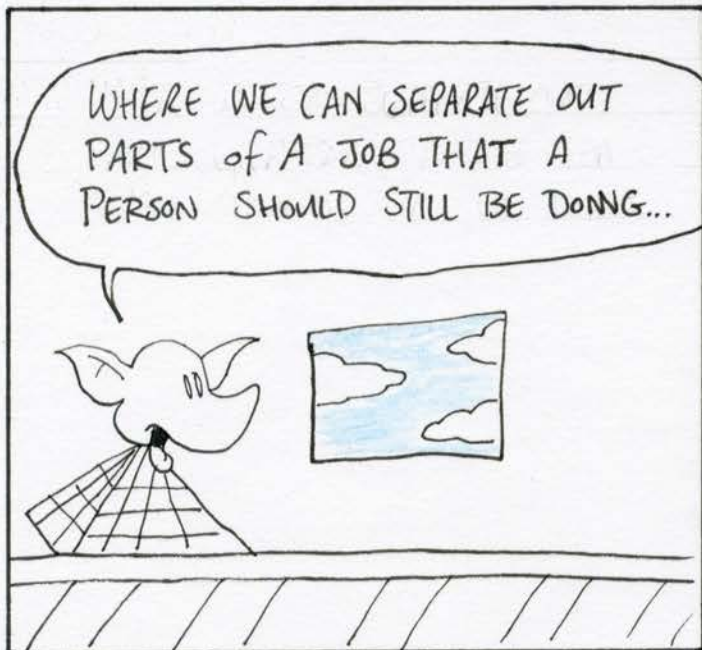
then there are the things
that some people may enjoy doing
or experience personal benefit
from,
like jogging,
which don't provide essential
social benefit
(again, public health benefit of
jogging, specifically, aside)

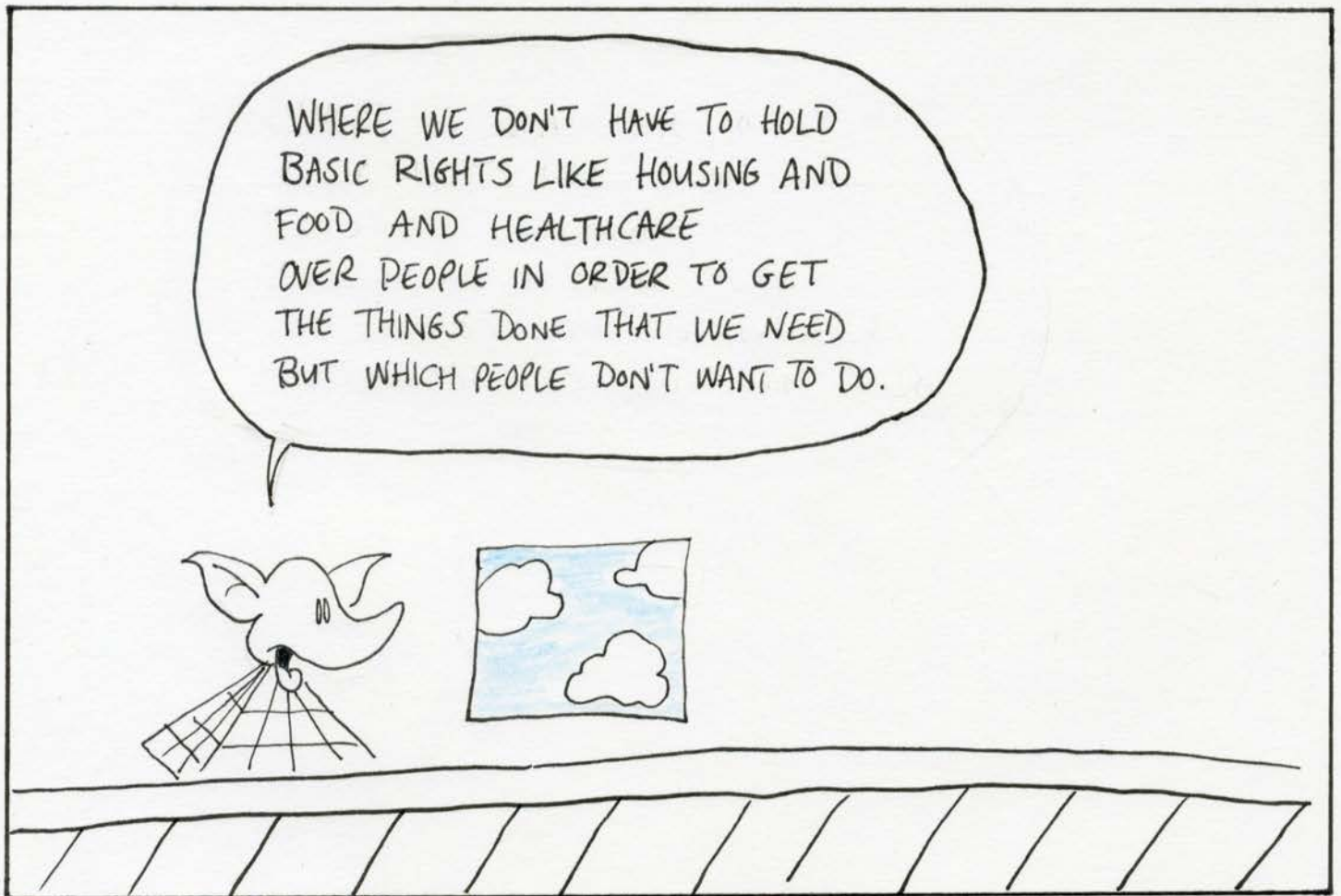
then, we haven't discussed
things that people enjoy doing
which benefit society
but which don't really command
financial earning power or
whatever the technical economic
term would be—
things it's hard to get paid for
right now, but which we need
as a society
art
childcare
mentoring of young people
charity work
spiritual guidance
caring for the elderly

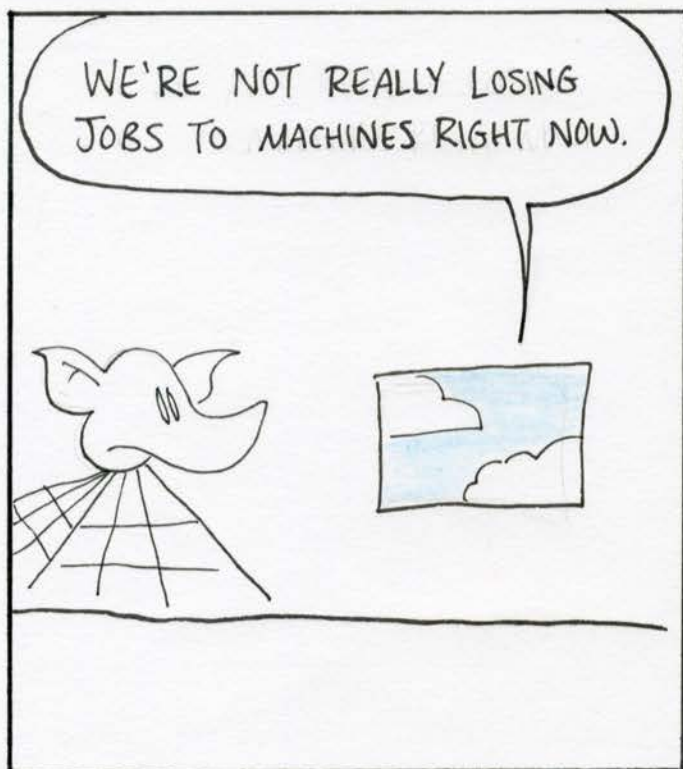
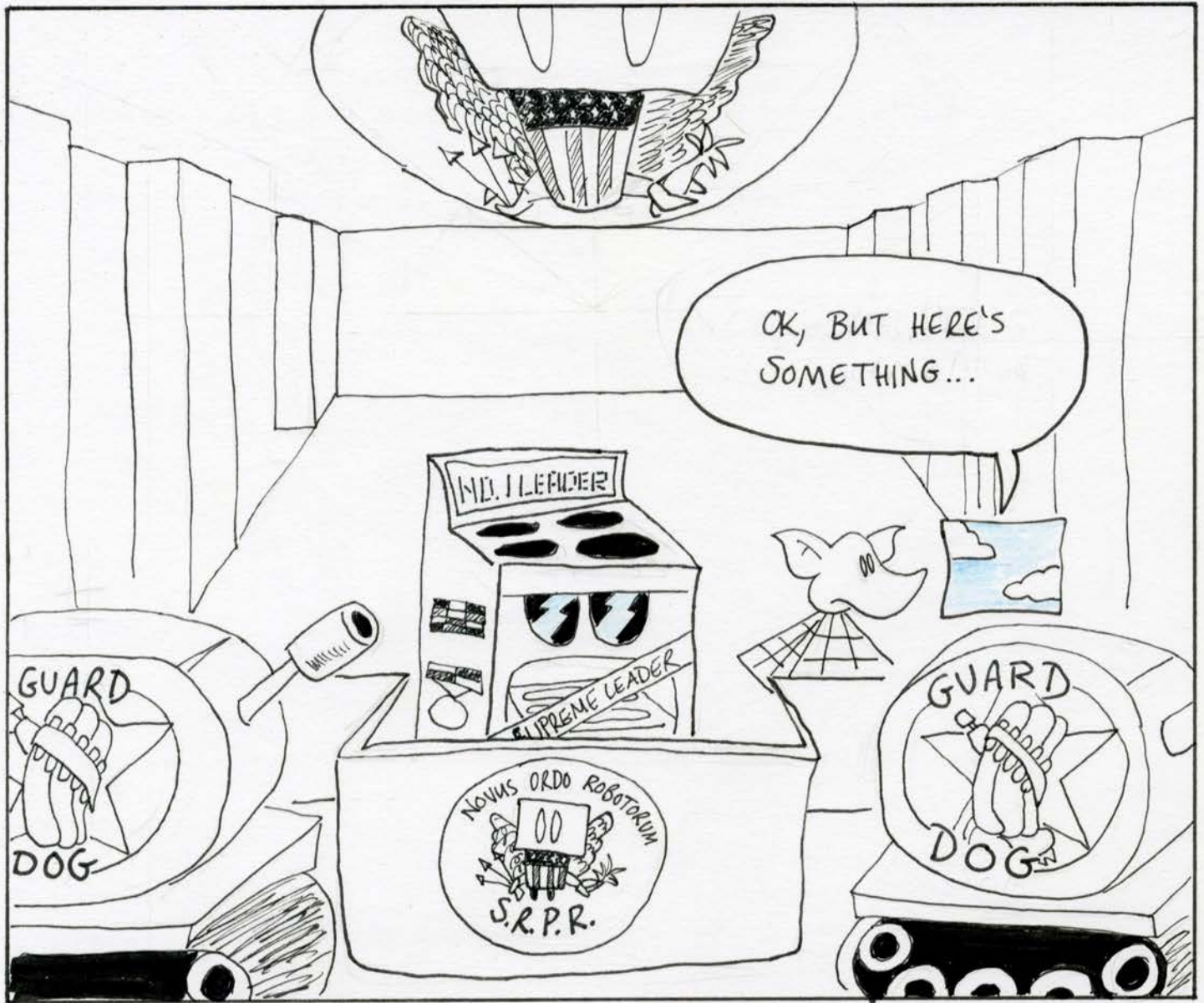
And then finally,
jobs that workers don't see
the point of,
besides the paycheck,
and which,
short of growth
in corporate profit,
may not have pronounced
societal benefit.
Those are bullshit jobs
and frankly,
essentially,
those are mostly
or maybe entirely
white-collar jobs.
Where there start to be
blue-collar or service industry
jobs in a similar position
is with mechanization
and automation
where blue-collar workers are
doing jobs that machines could do
or are getting to do
less and less
of their jobs themselves
are watching a robot build
something they used to build,
or whatever,

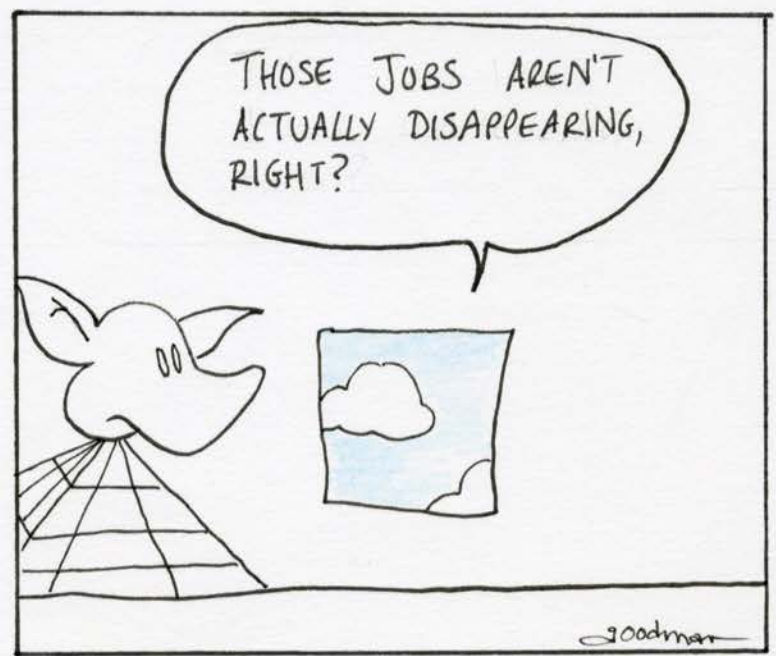
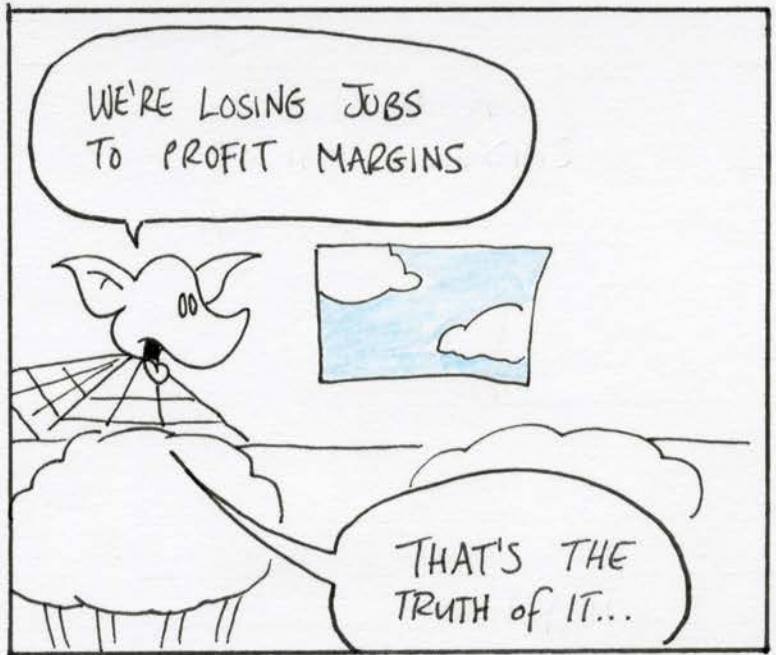
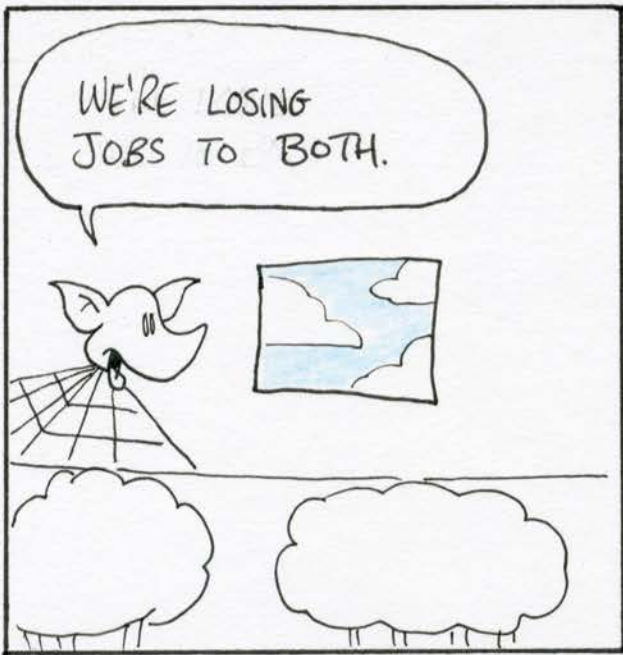


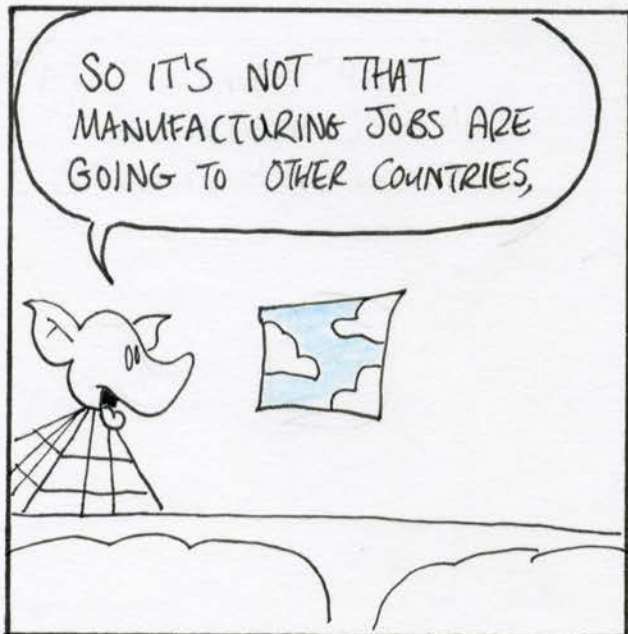
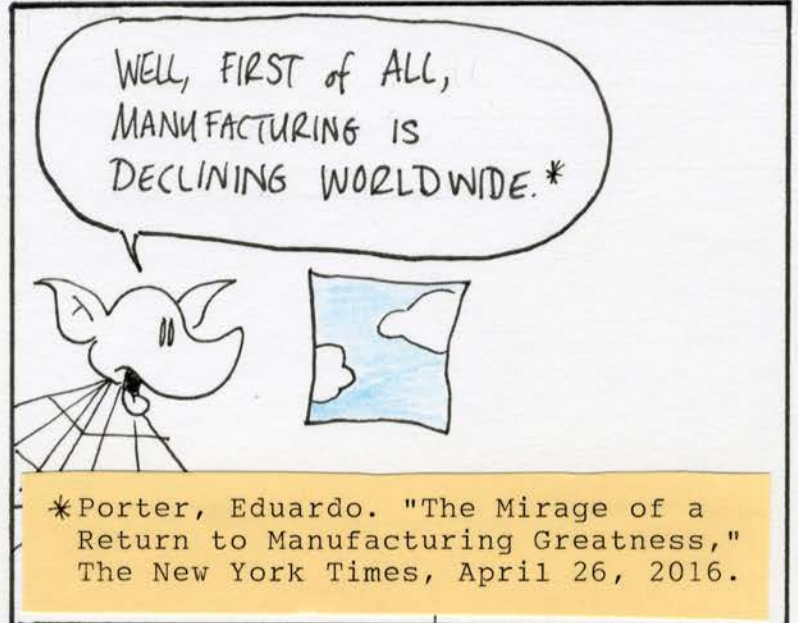
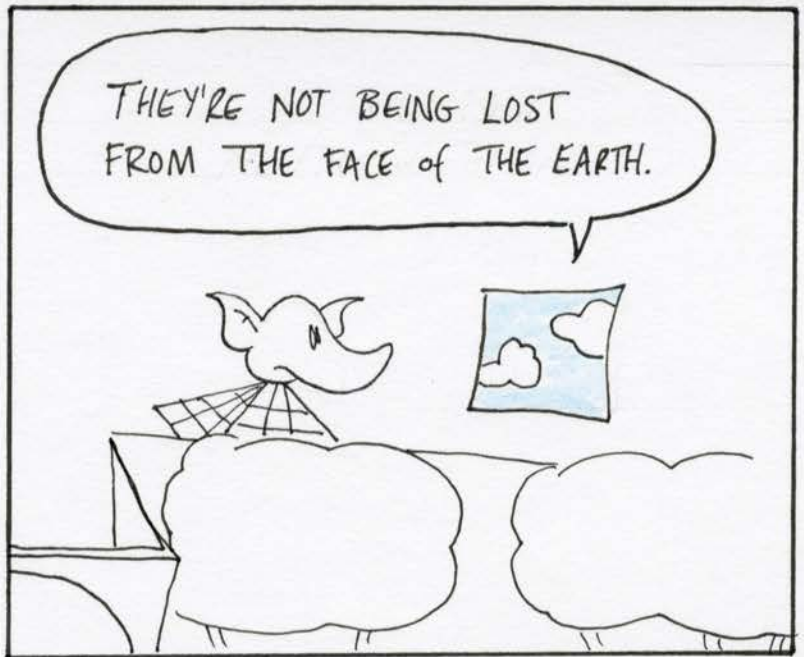


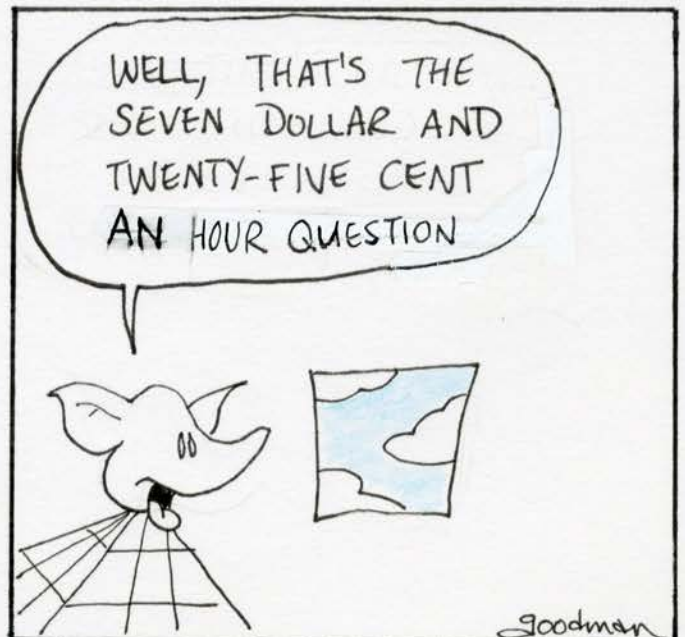
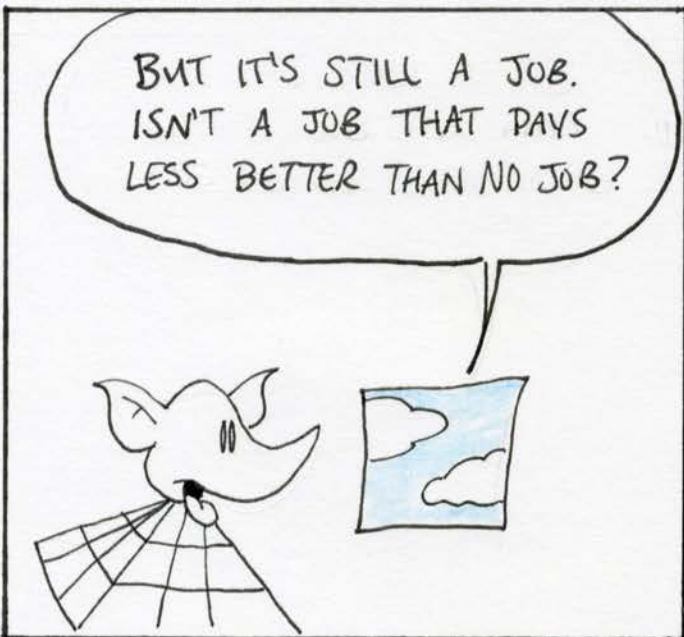
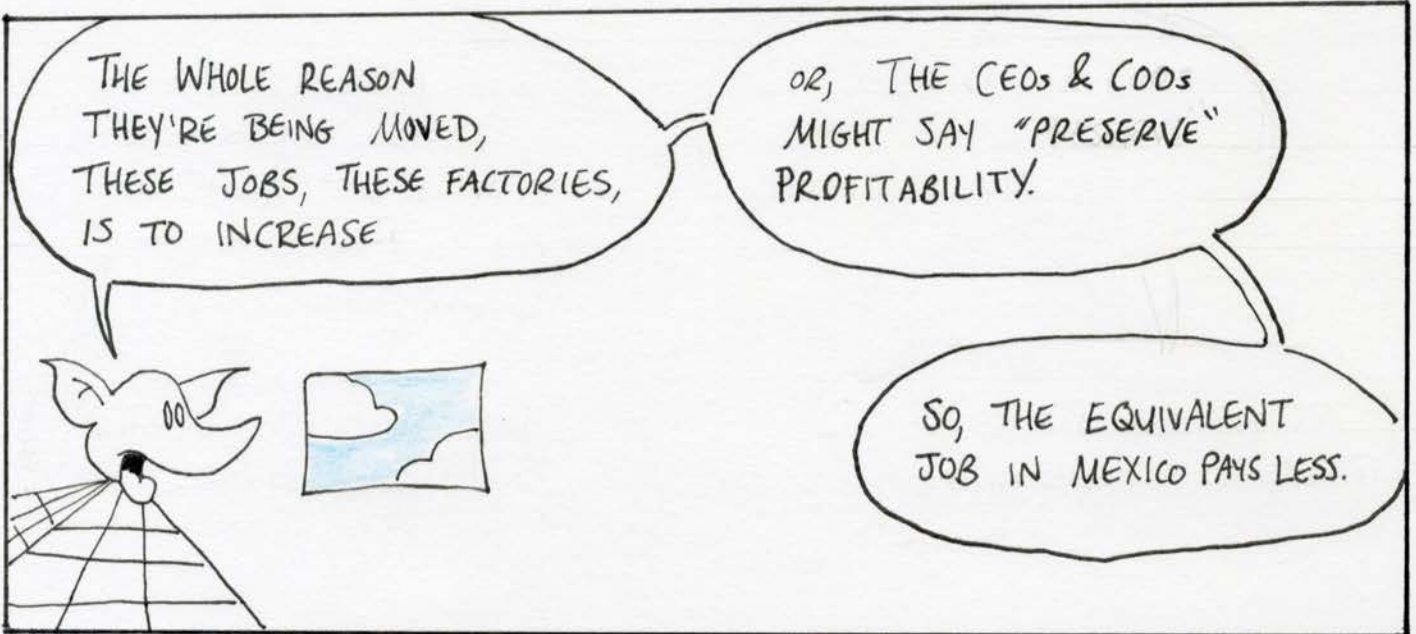


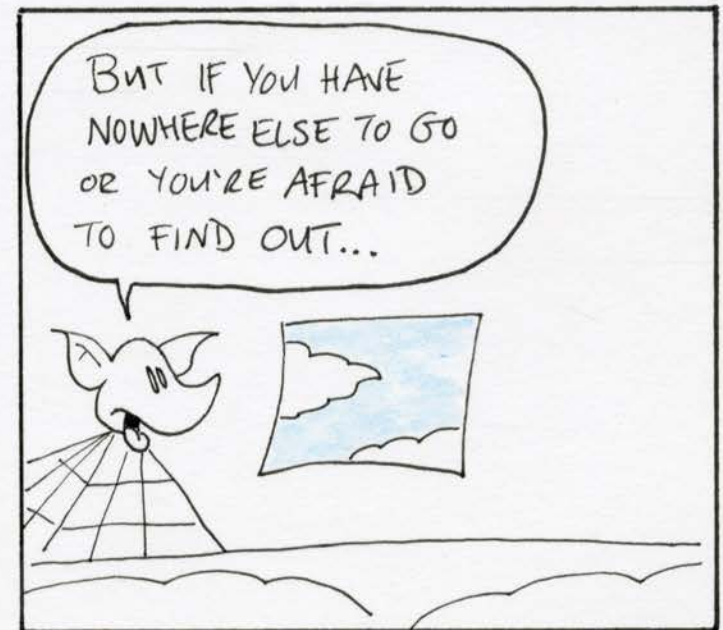
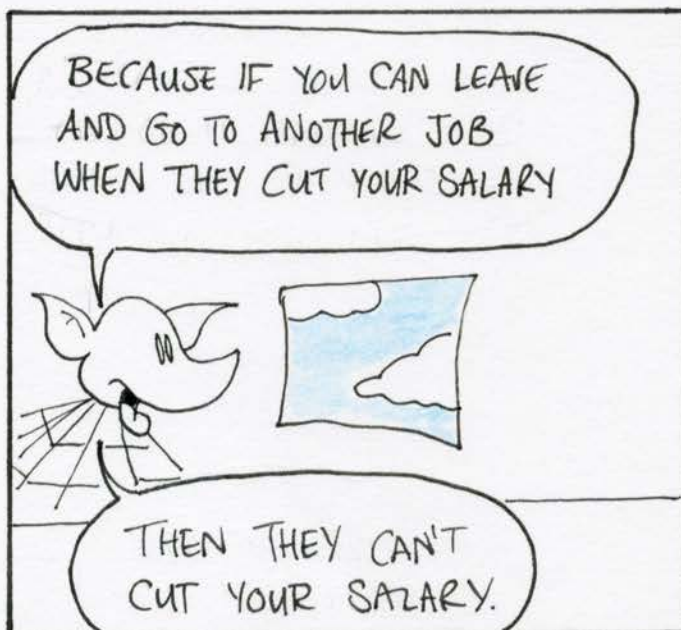


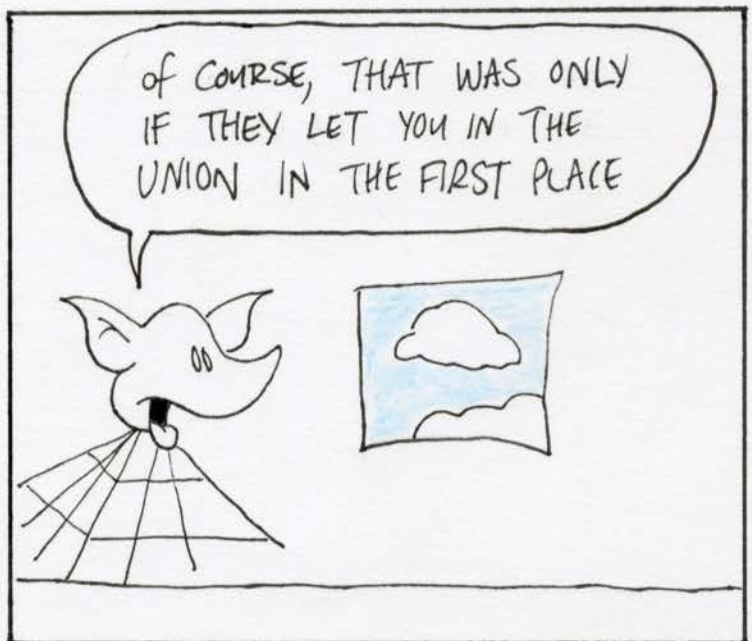
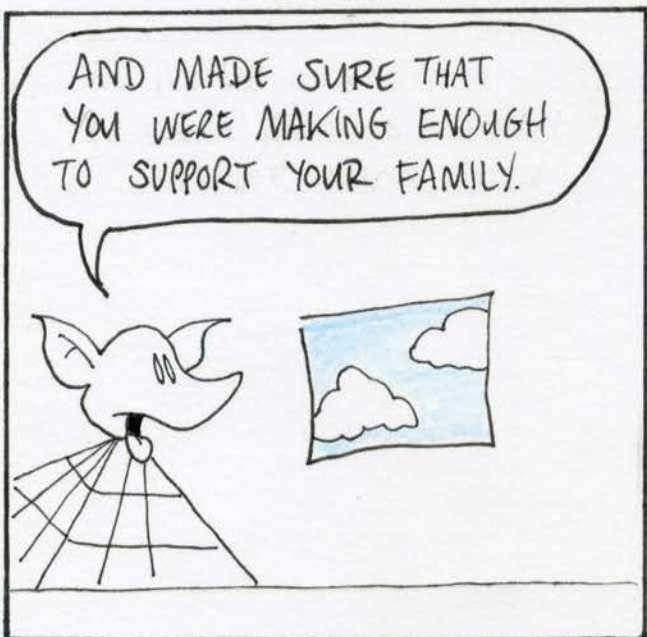
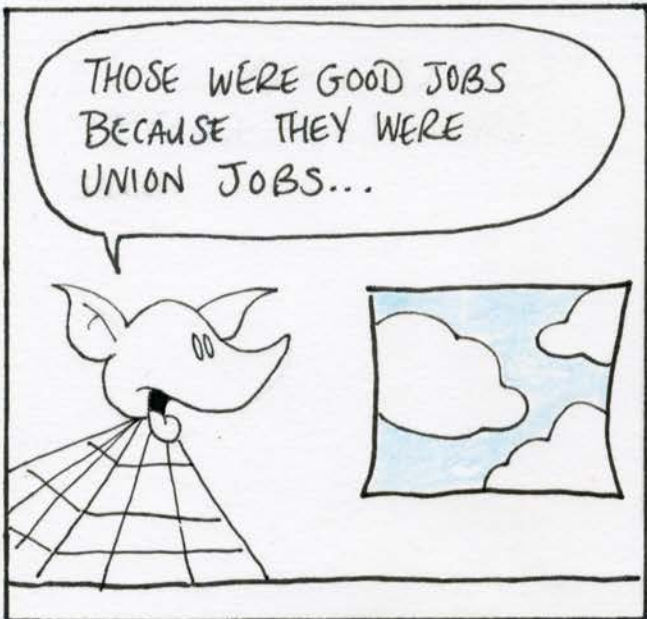
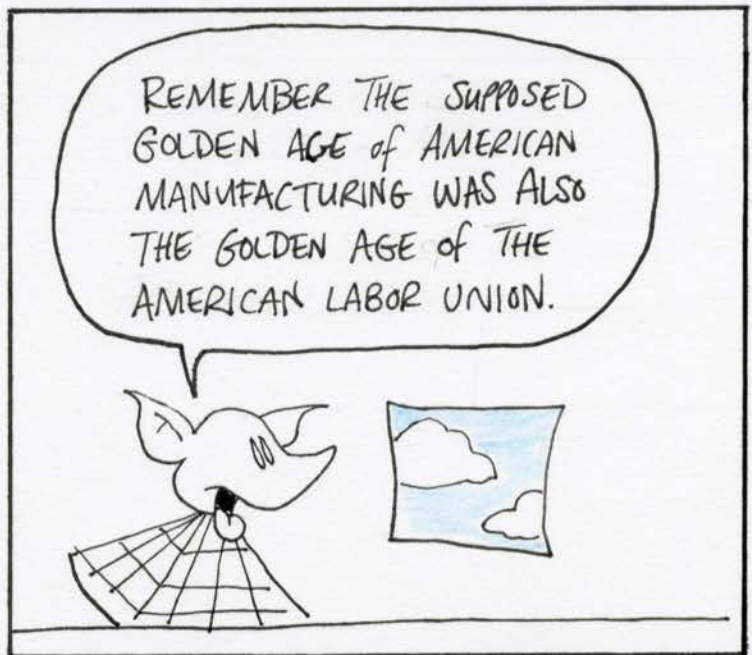
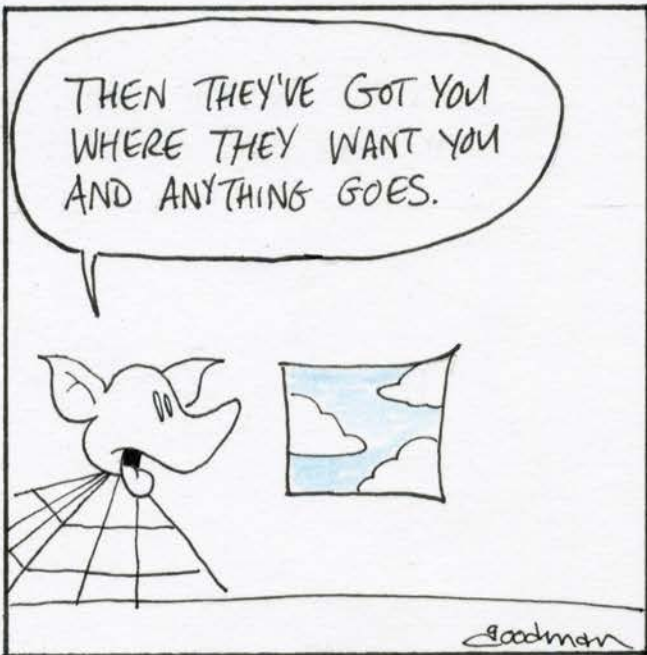














BUT WITH GLOBALIZATION,
OR THE FORM OF GLOBALIZATION
WE'VE GOT, AT LEAST...



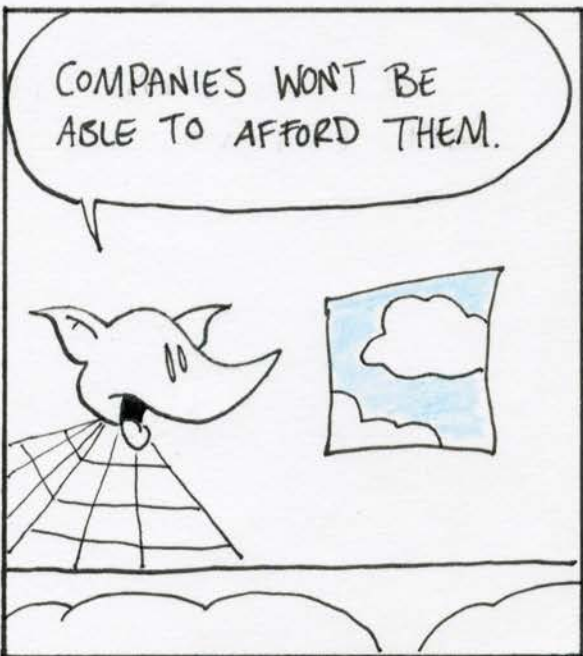
THE NEGOTIATING POSITION
OF THE AMERICAN WORKER
IS WEAKENED.



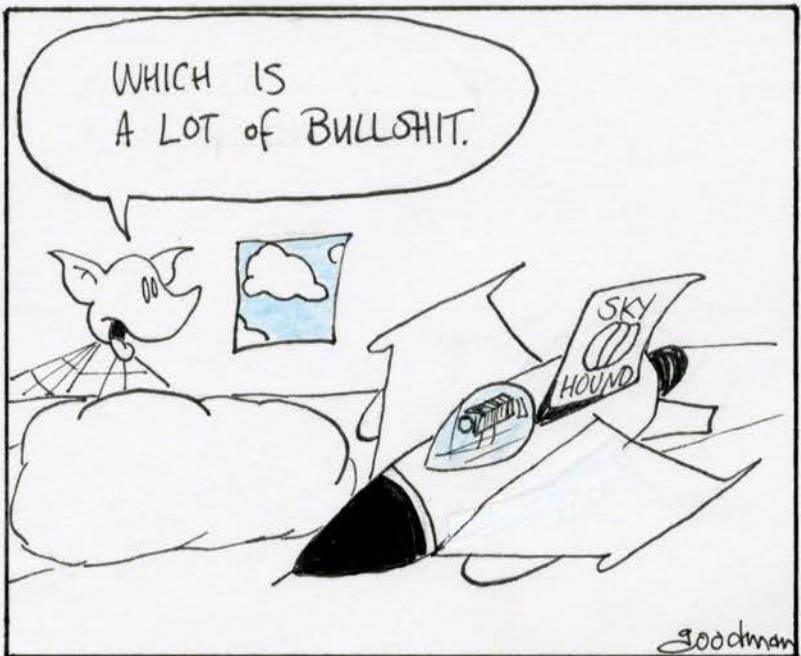
AND THIS IS THE ARGUMENT
YOU HEAR AGAINST RAISING
THE MINIMUM WAGE...



THAT IF YOU MAKE AMERICAN
WORKERS TOO EXPENSIVE
YOU COST THEM THEIR JOBS.

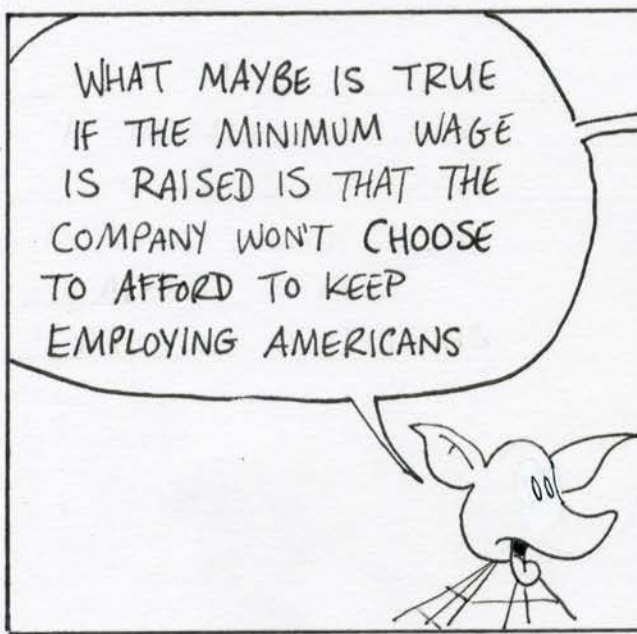
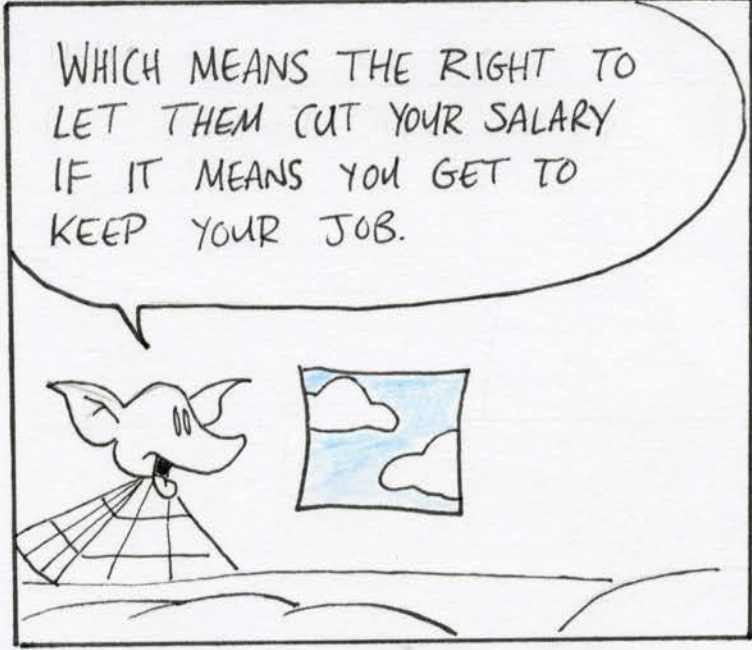
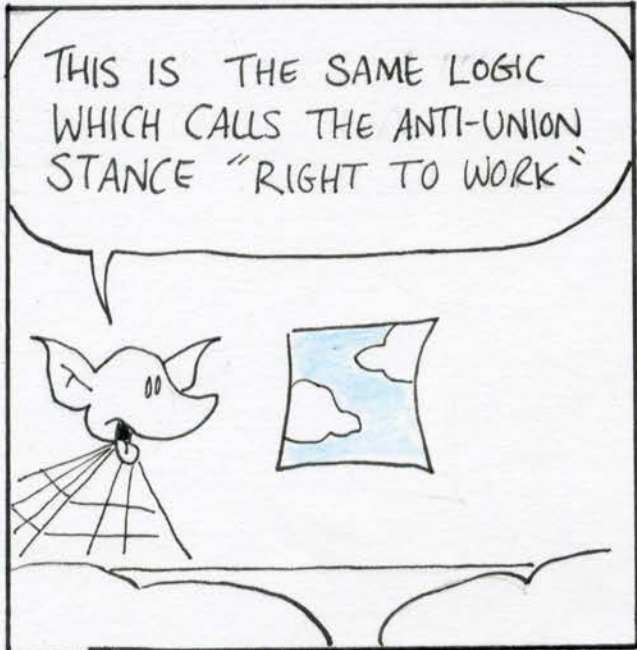


COMPANIES WON'T BE
ABLE TO AFFORD THEM.

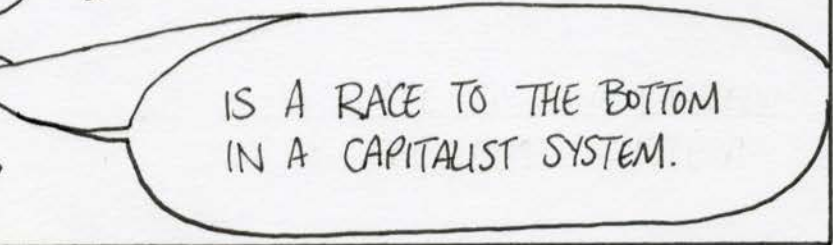
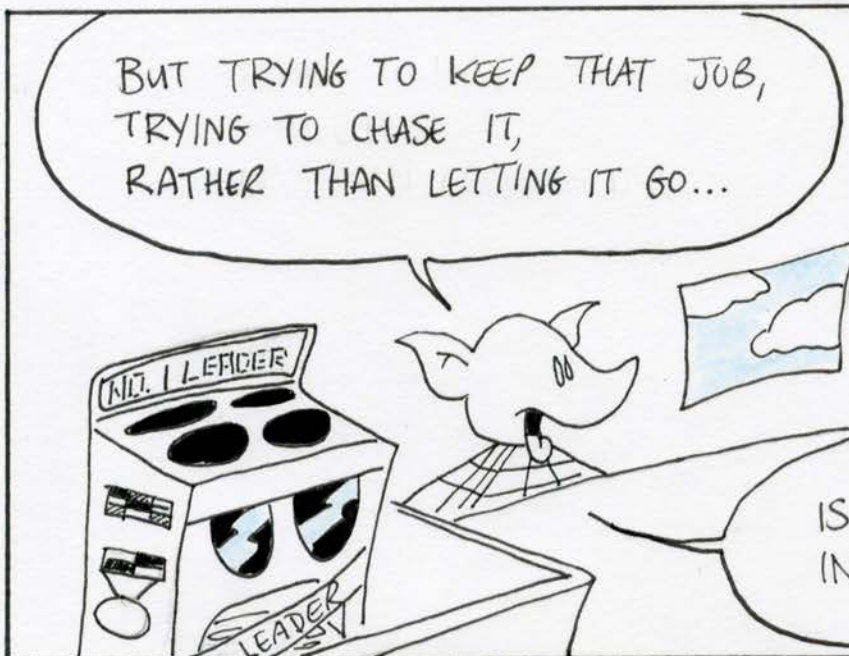


WHICH IS
A LOT OF BULLSHIT.

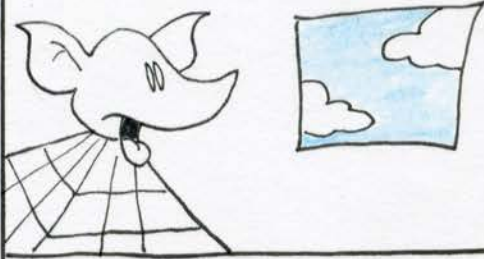
Goodman



goodman

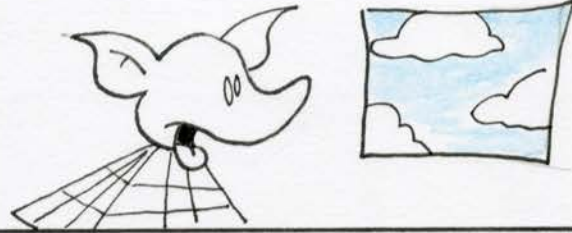


BECAUSE IF THEY CAN CUT THE WAGE ONCE, THEY'LL CUT IT AGAIN.

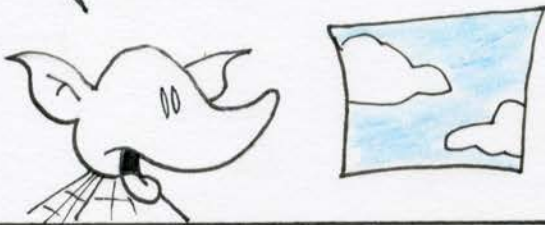


goodman

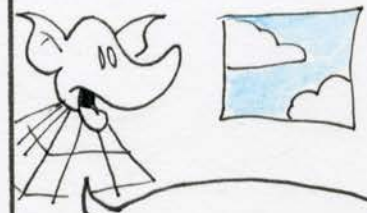
AND REMEMBER, WITH INFLATION IN THE COST OF LIVING, EVERY YEAR WE DON'T RAISE THE MINIMUM WAGE IS ESSENTIALLY A YEAR THAT WE'RE CUTTING IT.



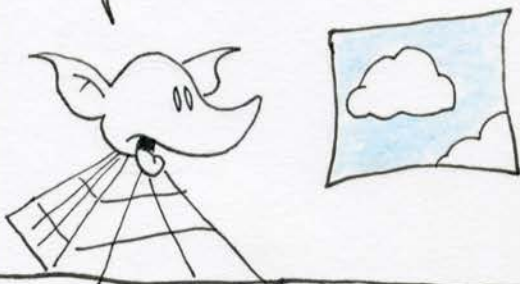
AND FROM THERE IT'S A SLIPPERY SLOPE TO THE POINT WHERE WE'VE LOWERED OUR LABOR STANDARD TO THE LEVEL OF CHINA OR MEXICO OR ANY OF THE COUNTRIES WE'RE SUPPOSEDLY LOSING OUR JOBS TO.



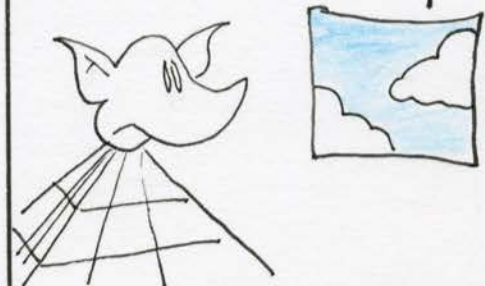
BUT THE ROBOTS ARE COMING ANYWAY.

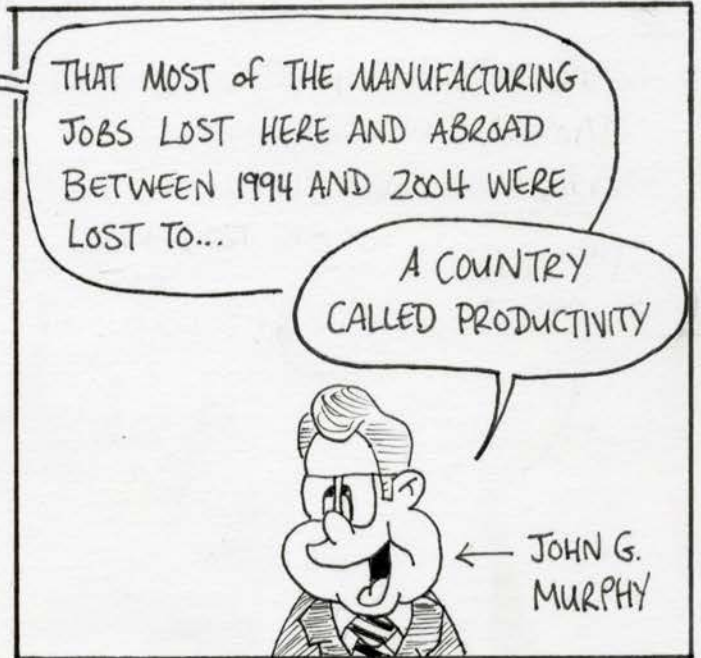
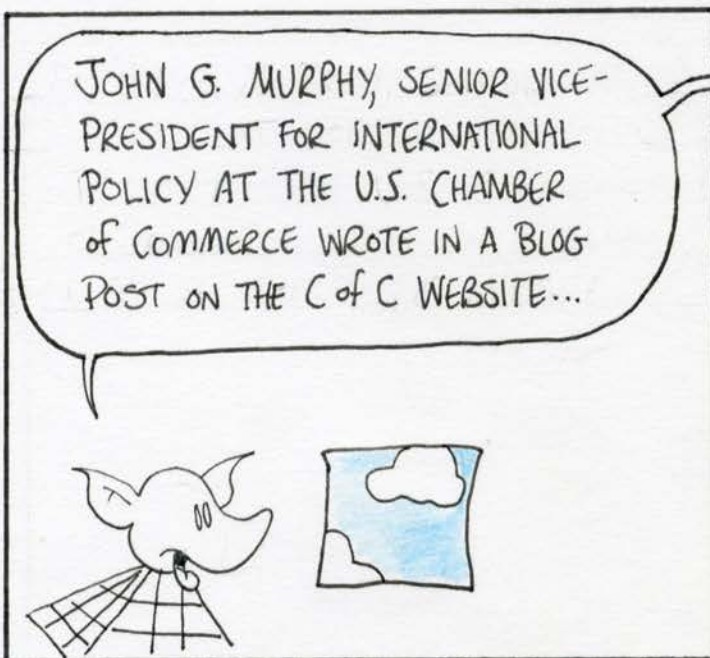
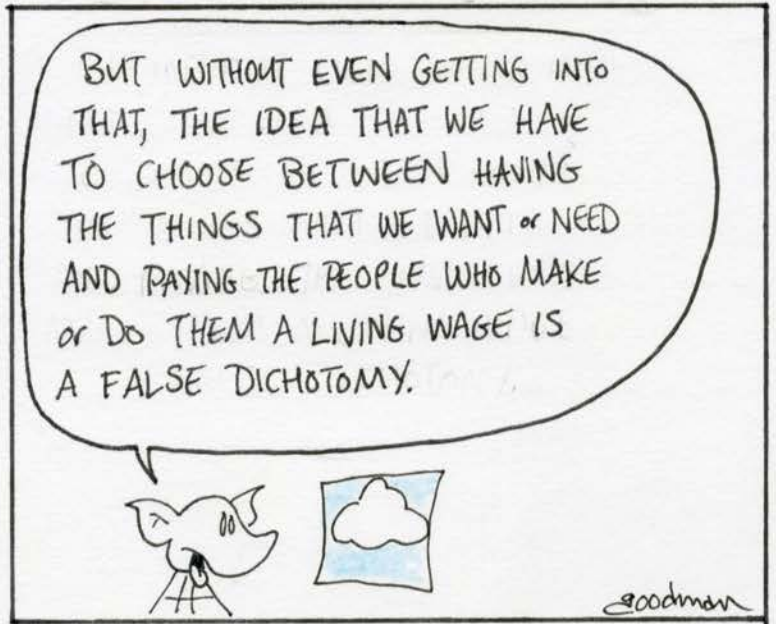
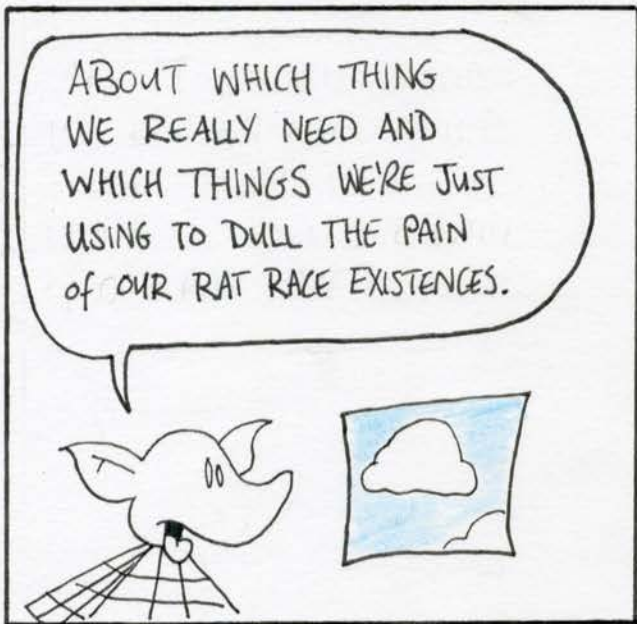
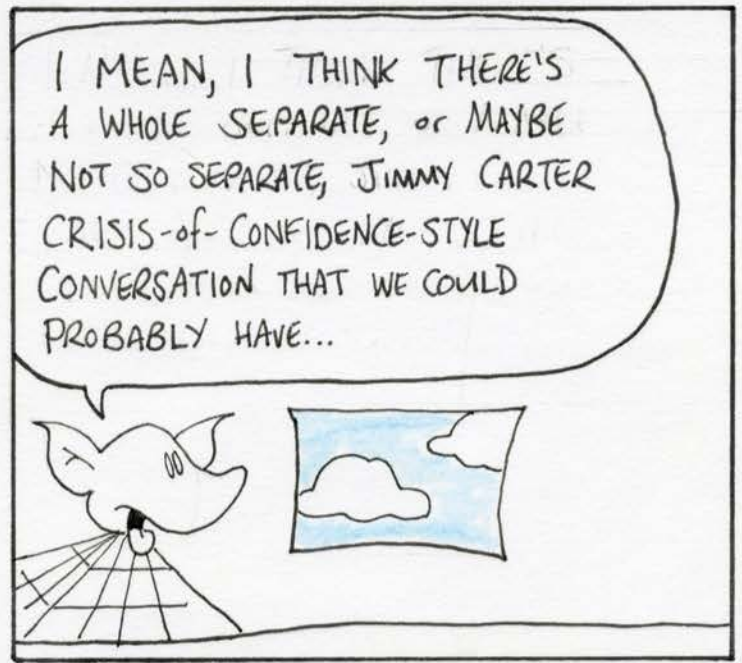
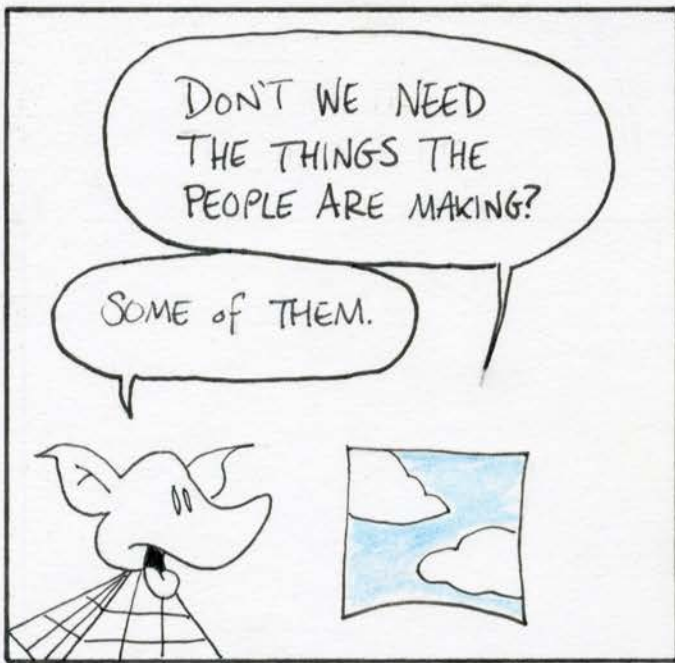


SO WHY NOT QUIT WHILE WE'RE AHEAD AND TRY TO FIGURE OUT WHAT COMES NEXT?

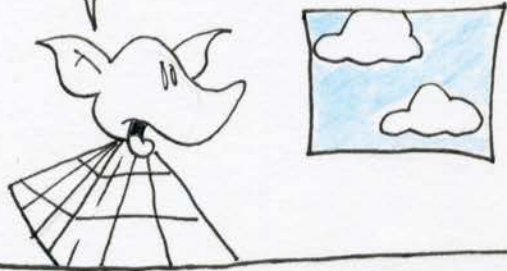


BUT DON'T WE NEED THE THINGS?

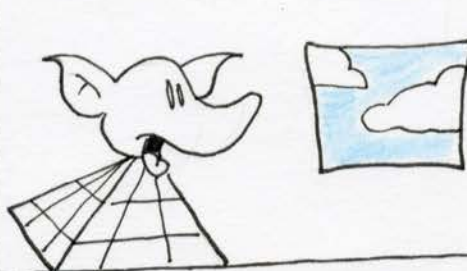




IN OTHER WORDS,
FACTORY OUTPUT WENT UP
WHILE THE NUMBER OF EMPLOYEE
HOURS NECESSARY TO GENERATE
THAT OUTPUT WENT DOWN.

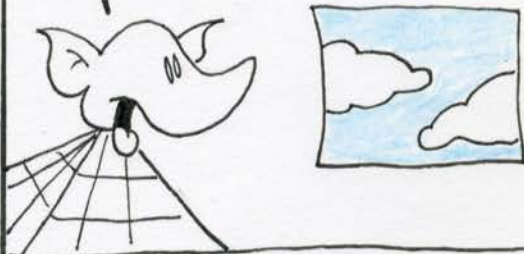


AND THAT'S TRUE
HERE AND IN CHINA.

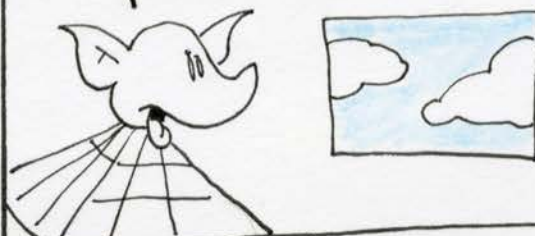


Goodman

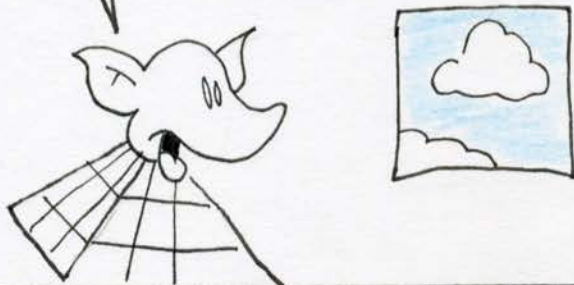
NOW, MURPHY DOESN'T PUT IT
THIS WAY, BUT THAT MEANS
COMPANIES MAKING MORE MONEY
BY EMPLOYING FEWER PEOPLE.



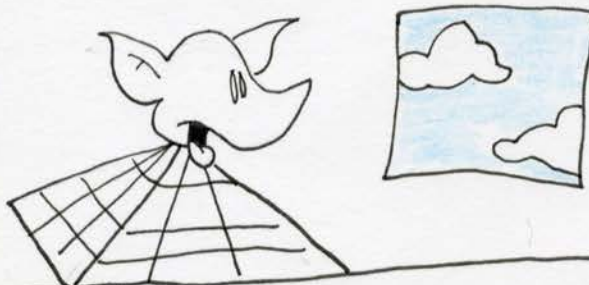
SO, THE IDEA THAT
MANUFACTURERS CAN'T AFFORD
TO PAY THEIR WORKERS MORE
JUST DOESN'T HOLD UP.



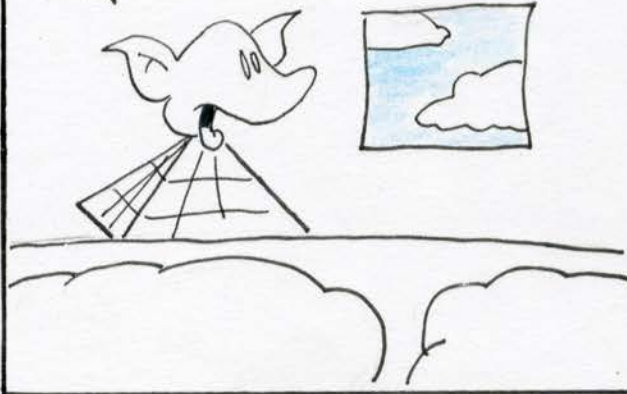
IF WORKERS ARE CREATING
MORE VALUE THROUGH
GREATER PRODUCTIVITY TODAY
THAN THEY WERE TWENTY
YEARS AGO...



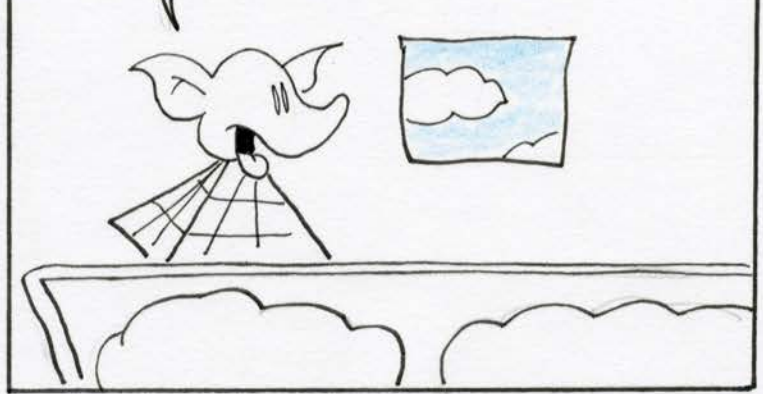
SHOULDN'T THEY
BE GETTING PAID MORE?



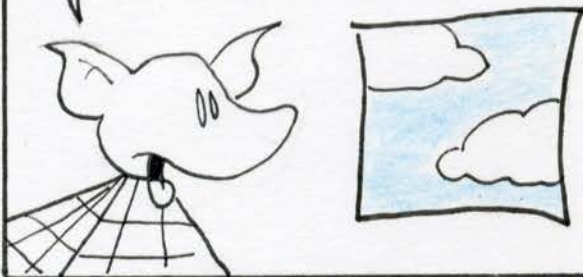
RIGHT NOW, COMPANIES
ARE USING TECHNOLOGY
TO INCREASE PRODUCTIVITY



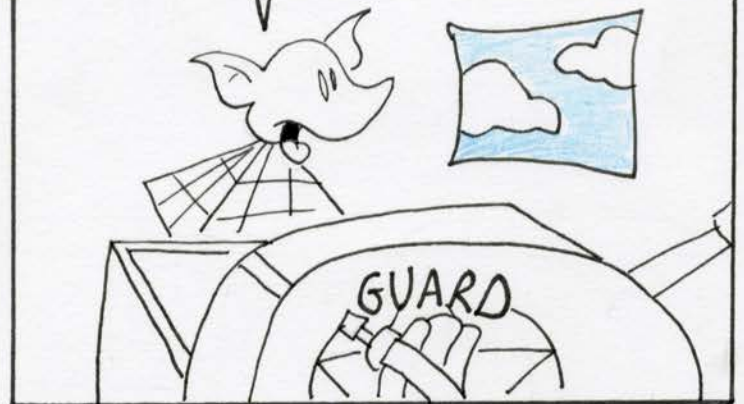
BUT RATHER THAN
USING THAT PRODUCTIVITY
TO RAISE WAGES...



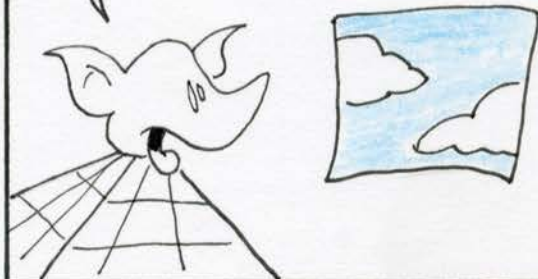
THEY'RE USING THE UNEMPLOYMENT
AND UNDEREMPLOYMENT THAT
AN INCREASE IN PER-WORKER
PRODUCTIVITY CREATES AS
LEVERAGE TO PAY WORKERS LESS.



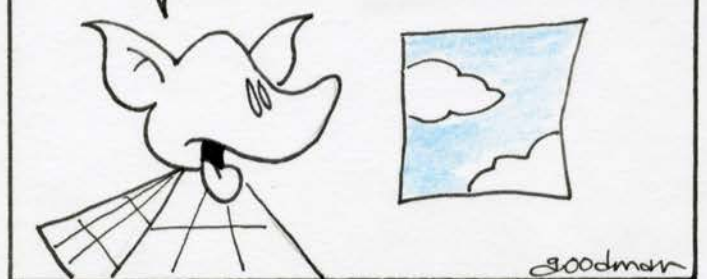
AND THAT'S TRUE, AGAIN,
IN THE U.S. AND IN CHINA.

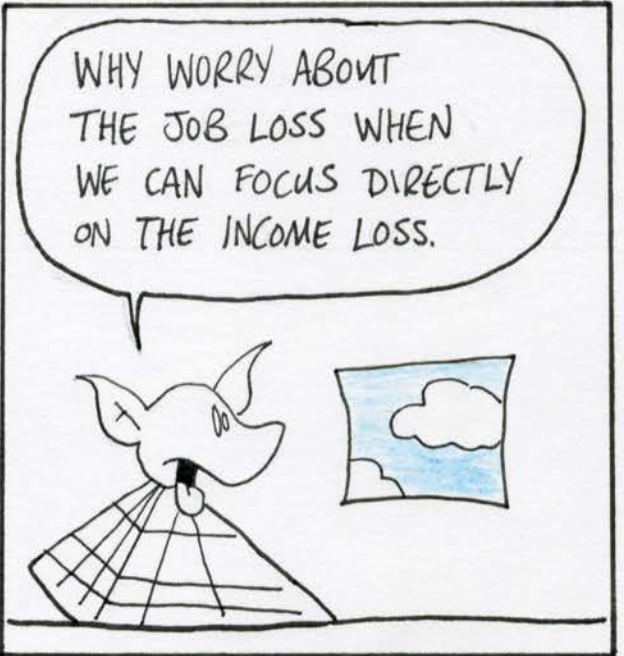
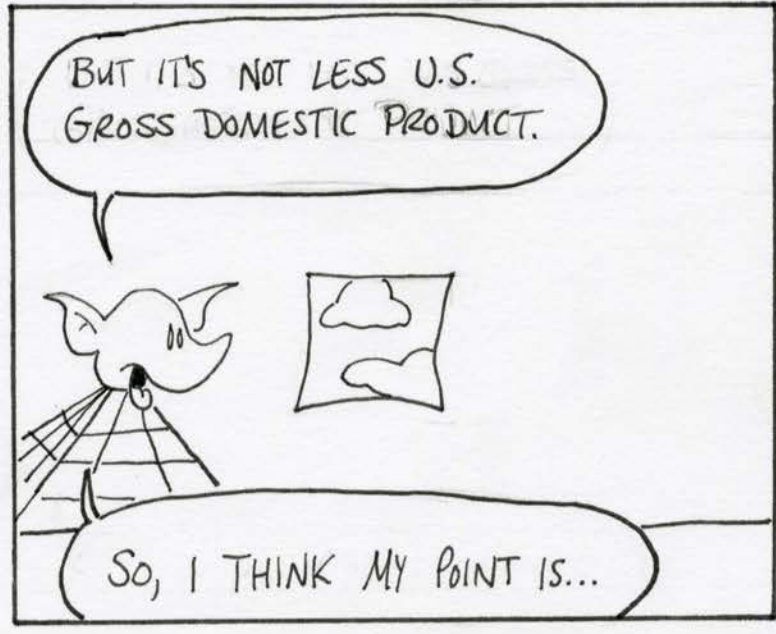
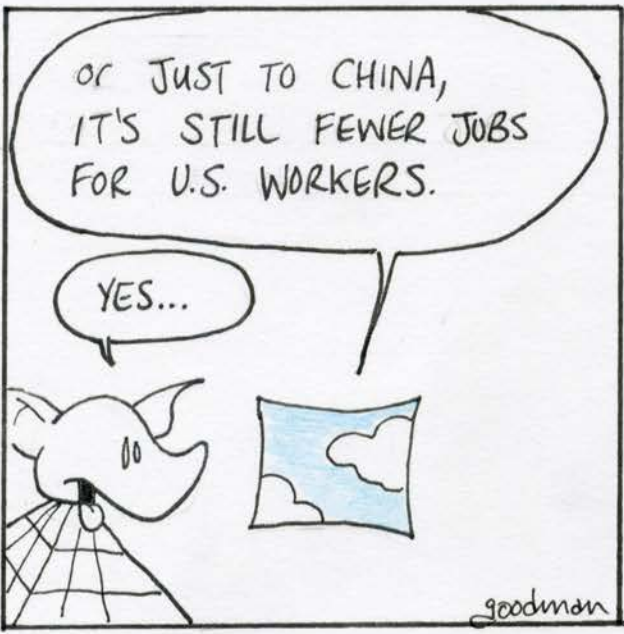


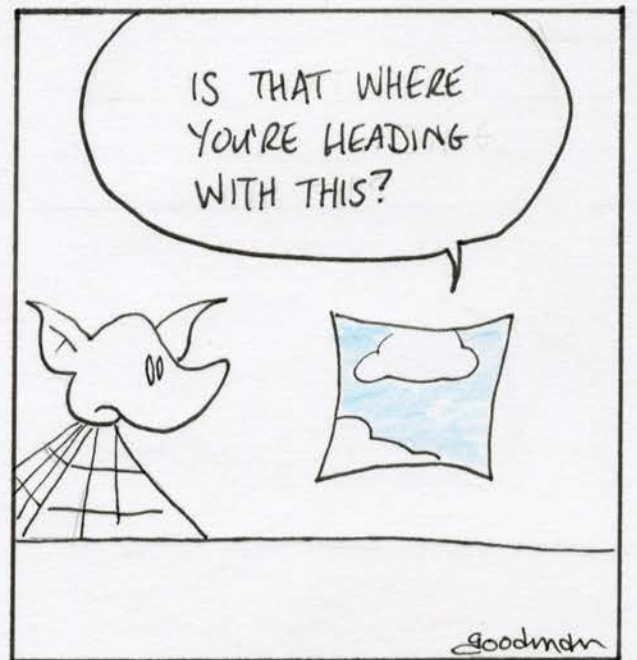
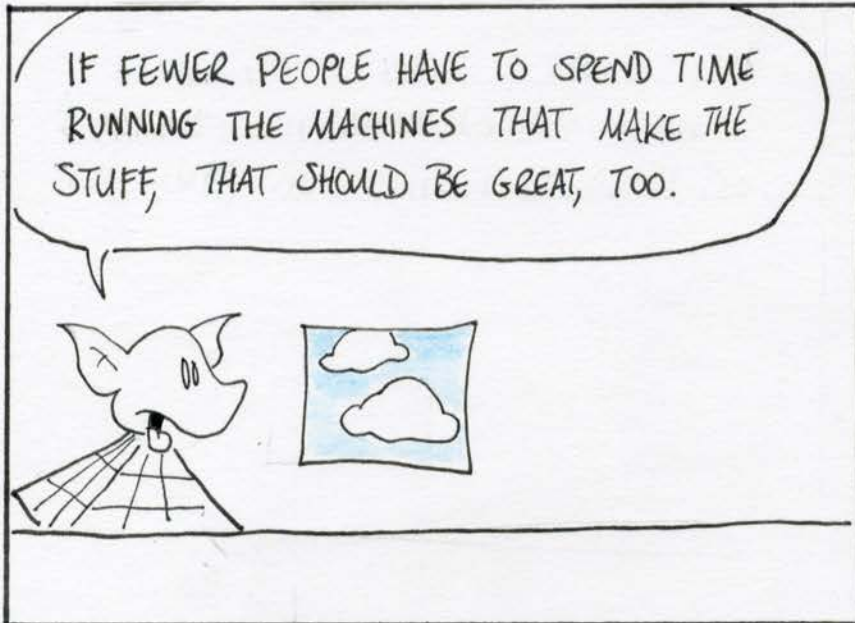
CHINA HAS JUST BEEN USING
STREAMLINED SUPPLY CHAINS
AND WEAKER LABOR PROTECTIONS
TO ACHIEVE EVEN GREATER
PRODUCTIVITY...



WHICH, COUPLED WITH TRADE
DEALS WHICH FAVOR COMPANIES
OVER WORKERS, HAS MADE
CHINA A REALLY ATTRACTIVE
PLACE TO MANUFACTURE PRODUCTS.

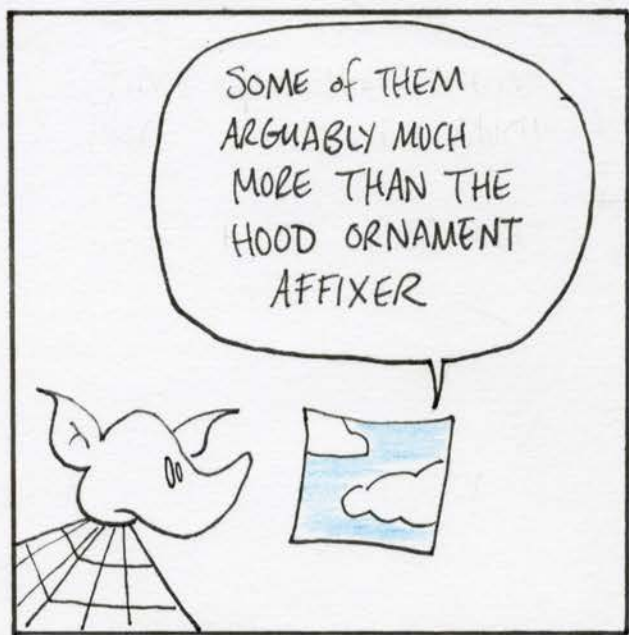
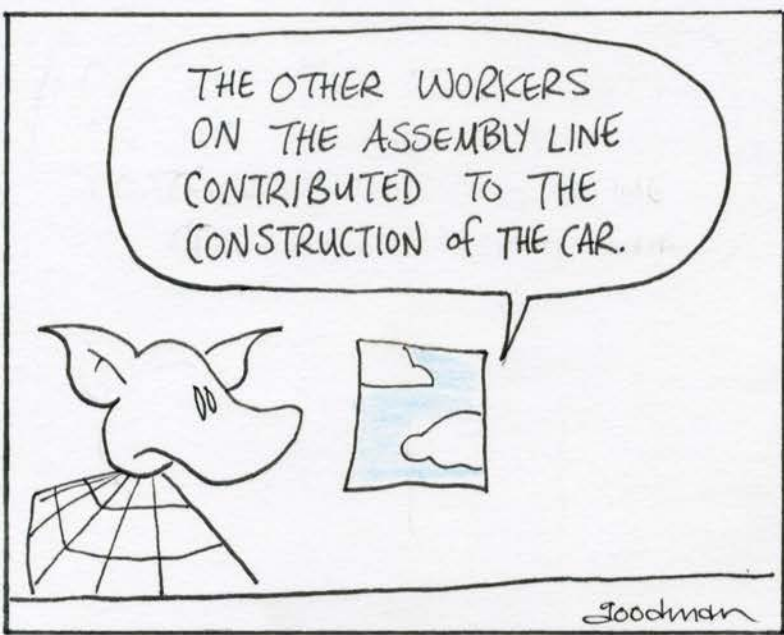
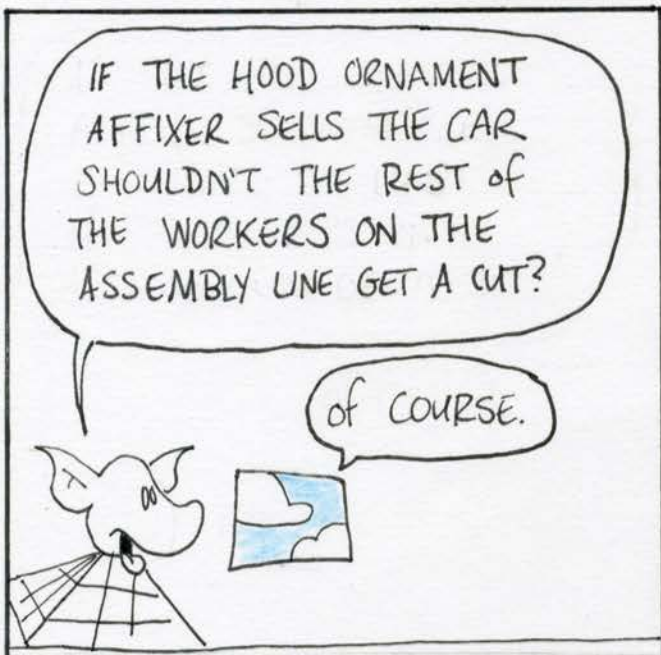
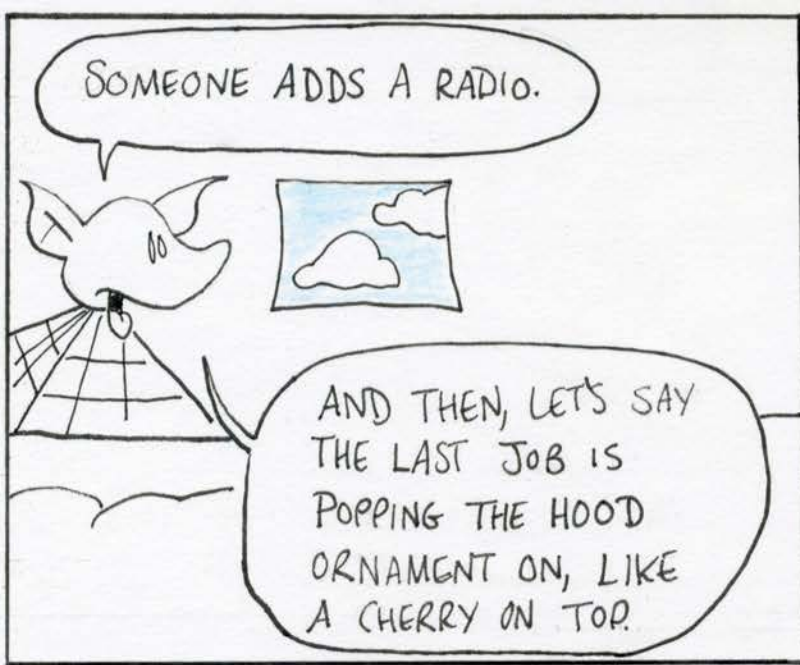


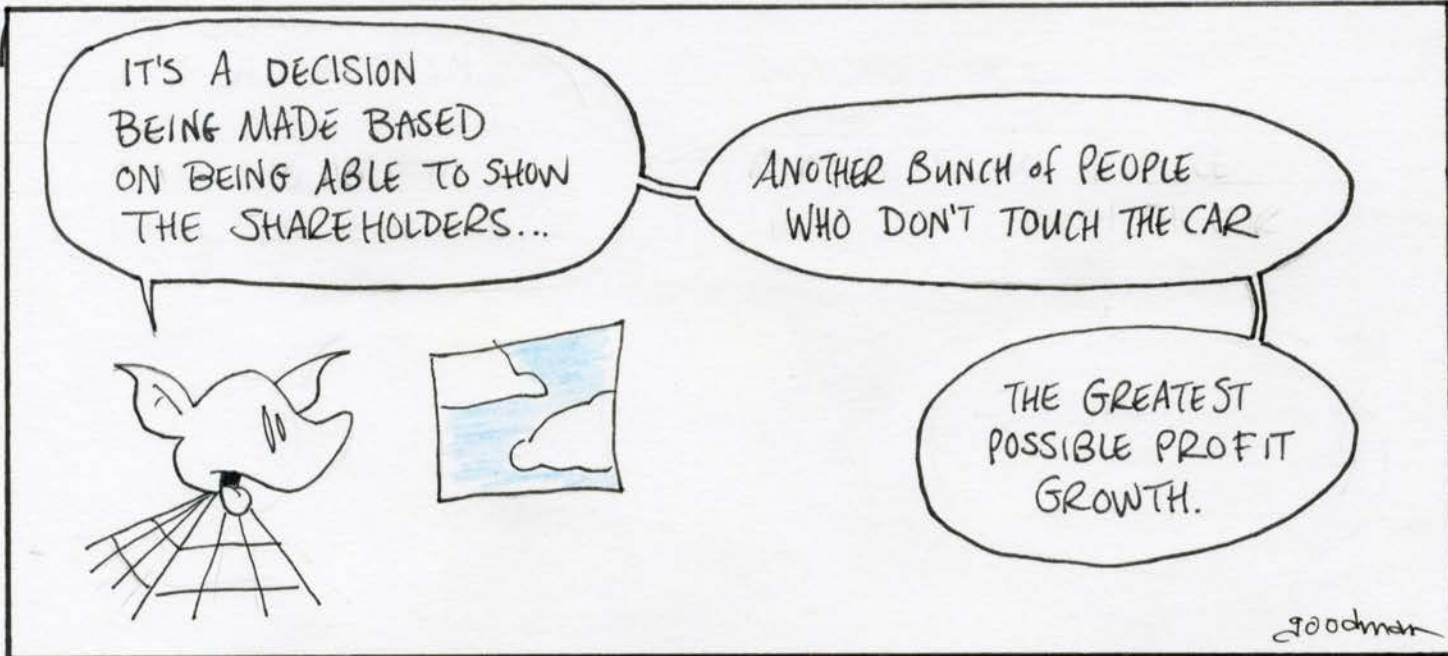
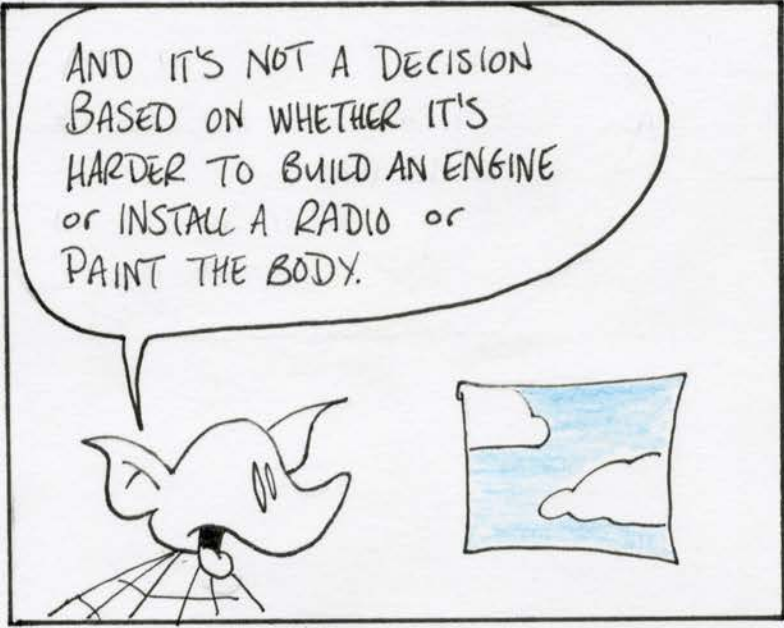
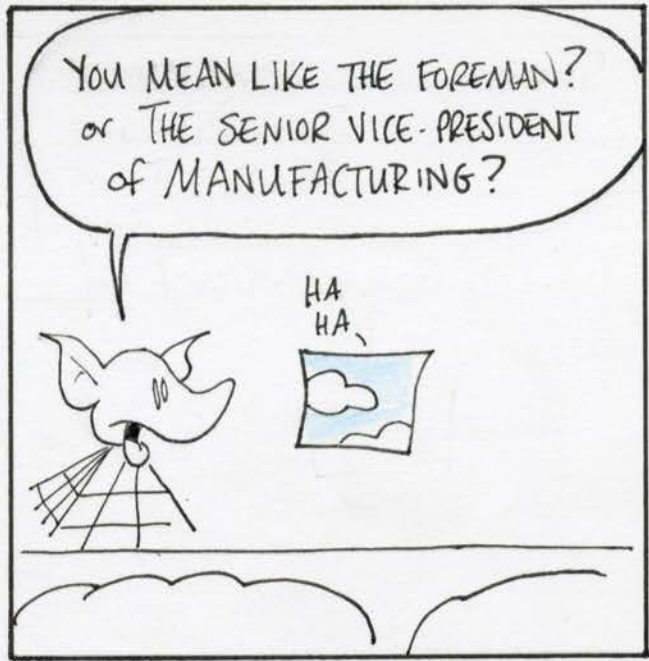
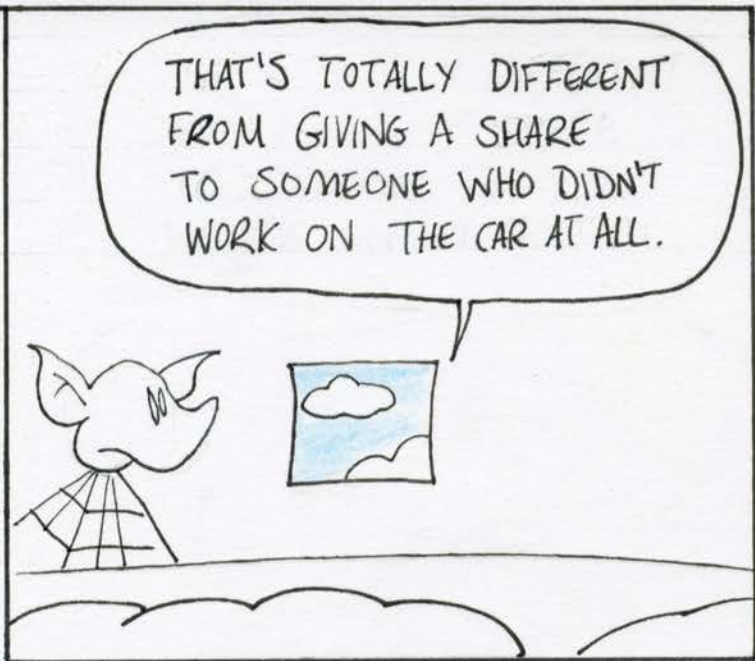


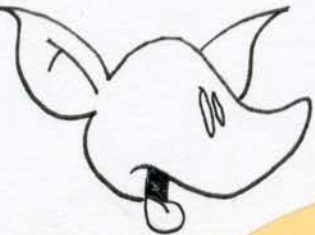




"Automobile," How Products Are Made, www.madehow.com/Volume-1/Automobile.html







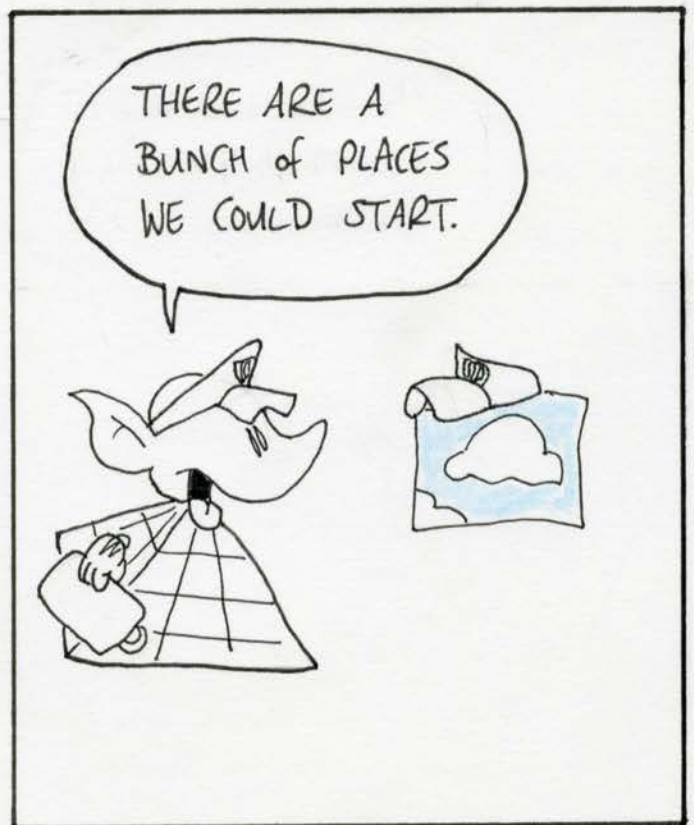
So,
instead of calling it redistribution of wealth,
with all that connotes,
let's just remember that someone watches those workers' kids
someone cooks their food
someone teaches the kids
and writes the books they read in school
and the books the workers read
or the movies or tv shows or YouTube videos they watch.
Someone codes the games they play on their phones.
Someone takes care of them when they're sick
and when they get old
and not just while they're in the hospital running up exorbitant bills.
Someone has to look out her window and see a kid fall off of her bike
and invite her in and calm her down, give her a bandaid and a glass
of water and help her call someone to pick her up.
And someone has to come pick her up.

And right now,
not all of those people are getting enough of the wealth
distributed to them.

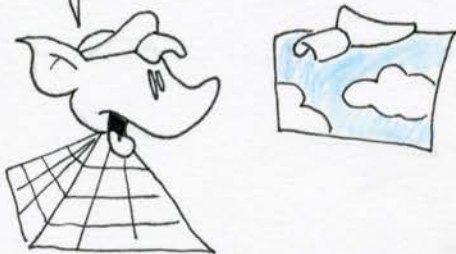
And that's where we should be focusing our attention,
rather than on dreaming up more things for them to be doing
in the name of job creation.

There's enough being done already.
Let's make sure we take care of people and give them the time
to do the things that really matter.

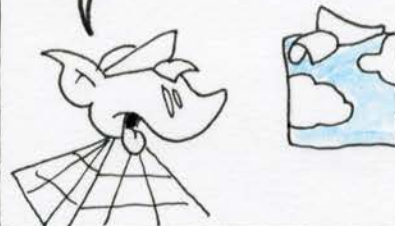
goodman



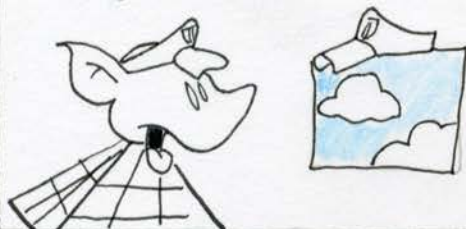
IF WE WERE JUST TALKING ABOUT HELPING WORKERS DISPLACED BY TECHNOLOGY, ONE PLACE TO START MIGHT BE PATENT LAW.



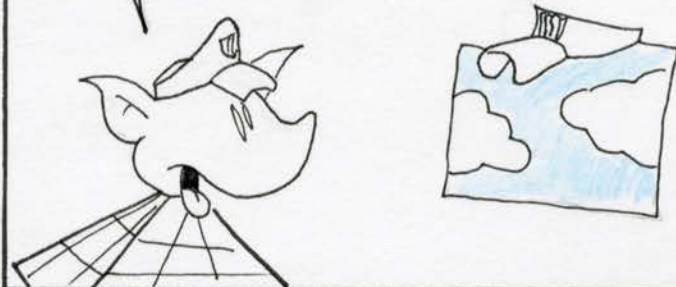
THE BIG REASON THAT WE EXPECT THAT MR. BURNS WOULD BE THE ONE TO OWN THE MACHINE THAT REPLACES HOMER IS THAT NEW TECHNOLOGY TENDS TO BE EXPENSIVE.



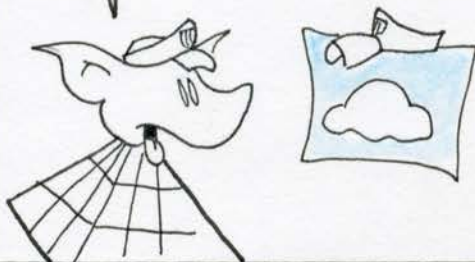
THE REASON THAT IT'S EXPENSIVE IS THAT WE'VE SET UP THE LAW SO THAT THE INVENTOR OF THE TECHNOLOGY OWNS A PATENT ON IT.



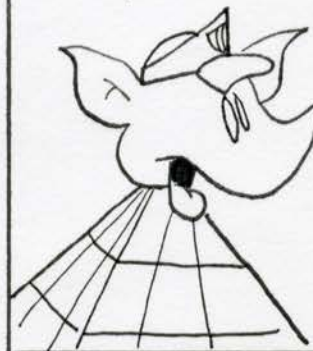
IF WE DIDN'T HAVE PATENT LAWS AND SOMEONE INVENTED A MACHINE TO DO YOUR JOB, YOU COULD JUST BUY ONE.



BUT, BECAUSE OF PATENT LAWS, THE COMPANY THAT OWNS A PATENT ON SOMETHING DOESN'T REALLY HAVE TO COMPETE WITH OTHER MANUFACTURERS OF THAT MACHINE.

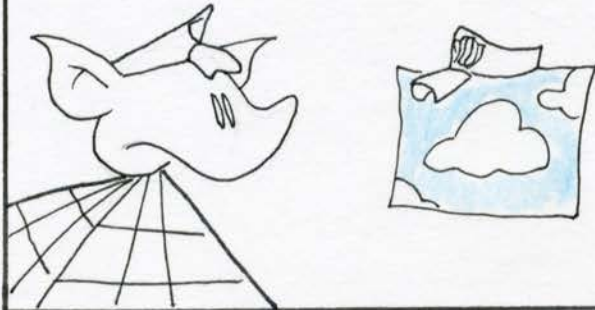


WHICH MEANS PRICES ARE MUCH HIGHER.

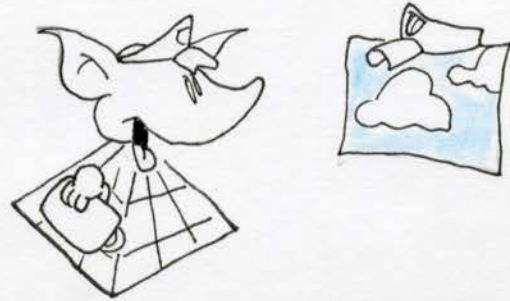


goodman

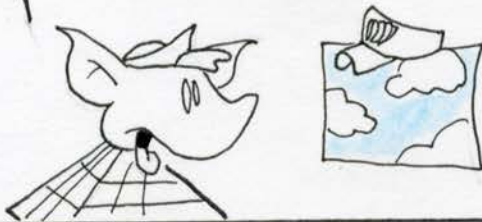
OK, BUT IF WE DIDN'T HAVE PATENTS HOW WOULD INVENTORS MAKE MONEY OFF OF THEIR INVENTIONS?



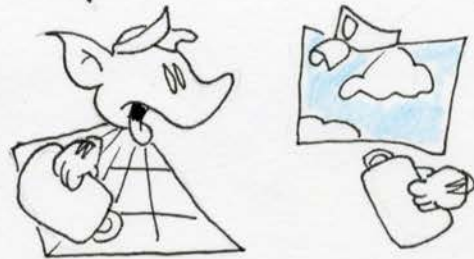
WELL, THEY COULD USE THE INVENTION JUST LIKE EVERYONE ELSE...



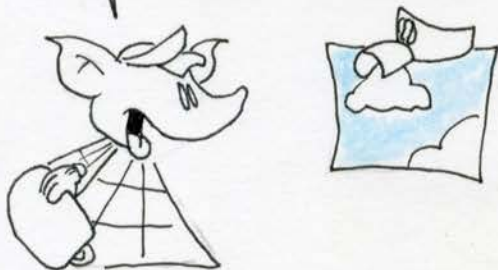
BUT YES, IT WOULD BE MUCH, MUCH HARDER FOR THEM TO MAKE MONEY OFF OF THEIR INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY.



BUT, IN A SENSE, THAT WOULD PUT THEM IN GOOD COMPANY



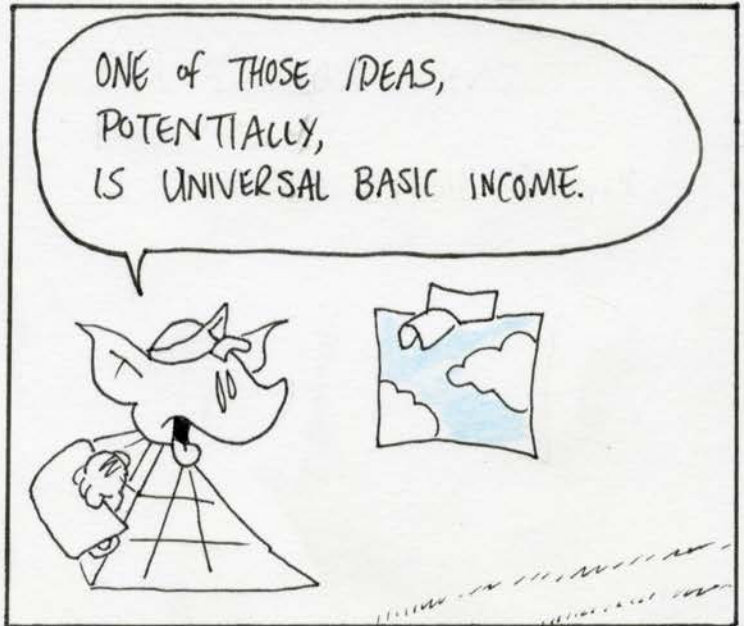
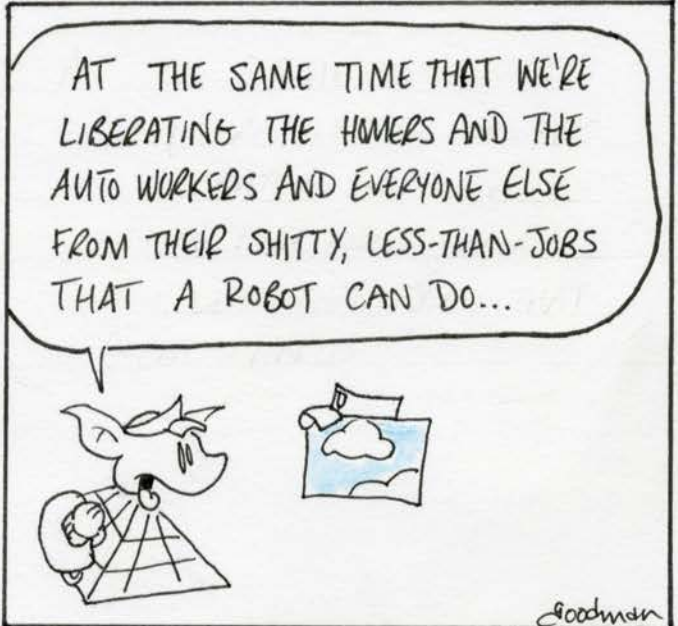
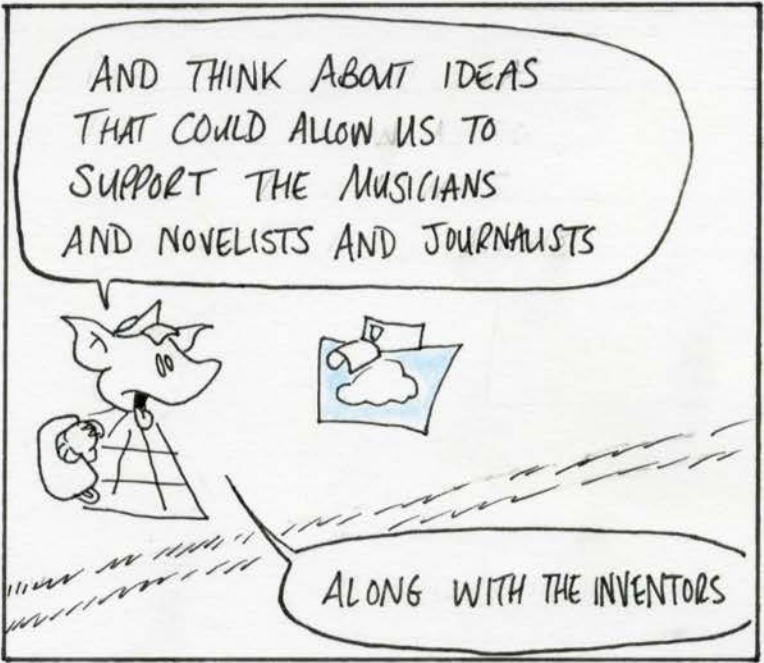
WE ALREADY HAVE A LOT OF PEOPLE STRUGGLING TO MAKE MONEY OFF OF THEIR INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY



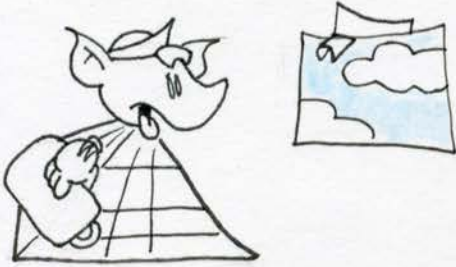
JOURNALISTS, MUSICIANS, NOVELISTS, FILMMAKERS...



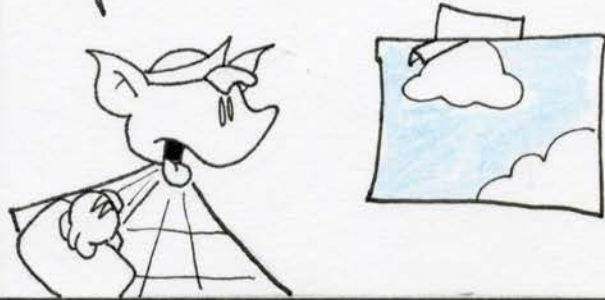
PRETTY MUCH ANYONE WHOSE WORK CAN BE INFINITELY REPLICATED IN A DIGITAL AGE



UBI MEANS DIFFERENT THINGS TO DIFFERENT PEOPLE...



BUT SIMPLY PUT, IT MEANS PAYING EVERY U.S. RESIDENT A MONTHLY or ANNUAL INCOME, NO STRINGS ATTACHED.

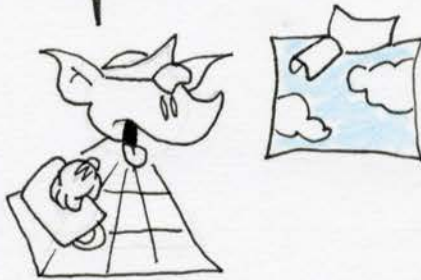


SOME PEOPLE THINK IT SHOULD REPLACE THE CURRENT WELFARE SYSTEM



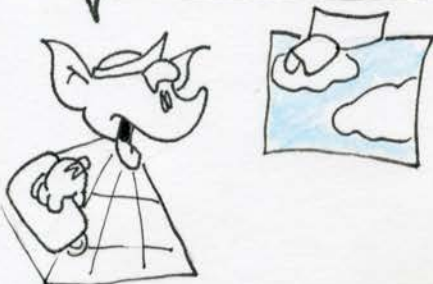
OTHER PEOPLE THINK IT SHOULD AUGMENT THE WELFARE SYSTEM.

I THINK THE ANSWER IS PROBABLY SOMEWHERE IN BETWEEN.

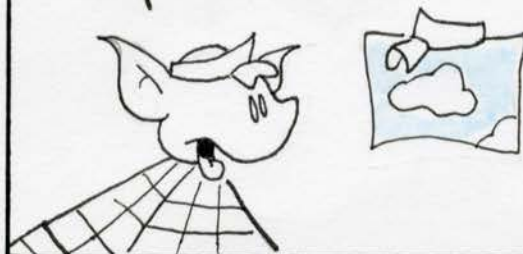


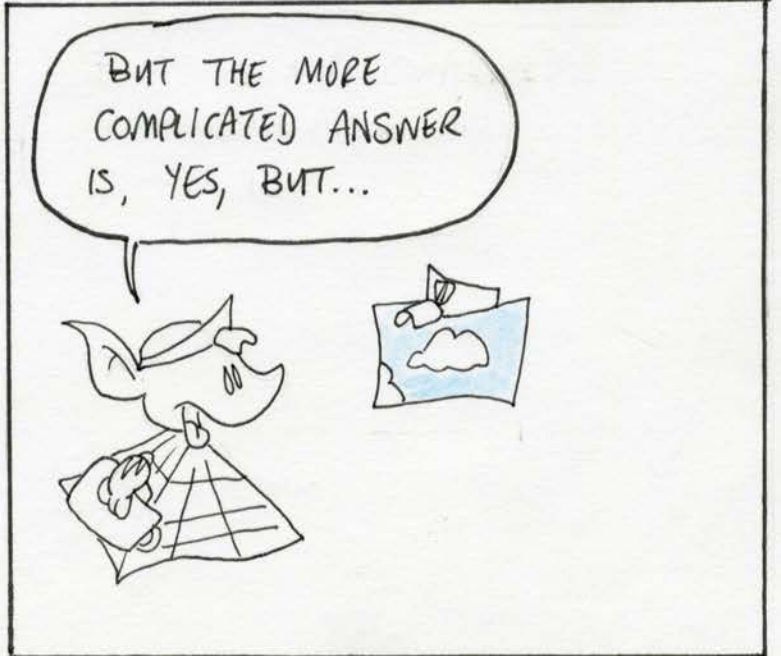
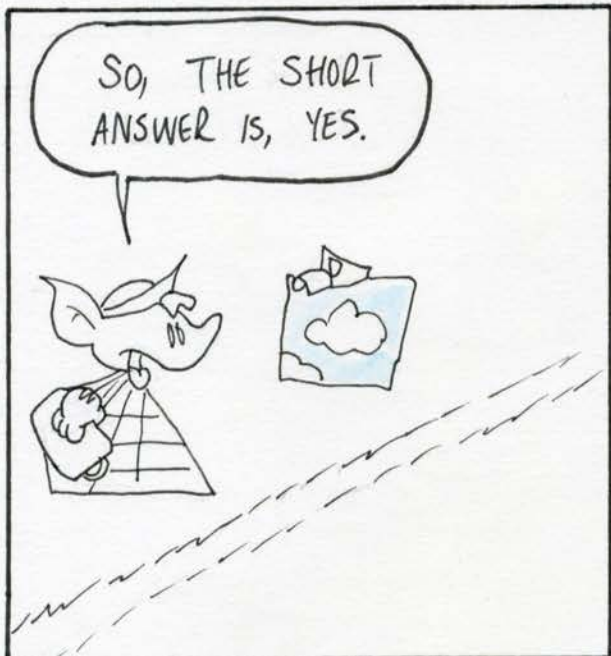
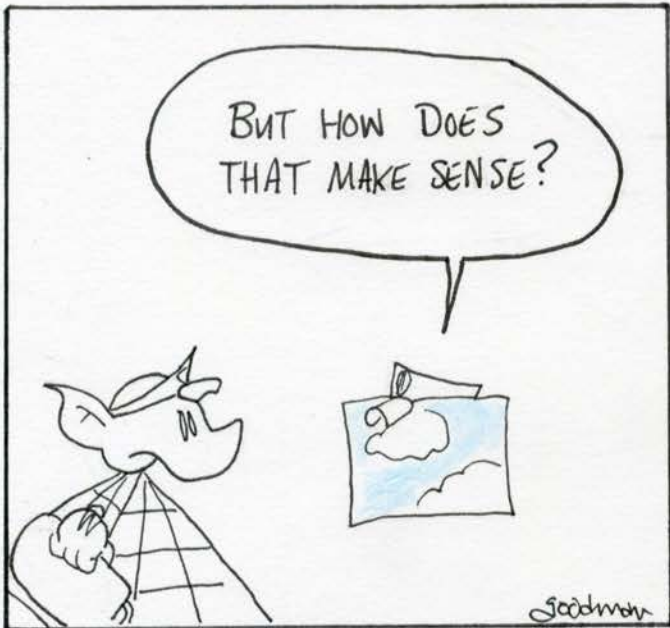
goodman

THERE ARE PROBABLY PROGRAMS THAT THERE WOULDN'T BE A NEED FOR IF WE HAD A UBI AND PROGRAMS THAT WE WOULD STILL NEED.

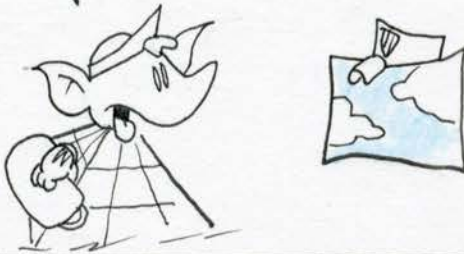


BUT THE BOTTOM LINE WOULD BE A DIRECT CASH TRANSFER TO EVERY U.S. RESIDENT, NO STRINGS ATTACHED.

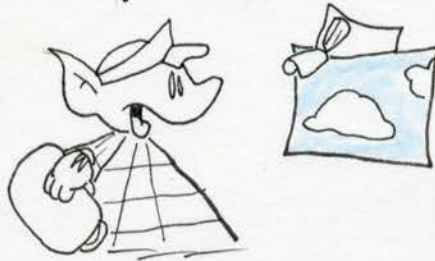




BECAUSE, FIRST OF ALL,
YOU'RE SAVING A HUGE
AMOUNT OF MONEY ON
ADMINISTERING THE PROGRAMS
YOU DON'T NEED ANYMORE.

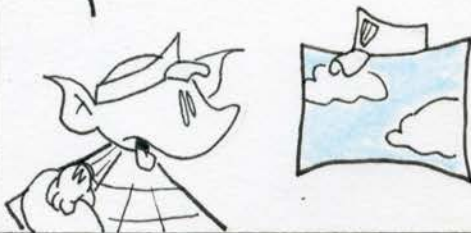


AND SECOND
YOU COULD TREAT IT
AS TAXABLE INCOME...



goodman

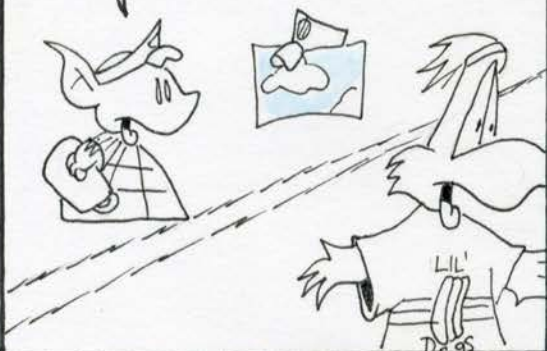
IN SUCH A WAY THAT,
IF YOU WANTED, THE U.B.I.
PAID TO PEOPLE WHO REALLY
DON'T NEED IT WOULD
COME BACK IN TAXES.



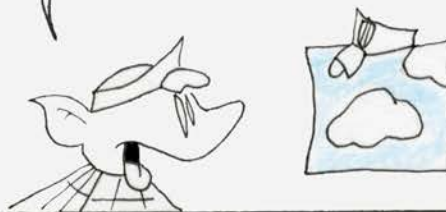
OK, BUT AGAIN, HOW DO YOU
CONVINCE THE AMERICAN PEOPLE
THAT THE GOVERNMENT SHOULD
JUST BE GIVING MONEY AWAY
TO PEOPLE WHO DON'T WORK?

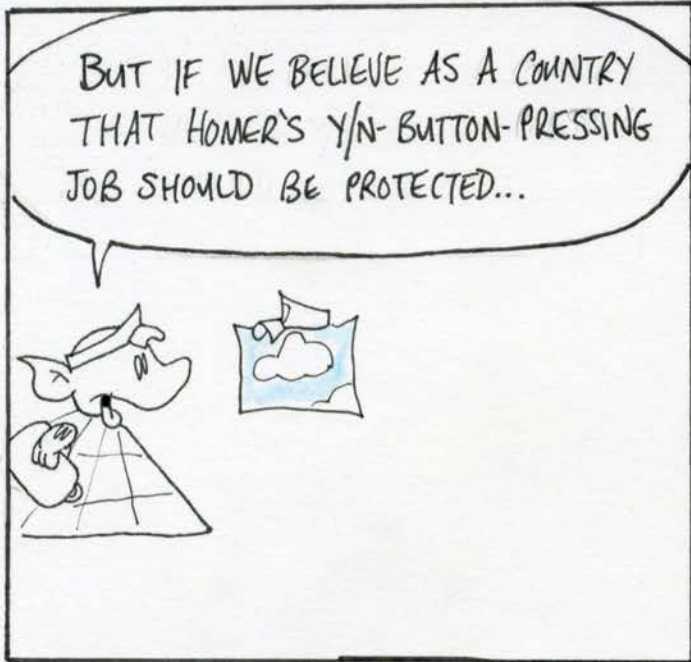


WELL, LET'S LOOK AT
THE HOMER SIMPSON
EXAMPLE...

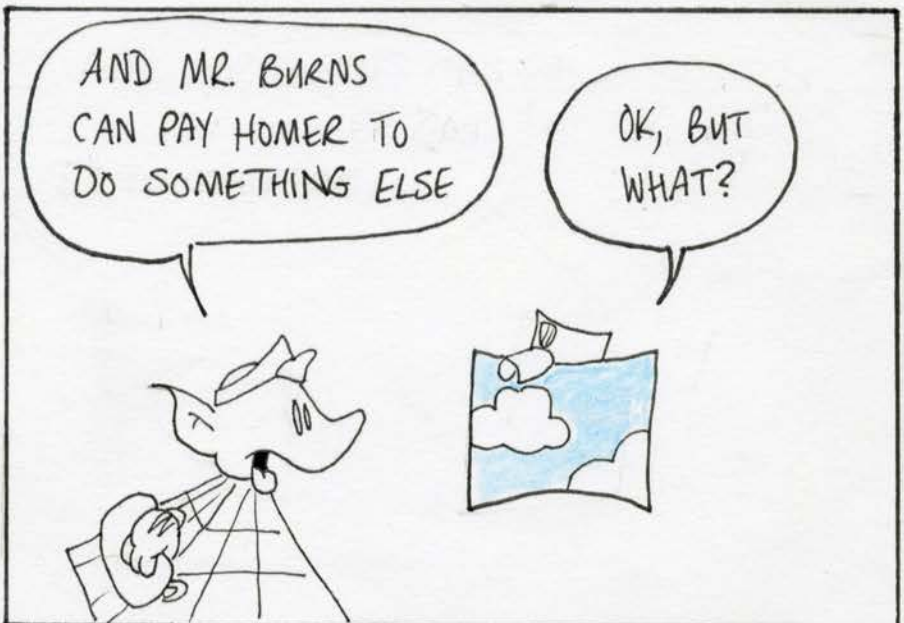
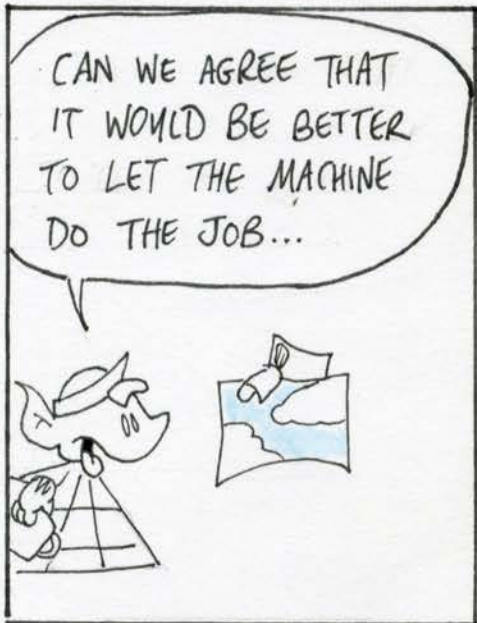


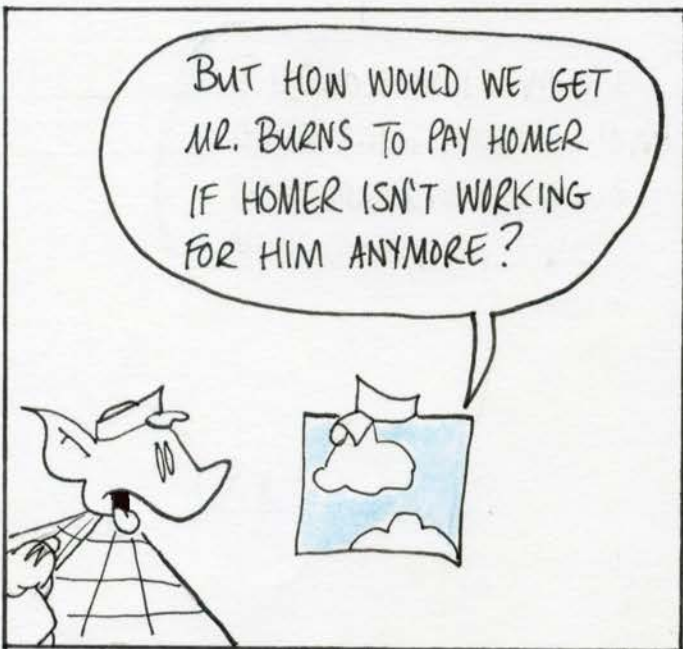
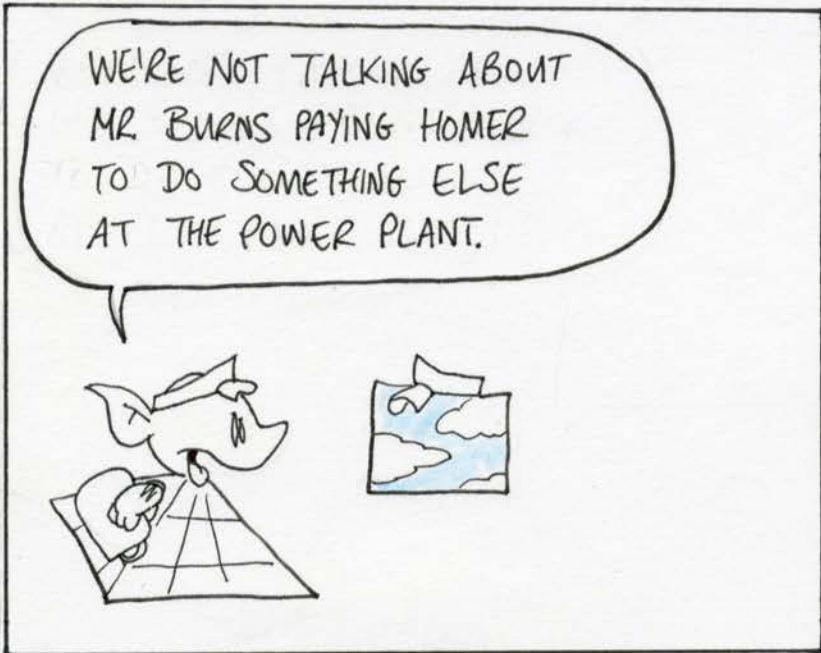
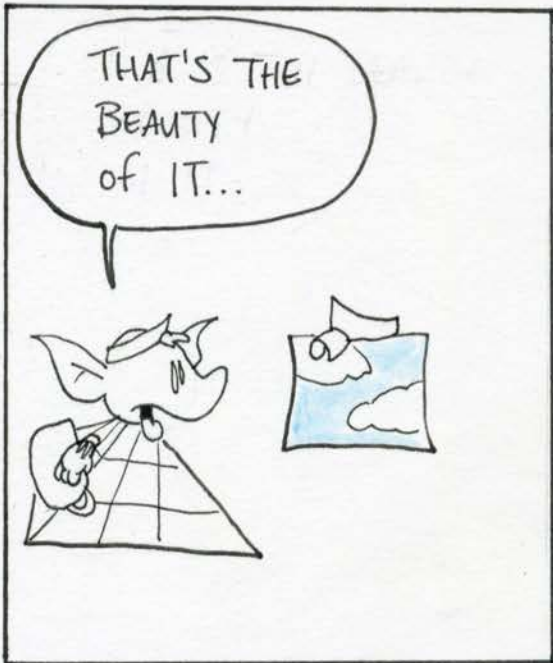
BECAUSE, I DO THINK THAT WHEN
PEOPLE TALK ABOUT LOST AMERICAN JOBS
THERE'S A PRETTY STRONG CONSENSUS
THAT WE SHOULD BE PROTECTING THOSE
JOBS OR DOING SOMETHING FOR
THOSE WORKERS.



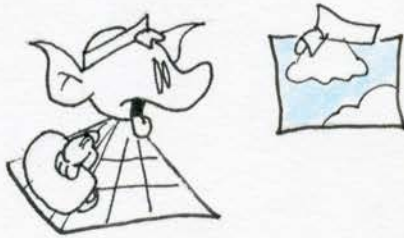


Goodman

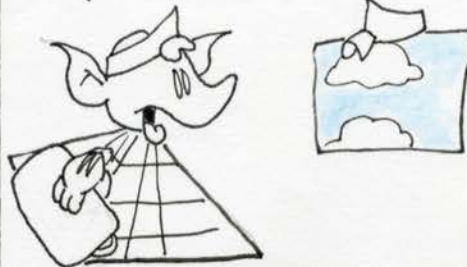




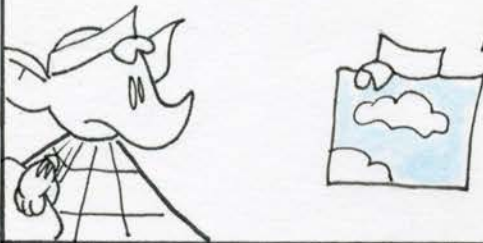
THOUGH IT DOESN'T FUNDAMENTALLY
MAKE THAT MUCH LESS SENSE
FOR MR. BURNS TO PAY HOMER
NOT TO DO A JOB...



THAN IT MAKES FOR
MR. BURNS TO PAY HOMER
FOR A JOB THAT A
MACHINE COULD DO
FOR LESS.

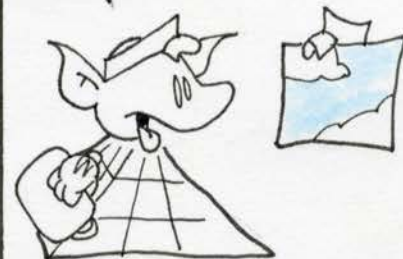


OK, BUT BOTH OF THOSE MAKE
LESS SENSE THAN MR. BURNS
JUST FIRING HOMER, GETTING
A MACHINE TO DO THE JOB
AND KEEPING HIS MONEY.

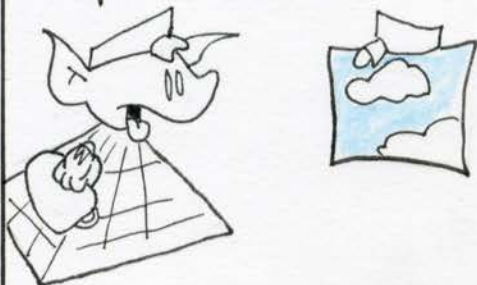


Goodman

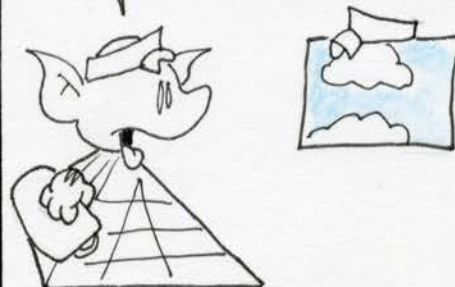
EXCEPT, AGAIN,
WHAT MAKES IT
MR. BURNS' MONEY?



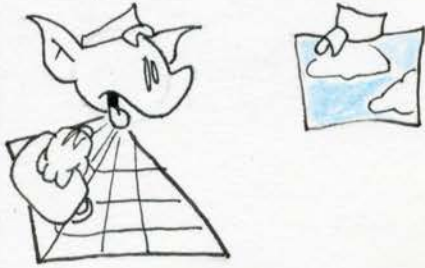
HE'S NOT WORKING FOR IT
ANY MORE THAN HOMER.



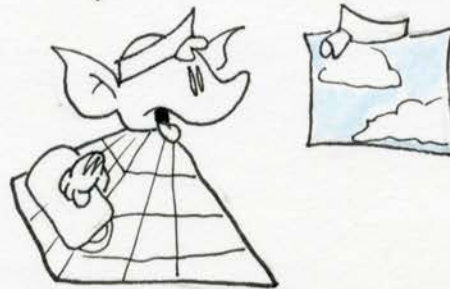
HE JUST HAPPENS
TO BE IN THE POSITION
TO BUY THE MACHINE,
TO OWN THE COMPANY.



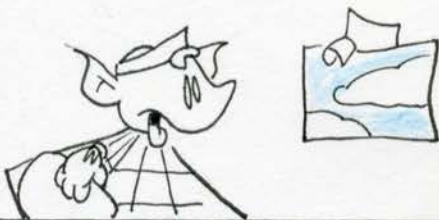
THE MACHINE
DOES THE
WORK.



THE QUESTION IS WHO
MAKES MONEY OFF OF
THE MACHINE'S WORK.



AND IF THE ANSWER SEEMS
OBVIOUS, IT'S ONLY BECAUSE
WE'RE SO USED TO THE RULES
THAT WE HAVE THAT WE
SELDOM THINK TO QUESTION THEM.

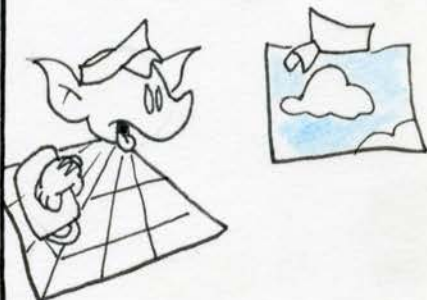


Goodman

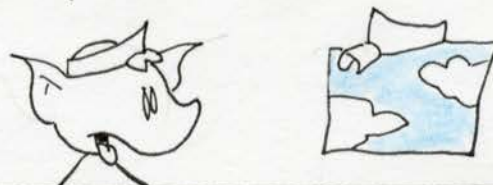
OK, BUT YOU STILL HAVEN'T
EXPLAINED HOW WE
MAKE MR. BURNS PAY
HOMER IF HE DOESN'T
WORK AT THE POWERPLANT
ANYMORE.

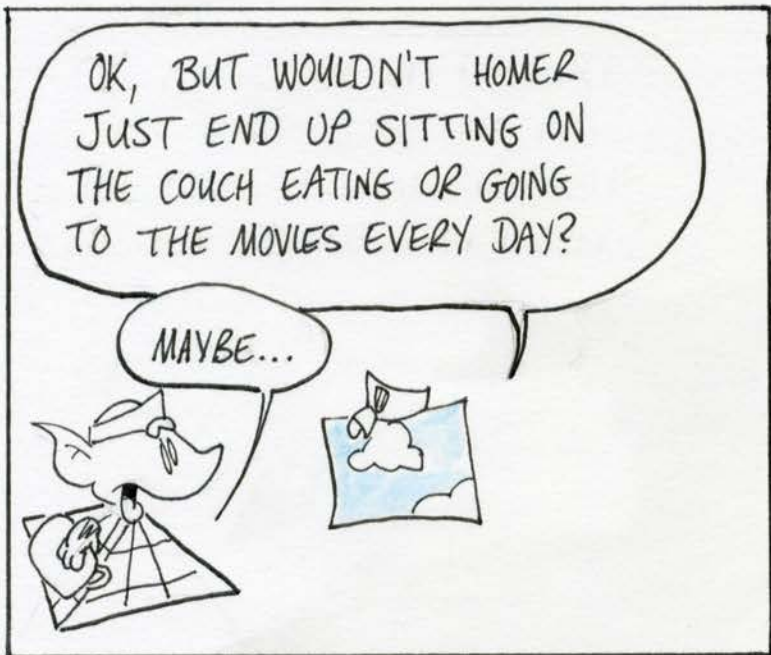
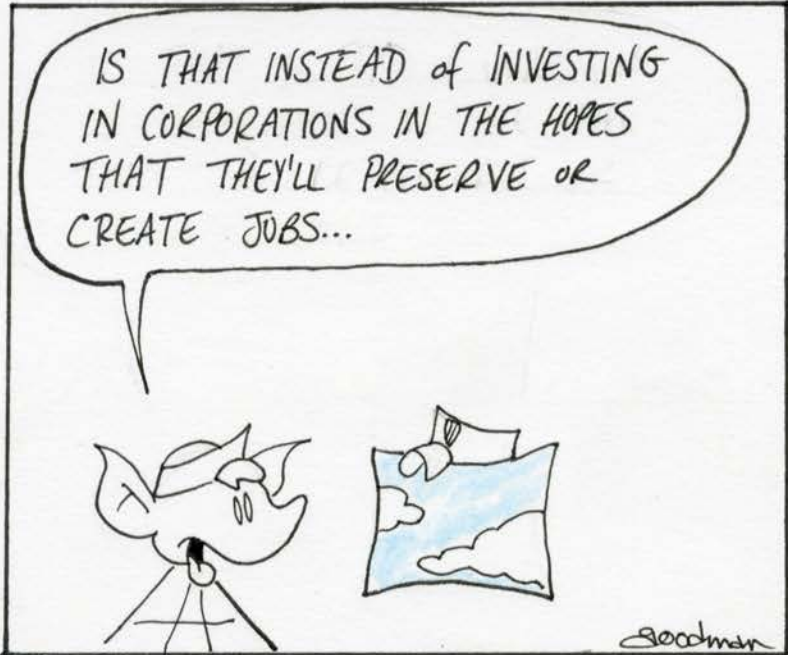


MR. BURNS DOESN'T
LITERALLY PAY HOMER

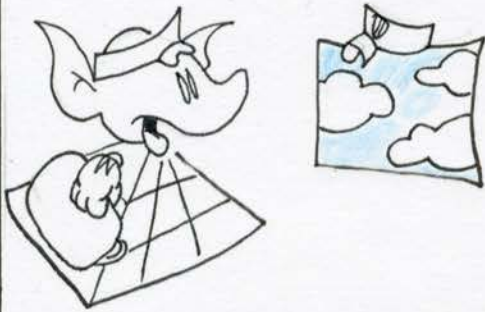


BUT INSTEAD OF DOING
SOMETHING LIKE GIVING
MR. BURNS A TAX BREAK
TO TRY TO KEEP THE PLANT
IN THE U.S., WE INVEST
IN HOMER DIRECTLY

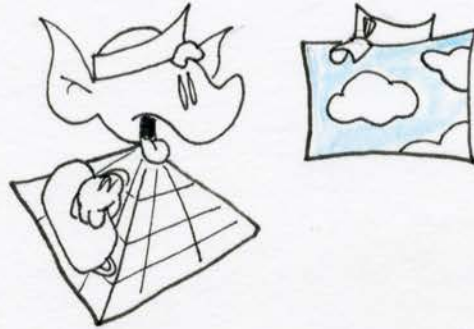




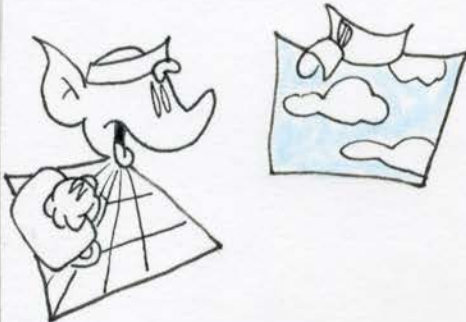
BUT THE POINT IS
THAT ANYTHING HE
DOES DO...



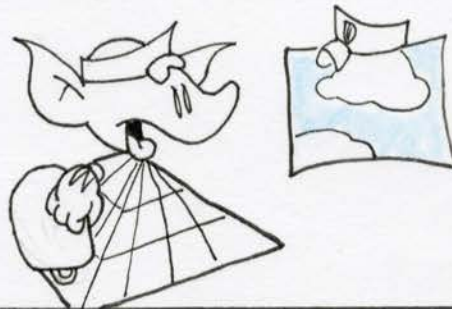
ANYTHING AT ALL
THAT'S PRODUCTIVE...



IS A NET GAIN
FOR SOCIETY.

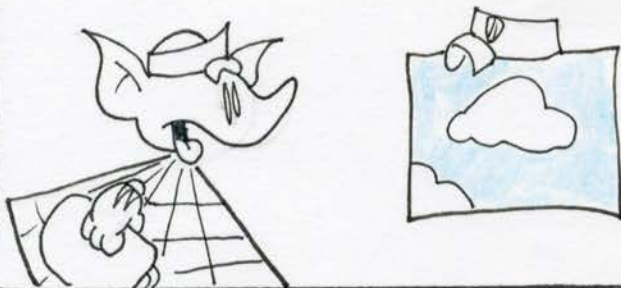


BECAUSE A MACHINE IS
ALREADY DOING THE JOB
THAT HE WAS DOING BEFORE

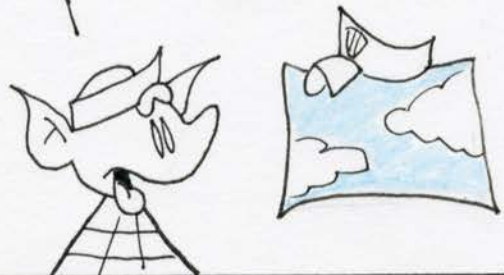


goodman

AND, IF WE ARE TALKING
ABOUT HOMER, PROBABLY
DOING IT BETTER.



THOUGH, TO BE FAIR TO HOMER,
HE DOES DO THE Y/N BUTTON-
PUSHING JOB BETTER THAN
THE DRINKING BIRD.

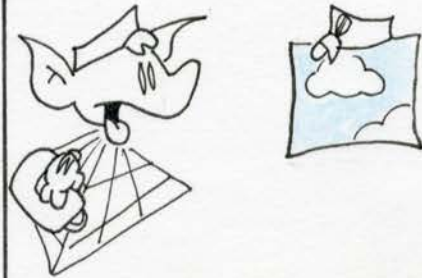


BUT IF THE MACHINE DOES DO THE JOB BETTER OR MORE EFFICIENTLY THAN HOMER



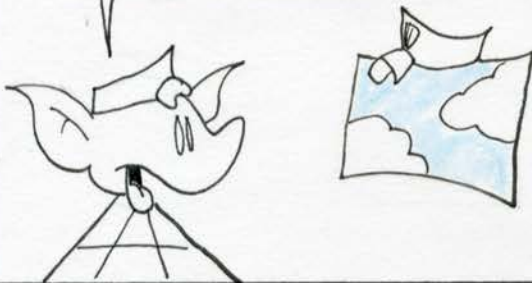
THEN REPLACING HIM WITH THE MACHINE IS ALREADY A GAIN IN PRODUCTIVITY

EVEN IF ALL HOMER DOES IS SIT ON THE COUCH AND CASH HIS CHECK.

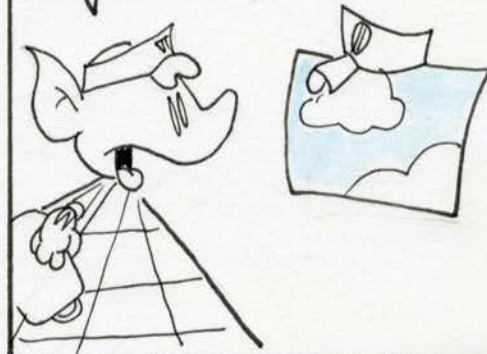


goodman

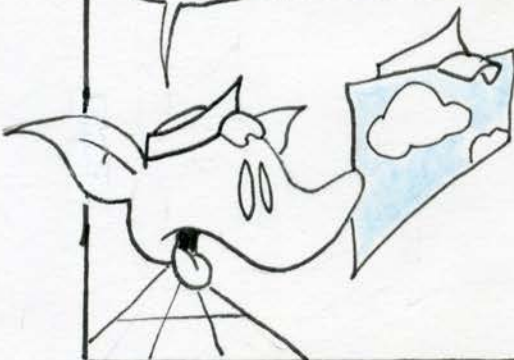
BUT, GIVEN THE GIFT OF TIME, I THINK THAT, ESPECIALLY IF WE STOP TALKING ABOUT HOMER SIMPSON, THE CARTOON EMBODIMENT OF LAZINESS...



AND START TALKING ABOUT A REAL PERSON WITH REAL HOPES AND DREAMS AND DESIRES...



I THINK THERE'S A PRETTY GOOD CHANCE THAT THAT PERSON IS GOING TO END UP DOING SOMETHING WITH THEIR TIME THAT PROVIDES A BENEFIT TO SOCIETY.

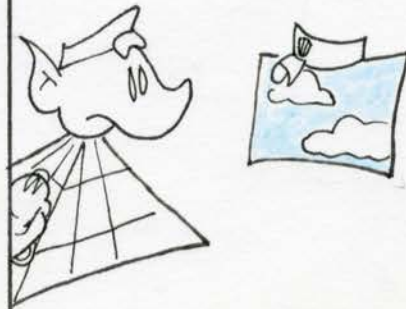


BUT WOULDN'T THAT PERSON HAVE MORE INCENTIVE TO DO SOMETHING PRODUCTIVE IF THEY NEEDED TO EARN MONEY, RATHER THAN IF WE JUST GIVE IT TO THEM?

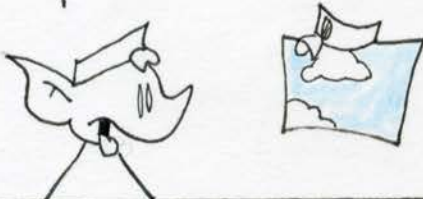


NO.

WHY NOT?



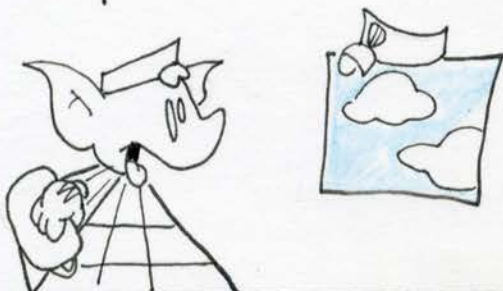
THINK ABOUT THE OPTIONS AVAILABLE TO A LAID-OFF BLUE-COLLAR WORKER IN AMERICA TODAY IF THAT WORKER HAS TO EARN A LIVING ...



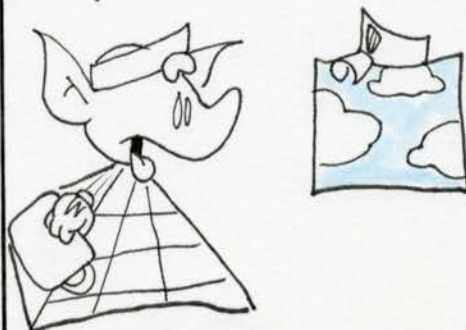
IF ONE JOB IS AUTOMATED ALL COMPARABLE JOBS ARE PROBABLY AUTOMATED.



WHICH MEANS ALL OF THE EXPERTISE AND EXPERIENCE THAT WORKER HAS ACQUIRED GO OUT THE WINDOW.

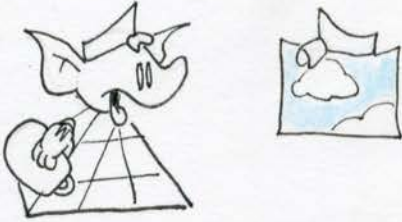


AND THEY'RE GOING TO HAVE TO START BACK AT THE BOTTOM.

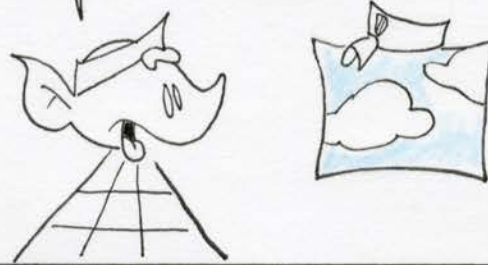


goodman

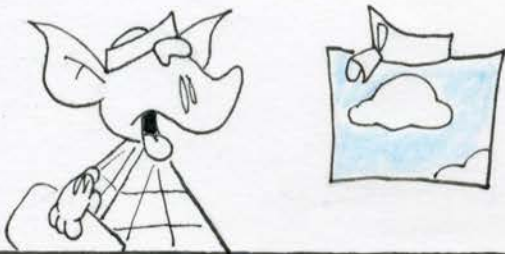
LEARNING A NEW JOB
OR TAKING A JOB THAT
DOESN'T REQUIRE SKILL
OR EXPERIENCE AND
PROBABLY PAYS LESS.



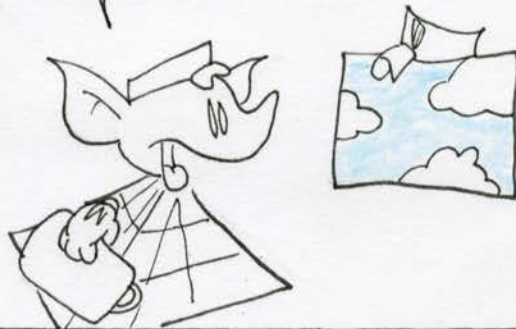
AND THE MORE WORKERS WHO
ARE COMPETING FOR THE SAME
UNSKILLED JOBS, THE LOWER
THE WAGES FOR THOSE JOBS
ARE GOING TO BE.



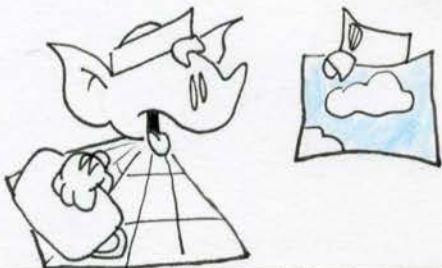
SO, ALL OUR LAID-OFF WORKER
IS DOING IS MAKING IT HARDER
FOR OTHER PEOPLE TO
MAKE A LIVING.



WE DON'T HAVE A SHORTAGE
OF PEOPLE WHO WANT TO DO
JOBS THAT REQUIRE LITTLE-
TO-NO EXPERIENCE.

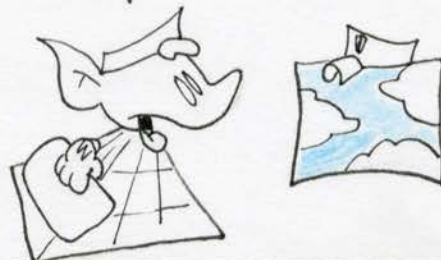


AND IN FACT IT'S ONLY THE
SURPLUS OF UNEMPLOYED
PEOPLE COMPETING FOR
THOSE MINIMUM-WAGE JOBS...



goodman

THAT KEEPS WAGES LOW
ENOUGH TO DISCOURAGE
EMPLOYEES FROM INVESTING
IN MACHINES TO AUTOMATE
THOSE JOBS.



But if our laid-off workers don't have to worry about earning a living they can start to do things that don't have instant financial payoff, but have greater potential for social benefit, whether it's starting a new business or volunteering or making art.

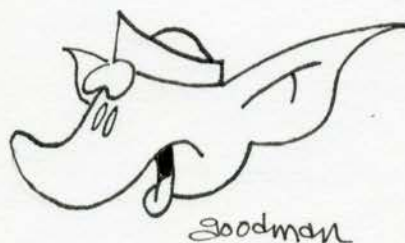
Or, to come back to our earlier conversation, raising children or homemaking.

And some of those things, in addition to having non-commodifiable benefits for society, are also going to pay off in the long term for the national economy, whether it's a small business that takes off or an invention that comes out of tinkering or a kid who, because of the teamwork skills that she learns on the rec-league soccer team that one of the laid-off workers coaches, ends up inventing the next generation of Yes-No choosing or automobile-assembling robots making transportation more affordable for someone else to get to community college classes where she learns programming— and so on and so forth.

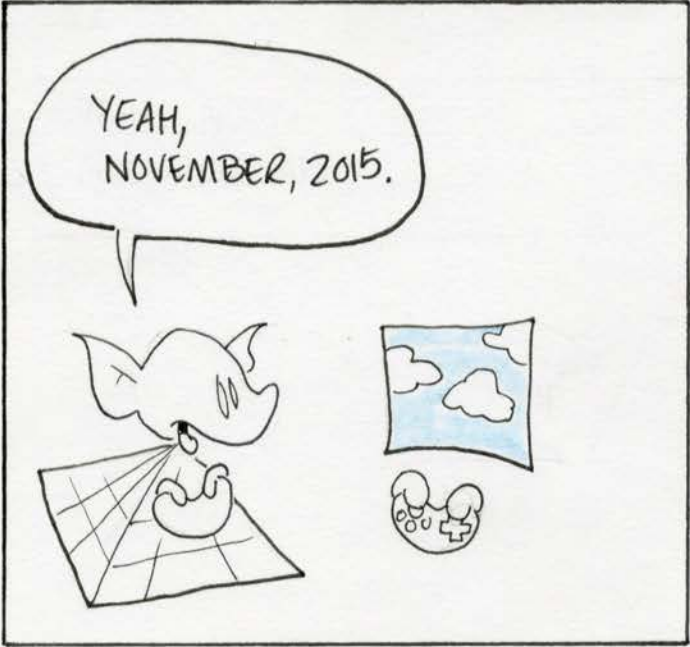
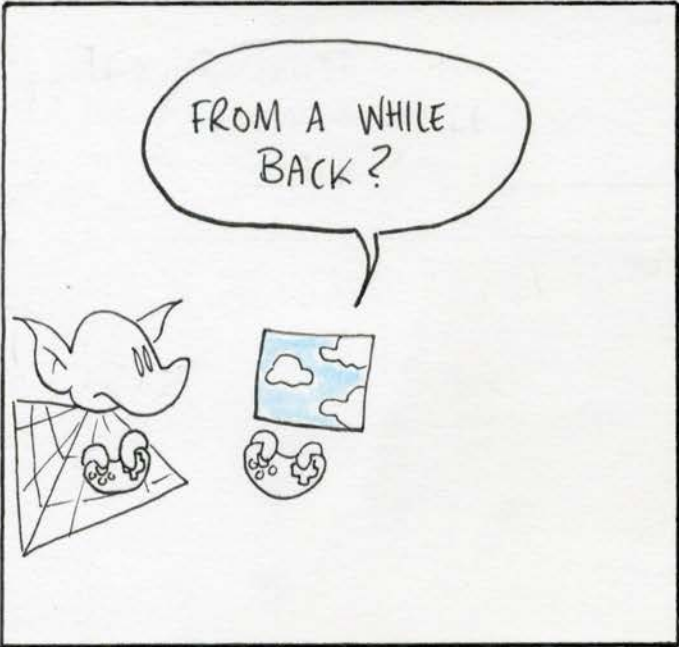
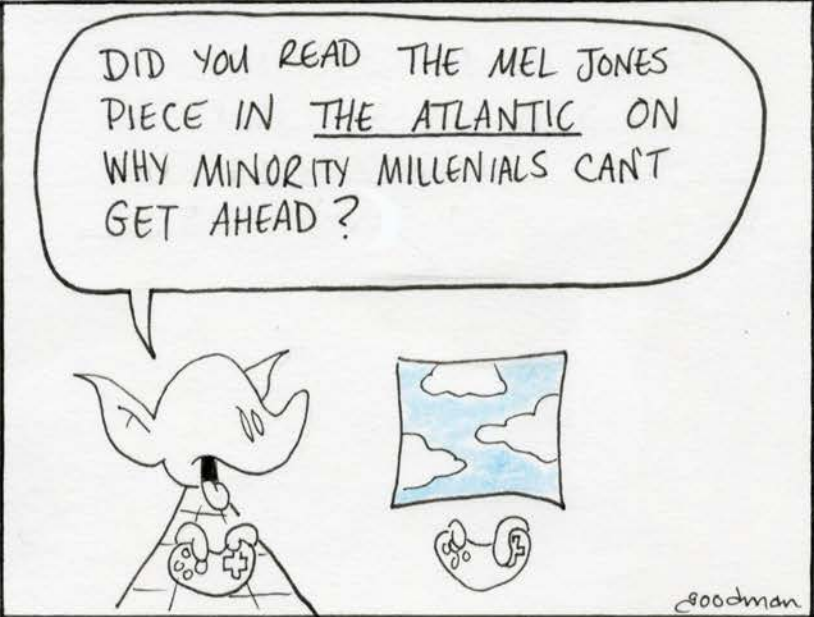
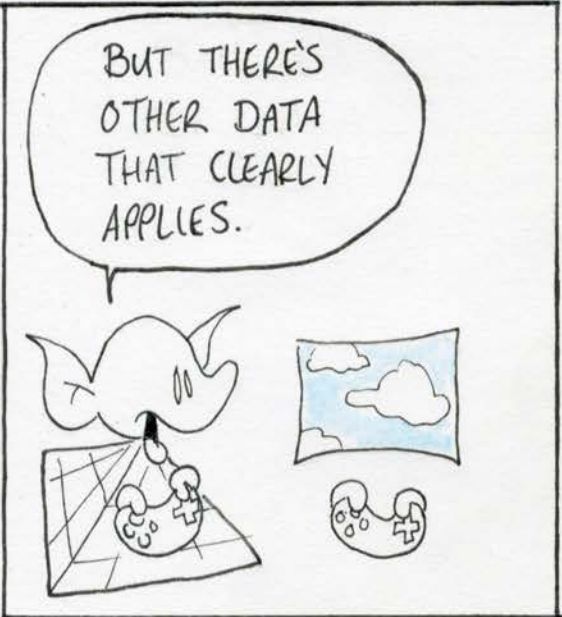
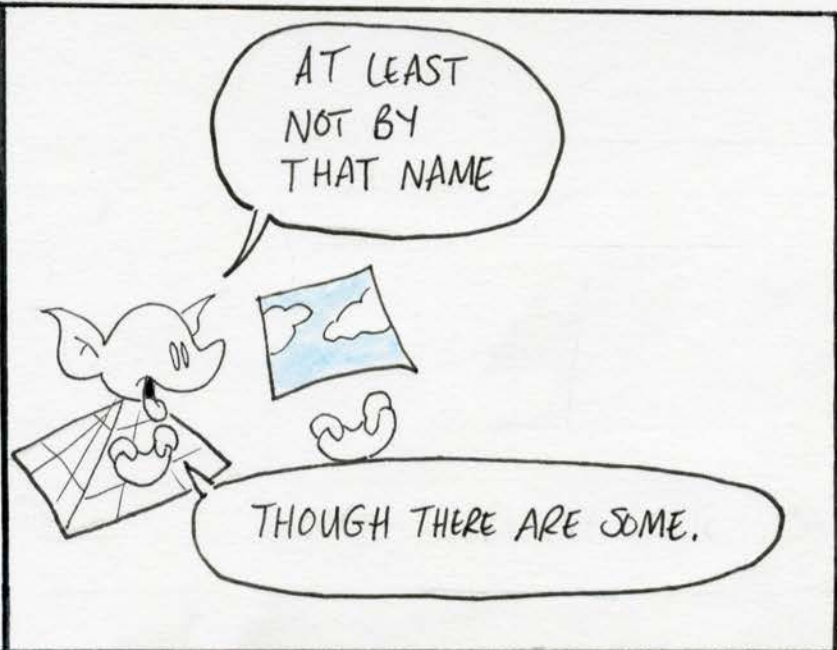
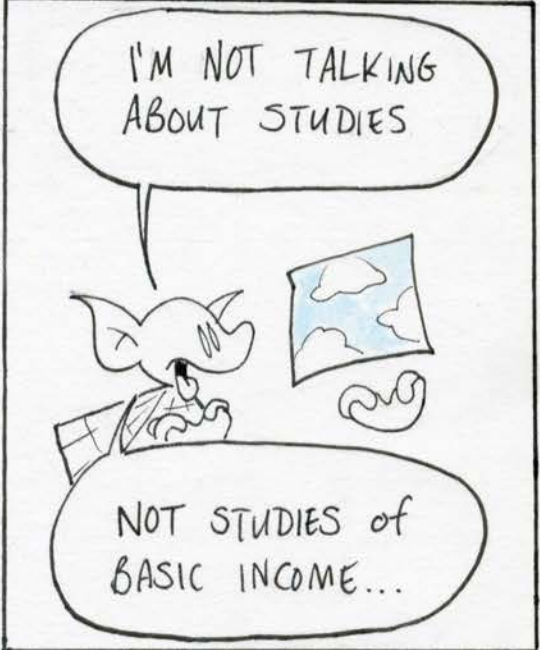
You get the idea.

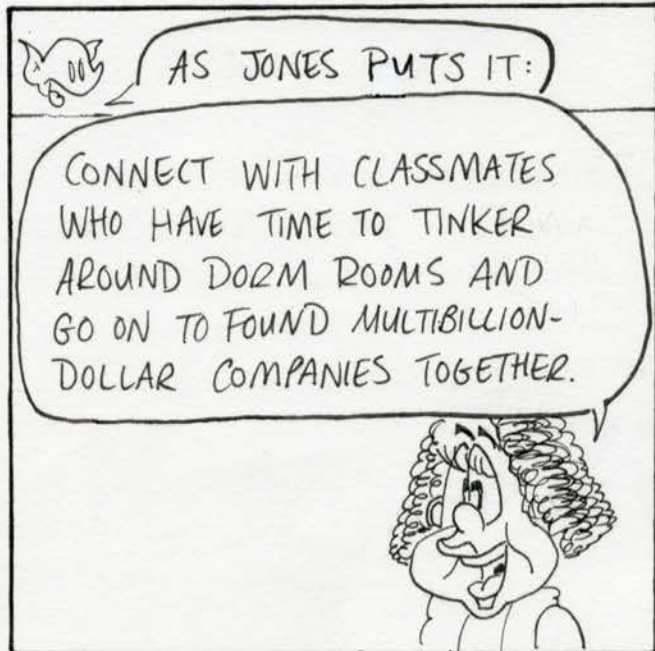
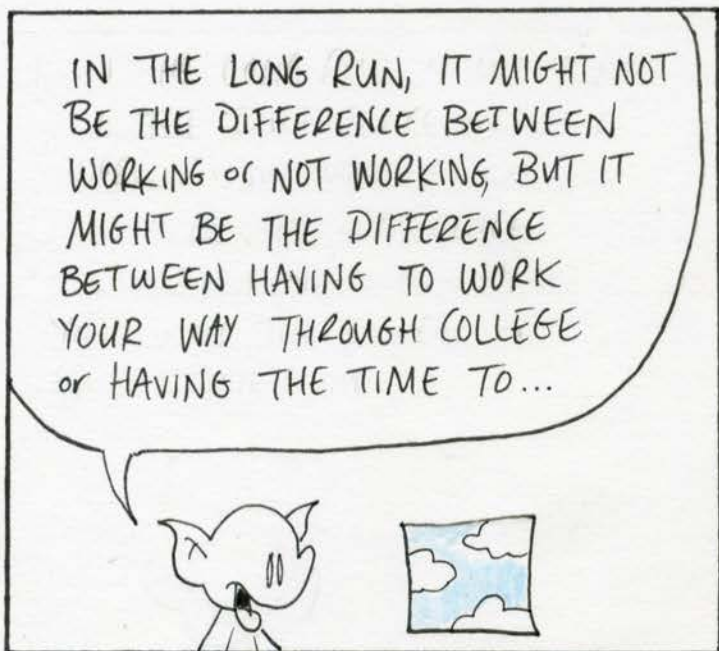
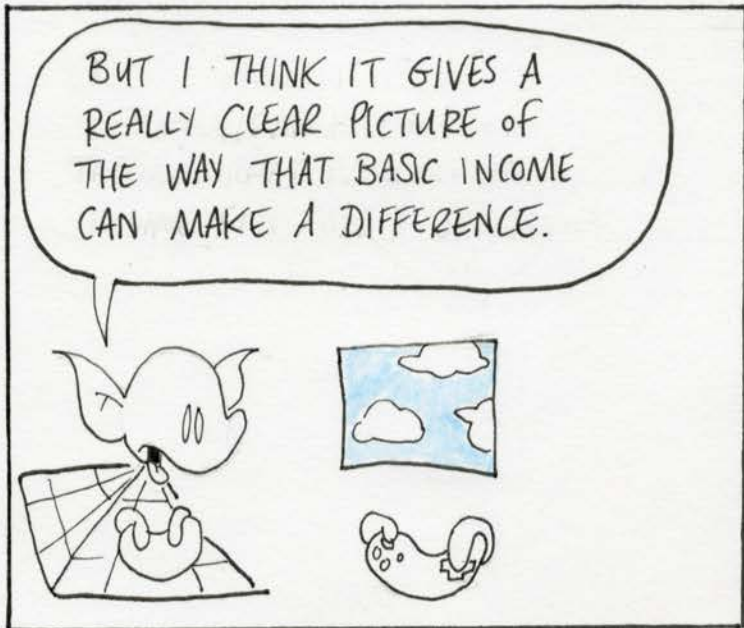
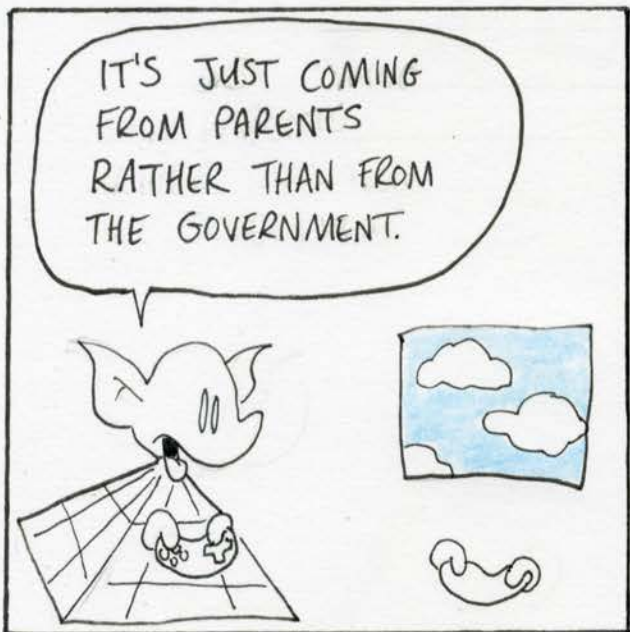
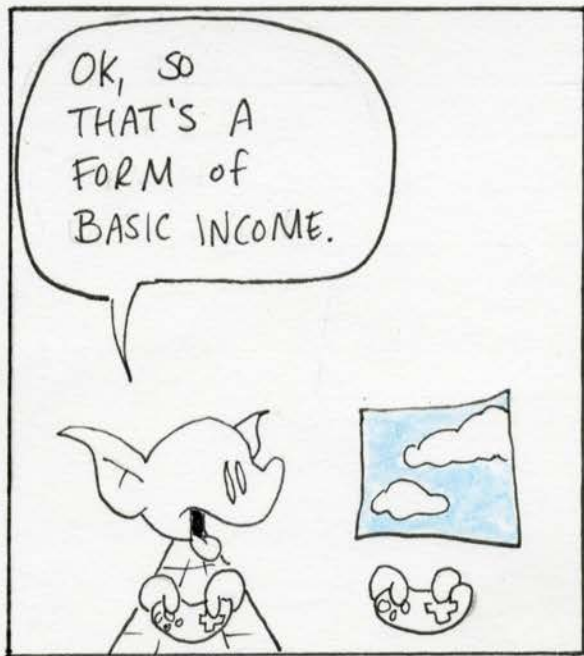
The point is, instead of talking about protecting jobs from robots, why not let the robots have the jobs that robots can do and provide opportunities for the people who had those jobs to do something that the market wouldn't normally pay them to do.

A human job
that a human can do best.

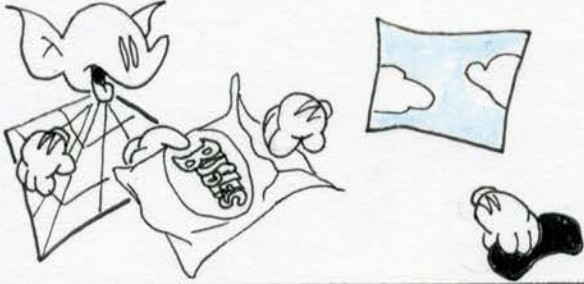








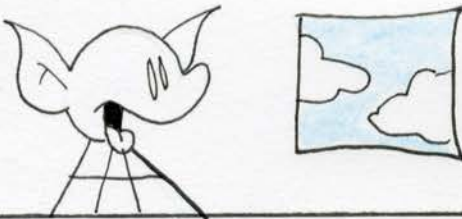
AFTER COLLEGE or OVER THE SUMMER IT COULD MEAN THE OPPORTUNITY TO TAKE AN UNPAID INTERNSHIP or DO VOLUNTEER WORK.



OR, YOU KNOW, THE ABILITY TO LIE ON THEIR PARENTS' COUCHES AND EAT BUGLES AND PLAY SKYRIM.



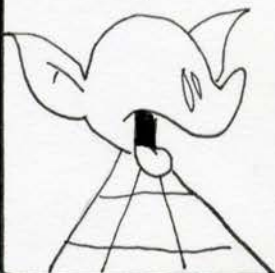
YEAH, BUT WHAT'S ECONOMIC PRESSURE REALLY GOING TO DO FOR THOSE KIDS?



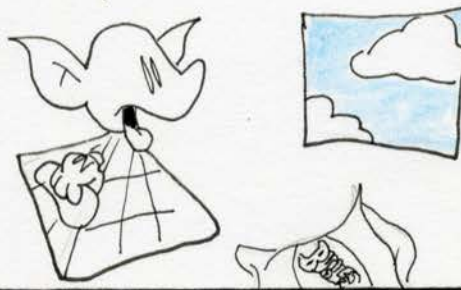
BEST CASE SCENARIO, IT SENDS THEM TO A FAST FOOD or RETAIL JOB or, IF THERE'S SOME SORT OF PARENTAL CONNECTION, BULLSHIT WHITE COLLAR...



BECAUSE THEN YOU'RE OBVIOUSLY NOT TALKING ABOUT KIDS WHO, AT THAT STAGE OF THEIR LIVES, HAVE A PASSION THAT THEY CAN CARRY TO THEIR WORK.

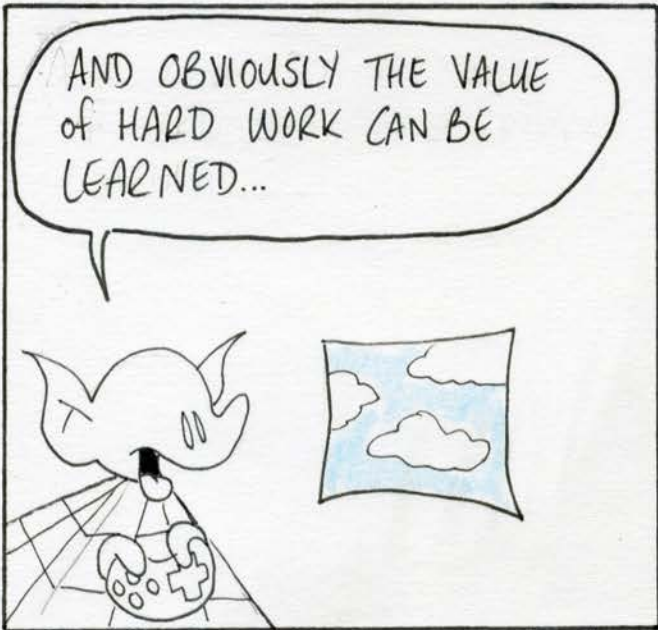


OR IF THEY DO IT'S IN THE FORM OF UNTAPPED POTENTIAL

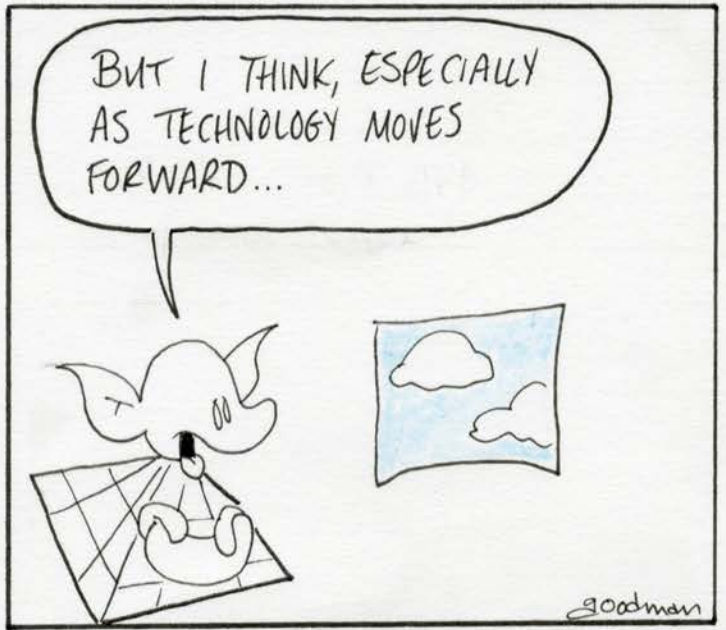




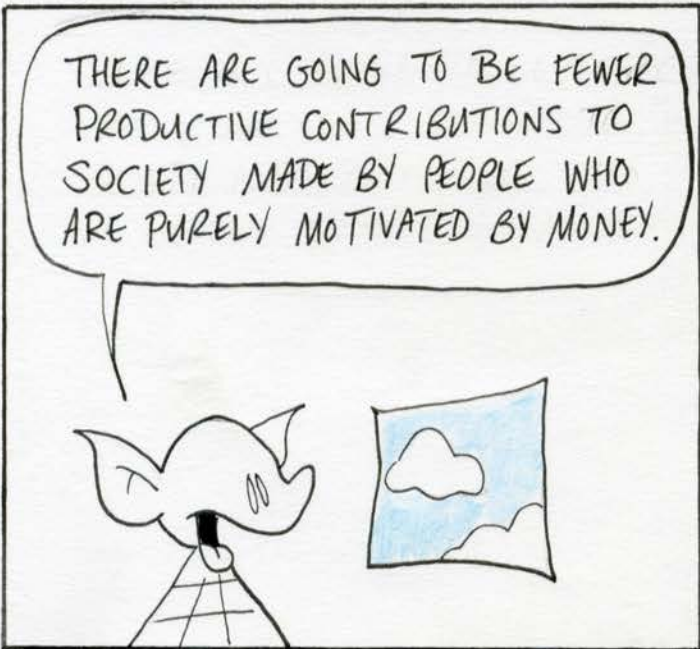
WHICH IS NOT GOING TO GET TAPPED IN THE KIND OF JOB THAT A COLLEGE KID WHO CLEARLY WOULD RATHER BE AT HOME PLAYING SKYRIM AND EATING BUGLES IS GOING TO BE ABLE TO GET.



AND OBVIOUSLY THE VALUE OF HARD WORK CAN BE LEARNED...



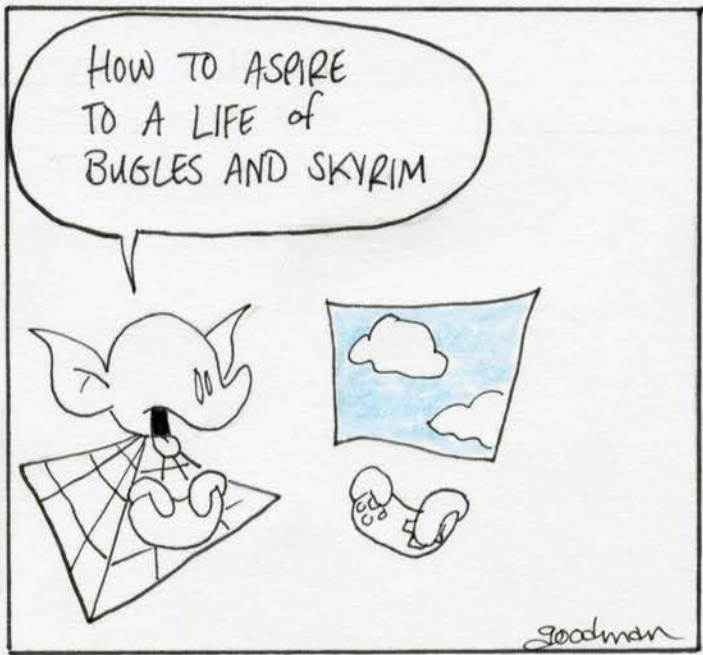
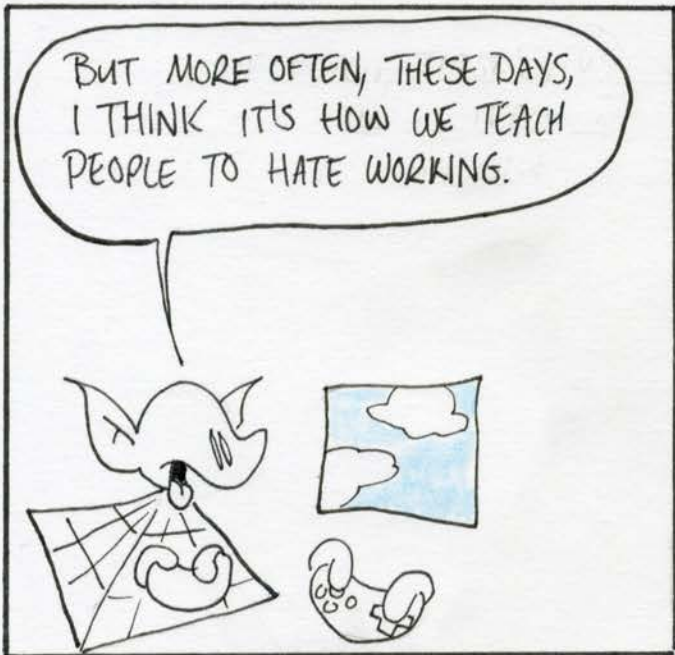
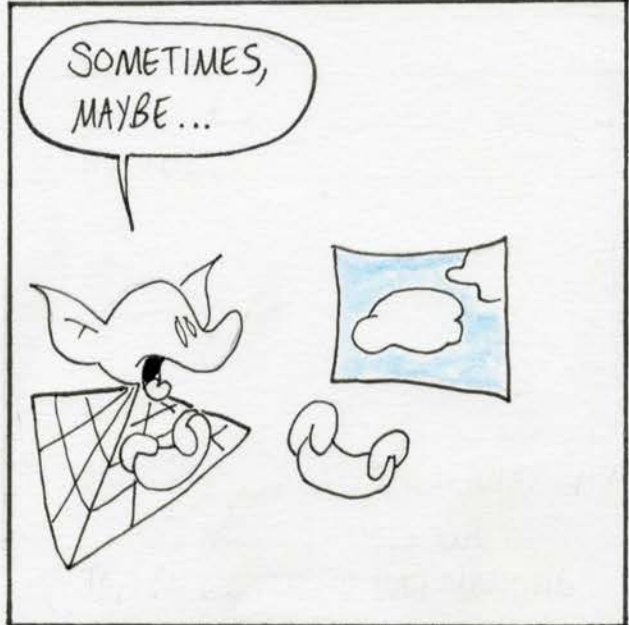
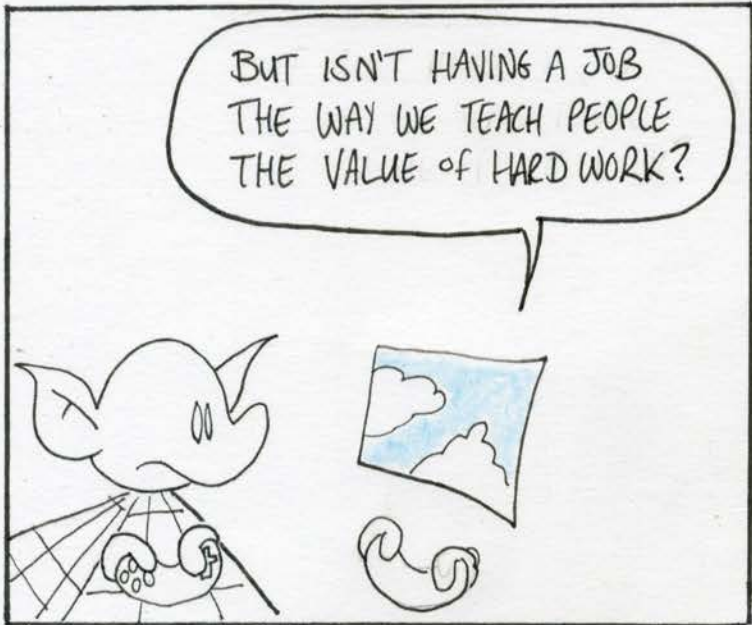
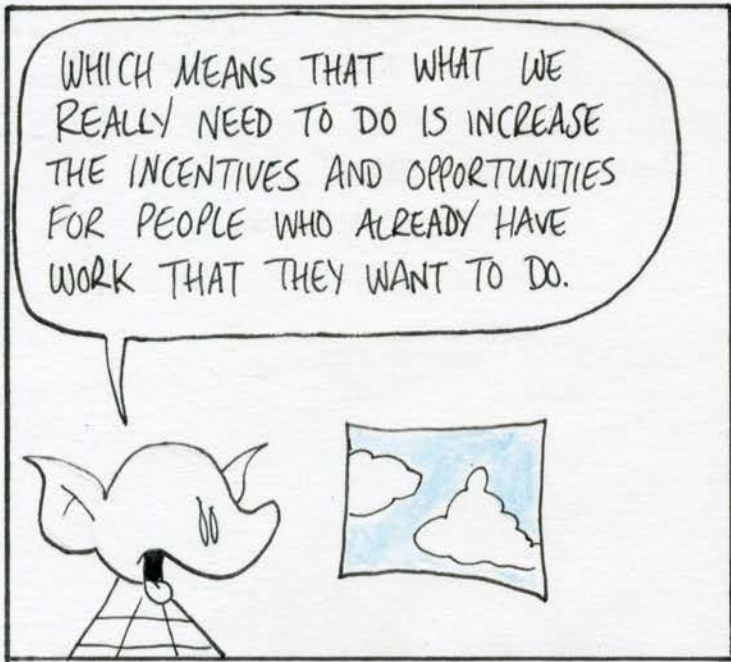
BUT I THINK, ESPECIALLY AS TECHNOLOGY MOVES FORWARD...



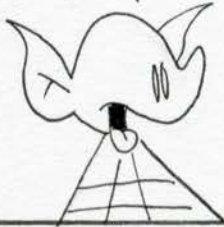
THERE ARE GOING TO BE FEWER PRODUCTIVE CONTRIBUTIONS TO SOCIETY MADE BY PEOPLE WHO ARE PURELY MOTIVATED BY MONEY.



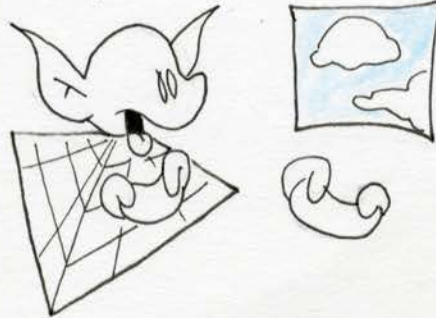
WE'RE RUNNING OUT OF JOBS THAT WE NEED TO PAY PEOPLE MONEY TO DO FOR THEM TO GET DONE.



BECAUSE I THINK THAT
IF YOU'RE GOING TO LEARN
THE VALUE OF HARD WORK
YOU HAVE TO BE ABLE TO
RECOGNIZE THE VALUE
OF WHAT YOU'RE DOING.

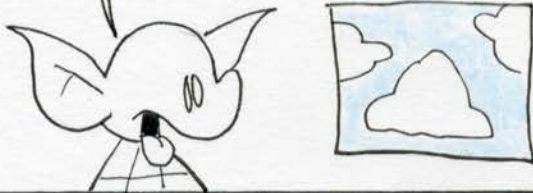


WHICH MEANS
YOUR WORK HAS
TO HAVE VALUE.

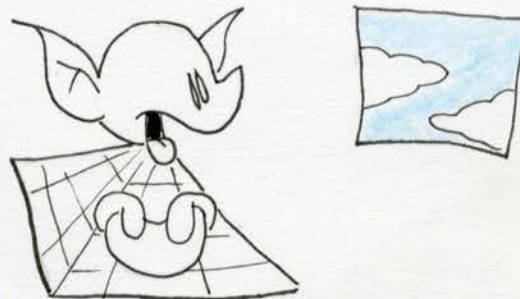


goodman

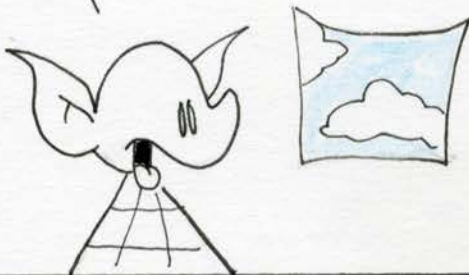
YOU HAVE TO BE ABLE
TO SEE THE CONNECTION
BETWEEN WHAT YOU'RE DOING
AND SOME VALUE THAT'S
BEING CREATED IN
THE WORLD.



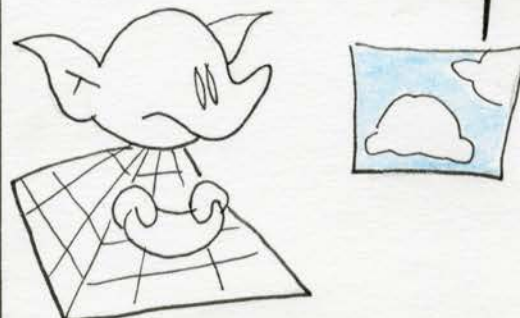
AND I DON'T
THINK THAT MONEY
IS ENOUGH.



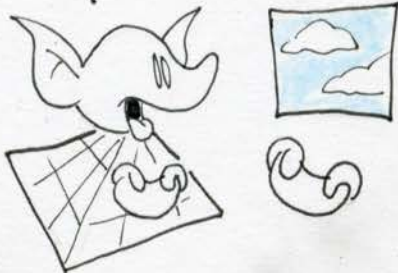
I THINK THAT YOU
HAVE TO SEE YOURSELF
ACHIEVING SOMETHING
MEANINGFUL IN THE WORLD.



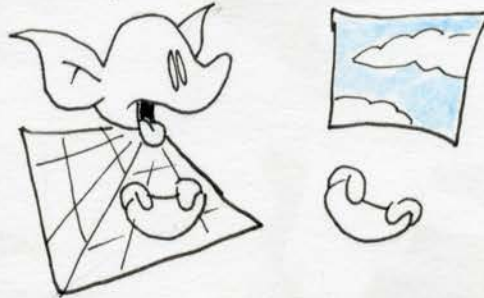
EVEN IF YOU CAN
GO OUT AND SPEND
THAT MONEY ?



MAYBE IF WE'RE STILL TALKING ABOUT THE MILLENNIAL LIVING ON HER PARENTS' COUCH.

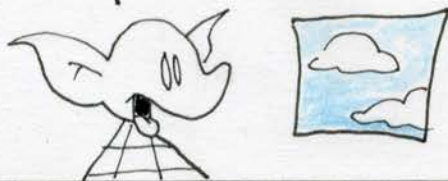


THAT'S PRETTY MUCH THE ONLY PERSON WHO CAN TAKE HOME MINIMUM WAGE AND FEEL EXCITED ABOUT IT.



goodman

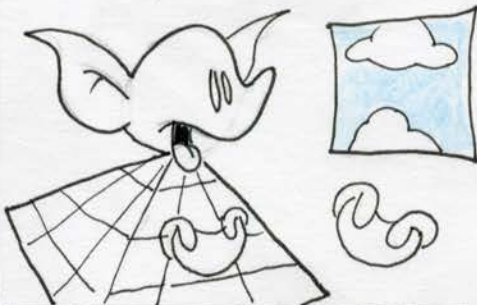
IF WE'RE TALKING ABOUT AN ADULT WITH DEBTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES, IT'S JUST BARELY, OR, MORE LIKELY, NOT QUITE ENOUGH TO KEEP GOING TO THE NEXT PAYCHECK



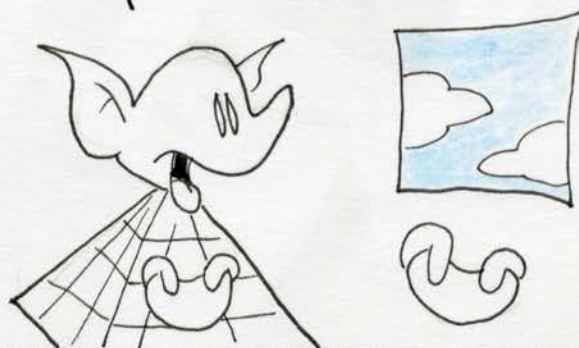
TO FEED HERSELF, PUT GAS IN THE CAR TO KEEP MAKING IT TO WORK.

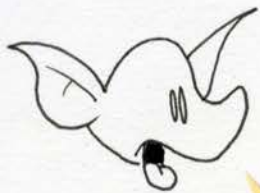
Super
BEAUTIFUL
Odyssey PRESS START
TO PLAY

FOR THE STUDENT, IT PAYS PART OF THE TUITION...



AND YES, MAYBE THERE'S A SATISFACTION IN WORKING YOUR WAY THROUGH COLLEGE...





But I would argue that the real pride comes from completing the schoolwork, from being able to accomplish that work on top of working to pay for school. More importantly, though, the student working their way through school is not someone who needs to learn the value of hard work.

I'd argue that that's someone whose work-ethic is really being wasted.

But to come back to the kid on her parents' couch, The reason she can appreciate that paycheck, if she does, is that she's also getting basic income. That free room and board is what allows her to appreciate the measly paycheck, by raising its purchasing power from sustenance to minor luxuries.

And it's not just movie tickets and blue jeans; as she gets older, that basic income foundation will allow her to get more out of the money she makes. Jones says that "each dollar in income increase yields \$5.19 in wealth for white American households, but only 69 cents for black American households." That's because black people are more likely to have to spend that money on day-to-day needs rather than savings or asset-building.

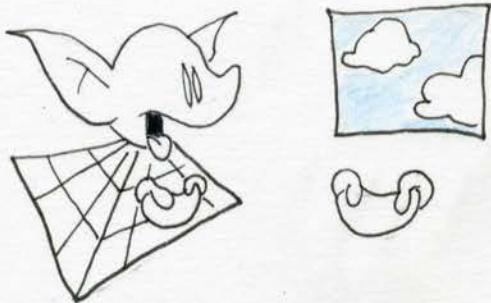
So, you're saying that we should give millennials a basic income.



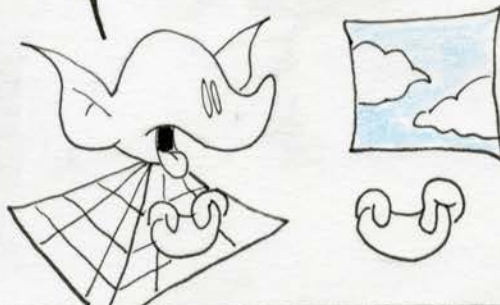
I'm saying that forty percent of millennials are already getting a basic income from their parents, but that that forty percent are disproportionately white.

goodman

IF WE GIVE IT TO EVERYONE,
WE SPREAD THE OPPORTUNITY
THAT IT PROVIDES.



NOT TO MENTION, JONES SAYS
THAT ON AVERAGE, THAT
SUPPORT MAKES EVEN MORE OF
A DIFFERENCE FOR BLACK PEOPLE.



SHE SAYS

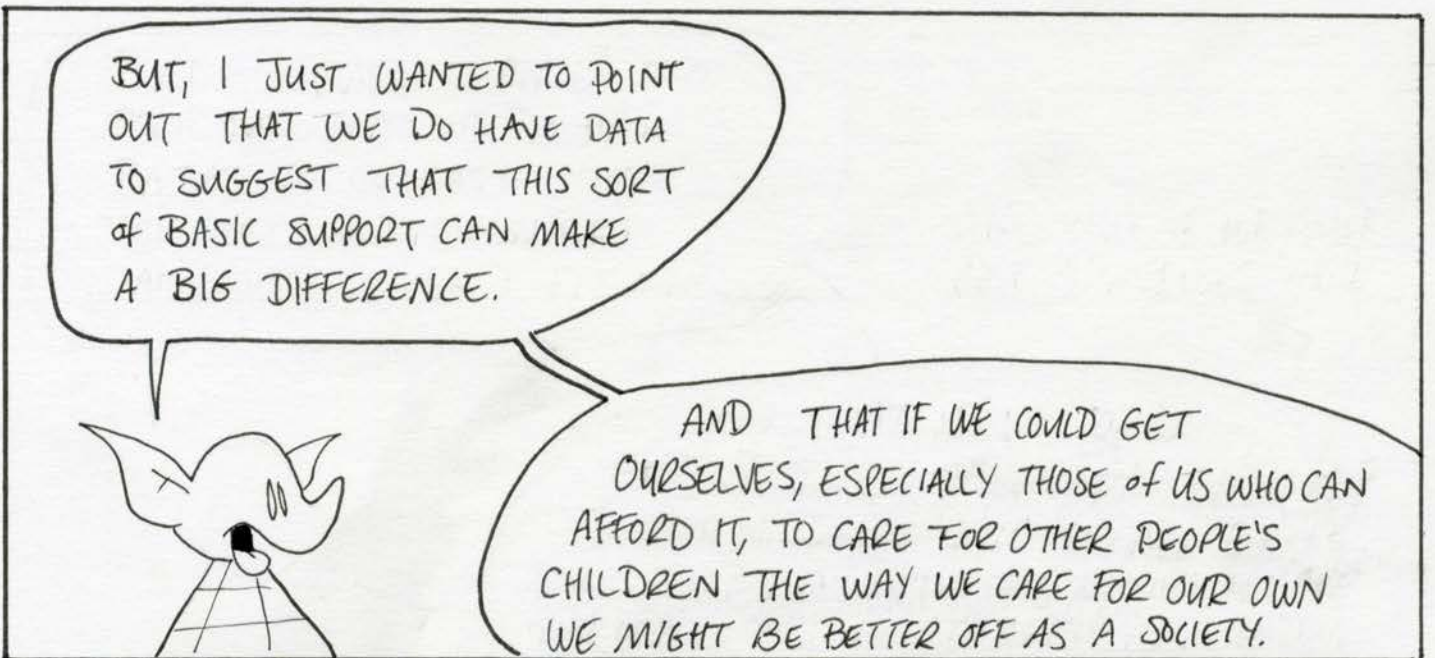
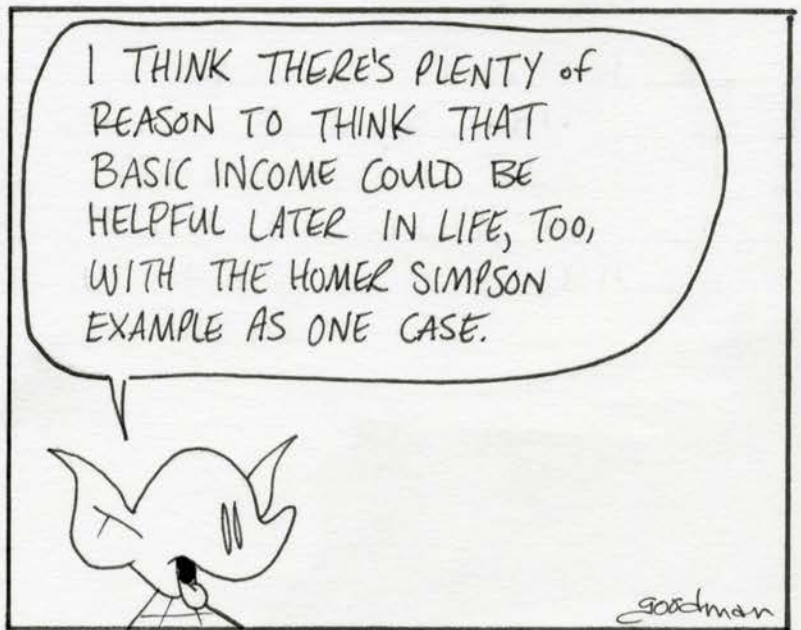
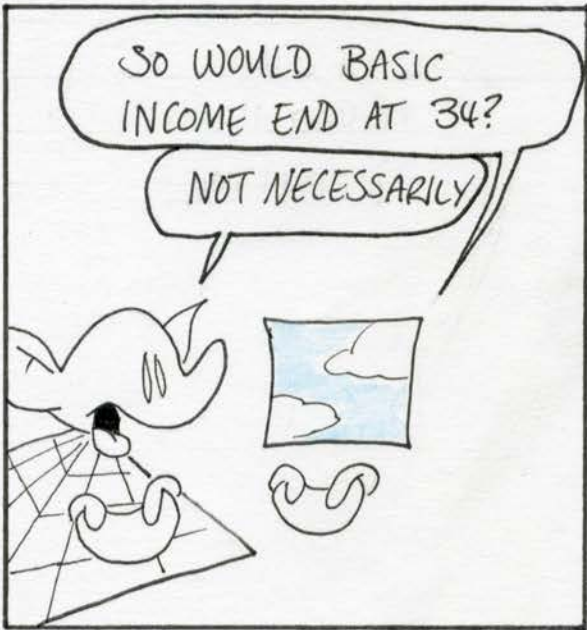
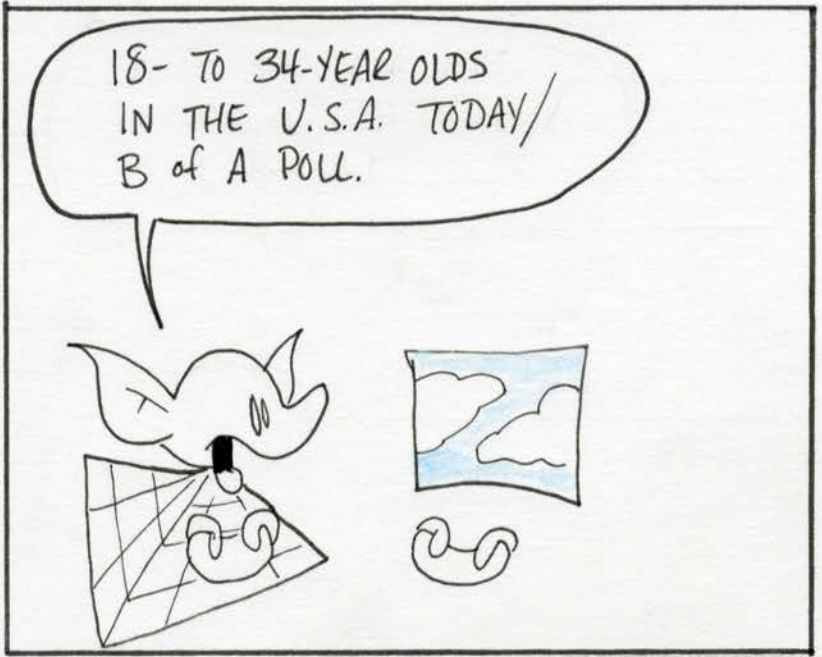
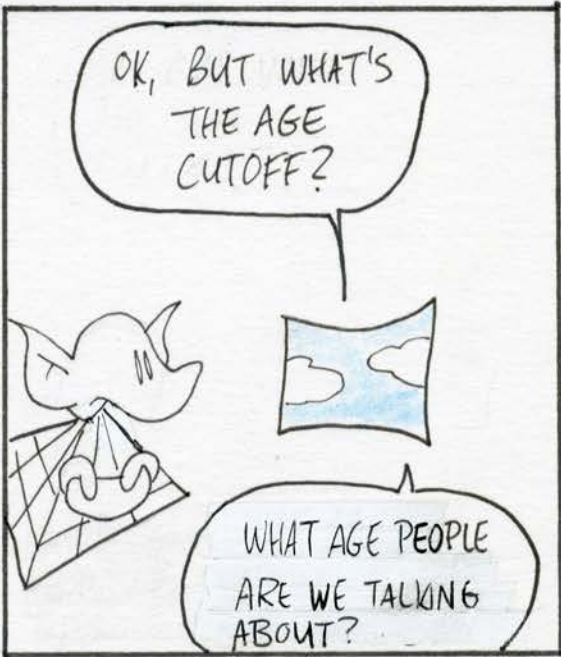
EVERY DOLLAR IN FINANCIAL
FAMILY SUPPORT RECEIVED
BY A WHITE AMERICAN
YIELDED 35 CENTS IN
WEALTH GROWTH.
FOR A BLACK INDIVIDUAL...

IT'S

52 CENTS.

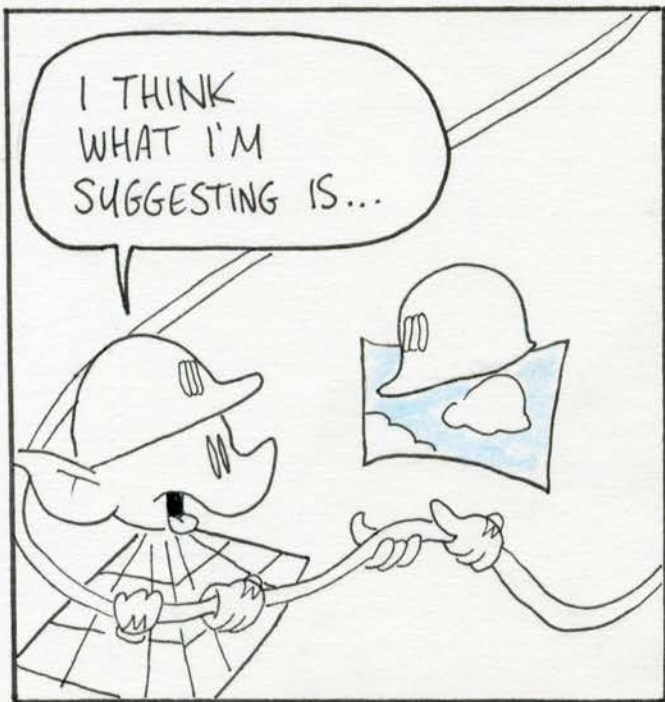


Goodman





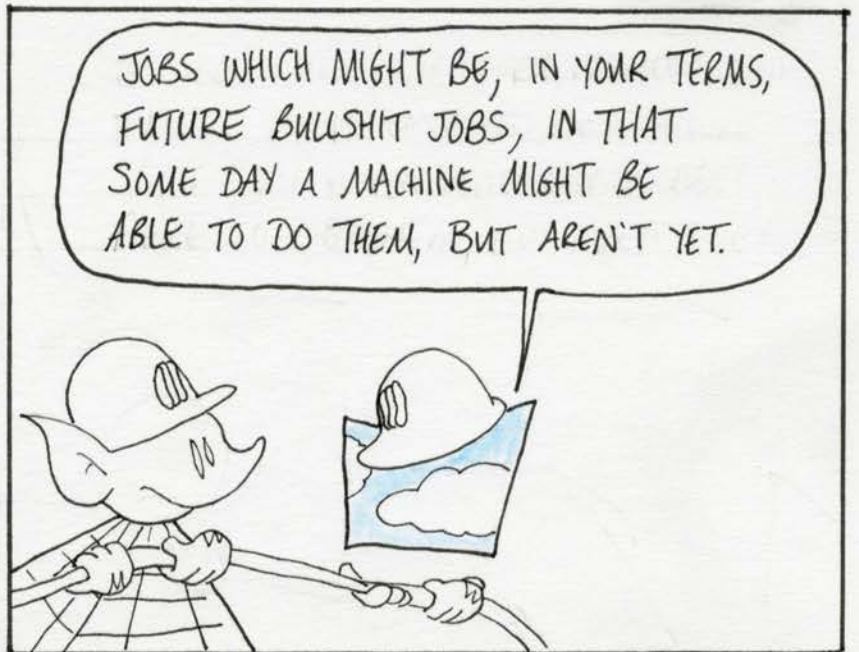
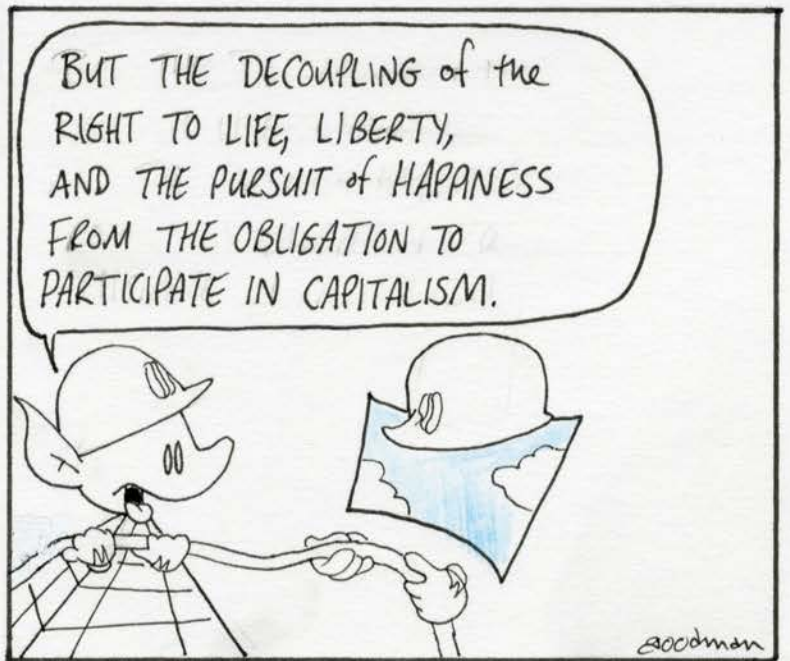
OK, BUT WHY NOT, FOR THE SAKE OF ARGUMENT
A NEW W.P.A. OR SOME SORT OF NATIONAL
GUARANTEED EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM?

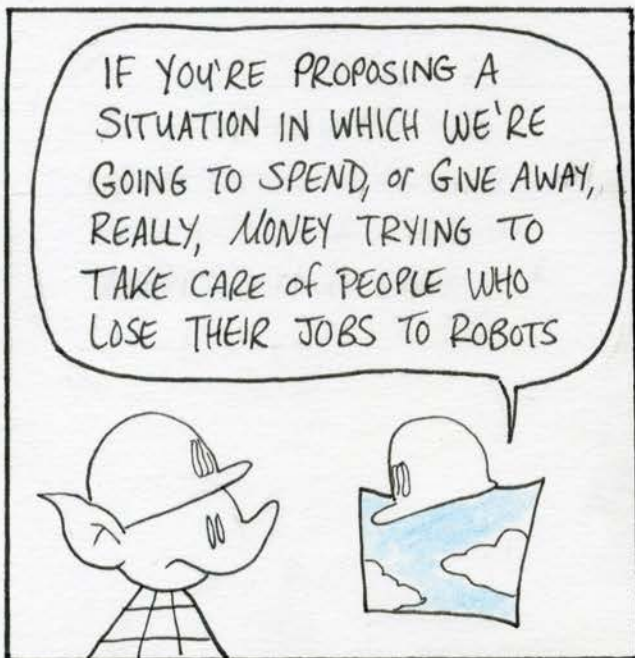
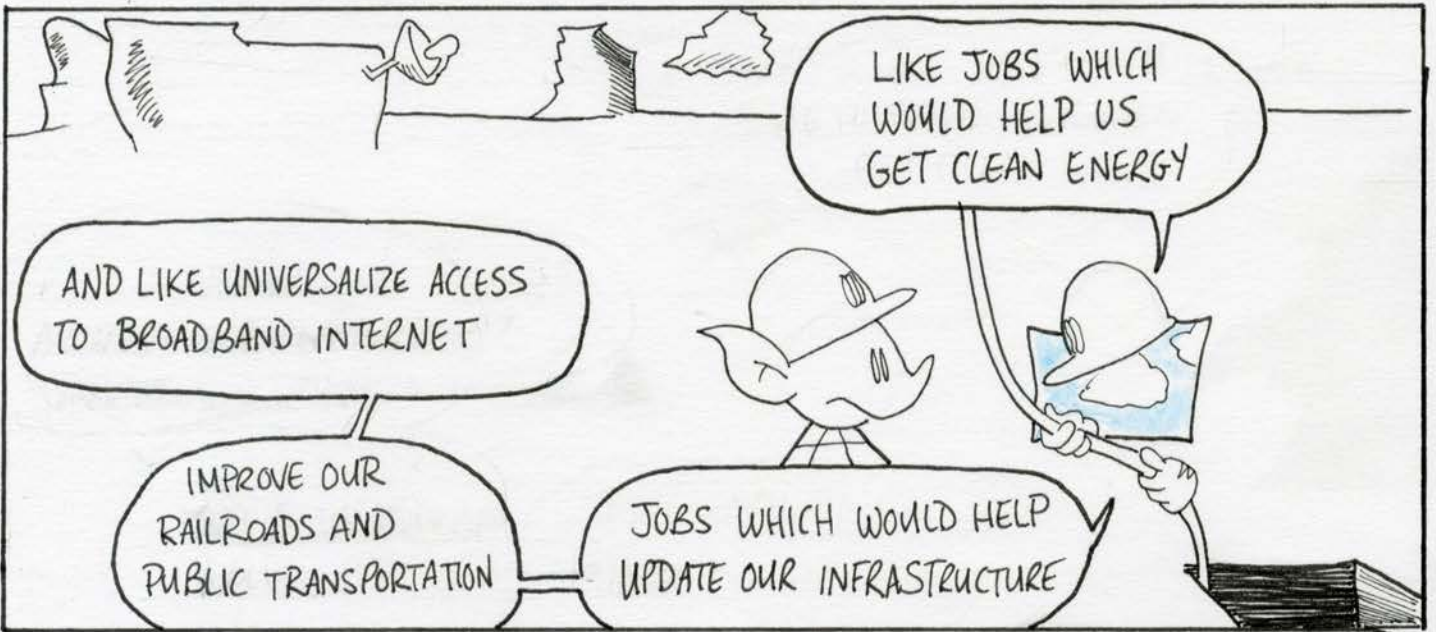
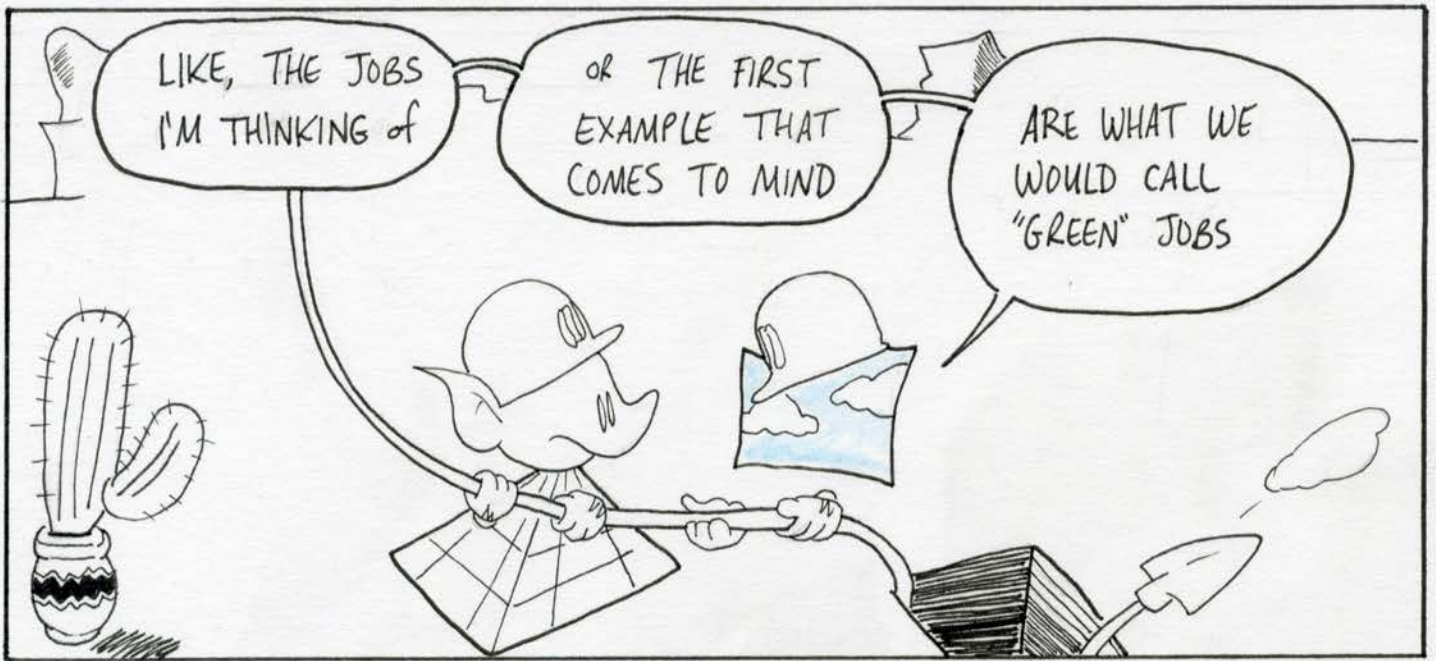


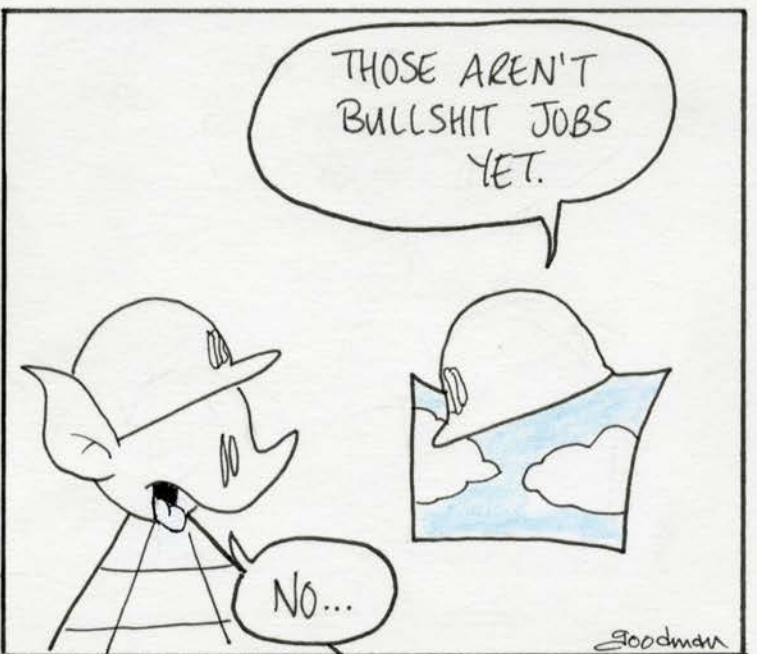
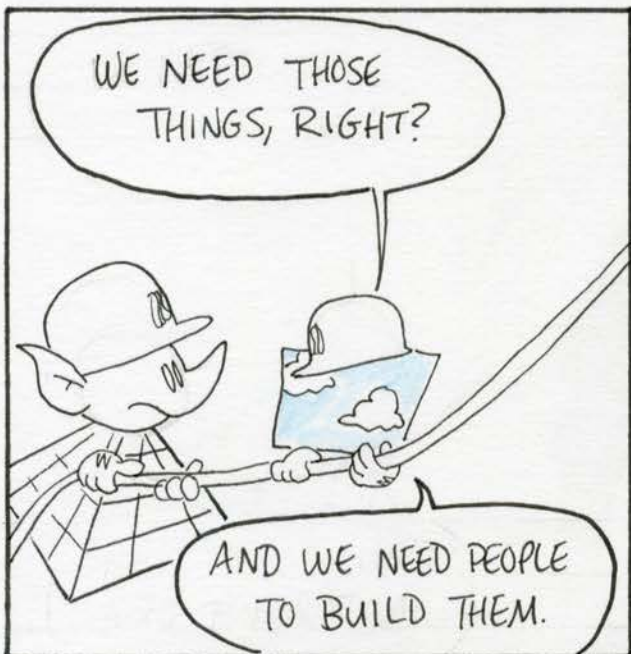
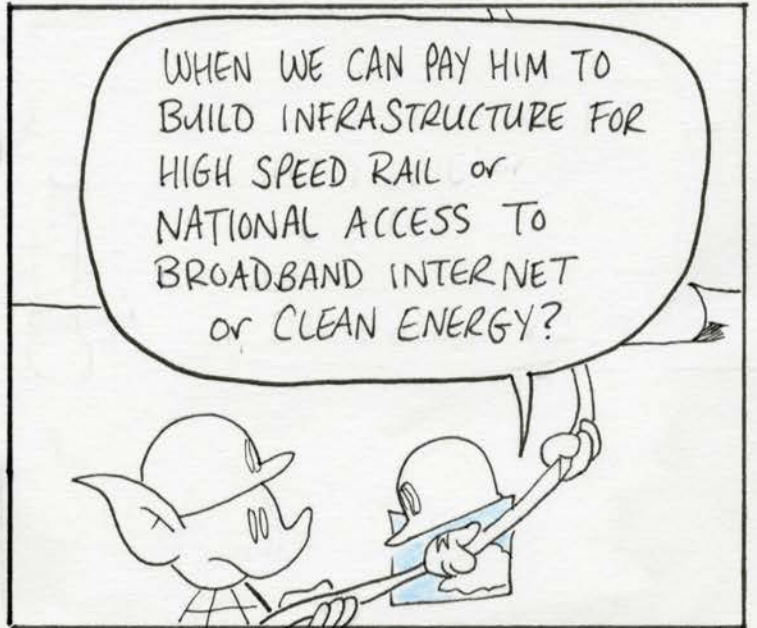
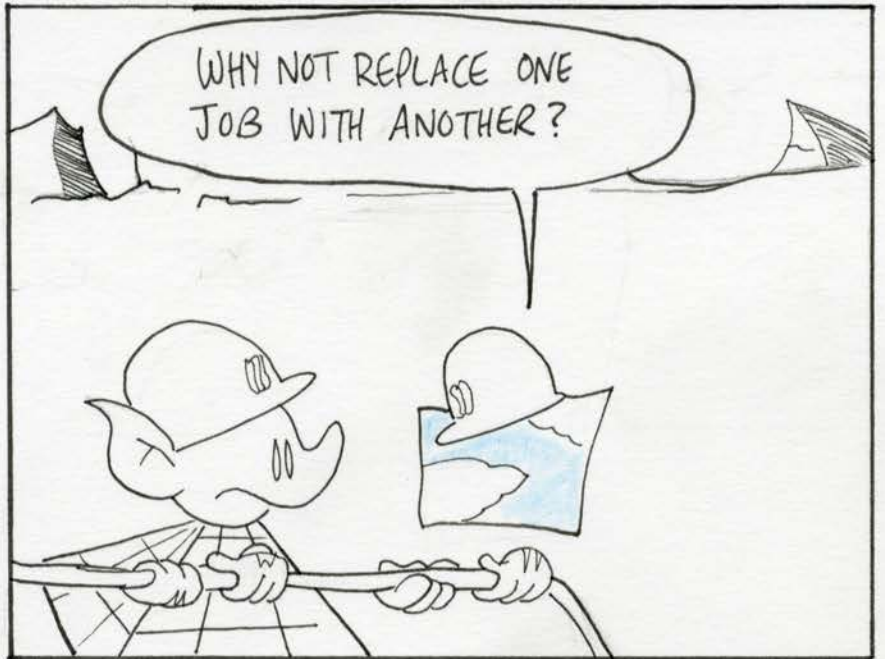
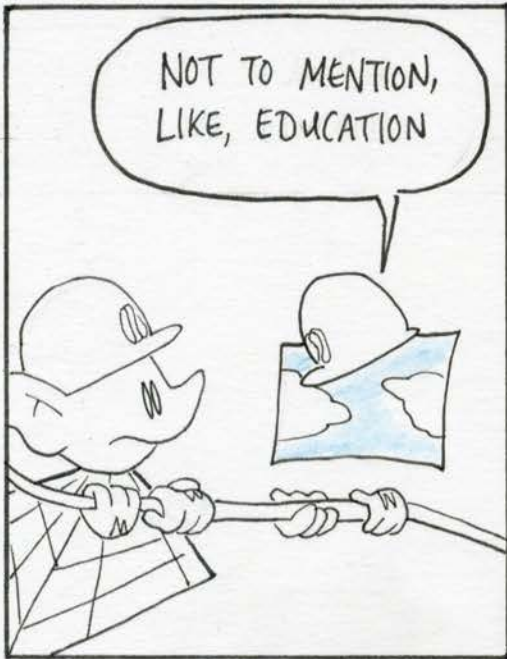
I THINK
WHAT I'M
SUGGESTING IS...

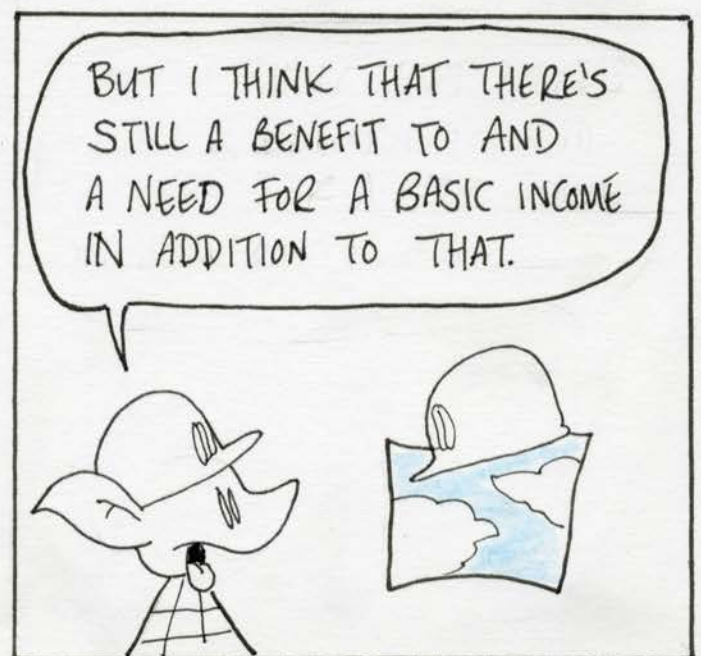
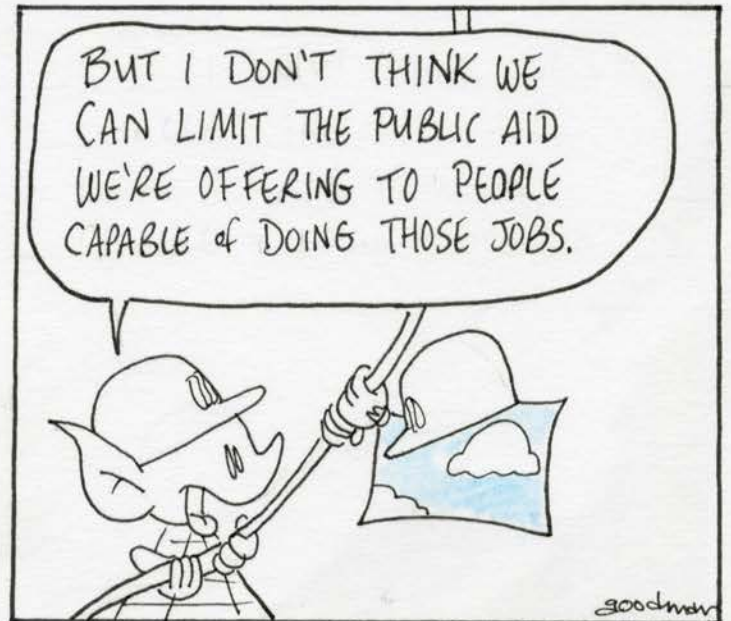
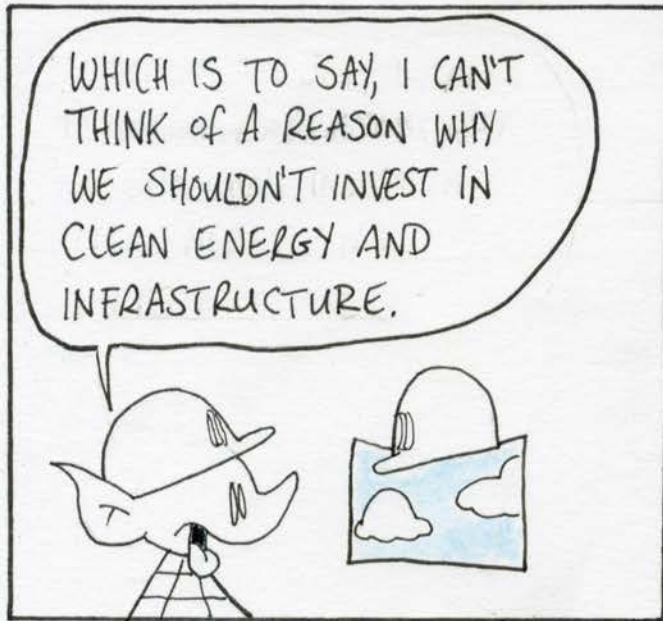
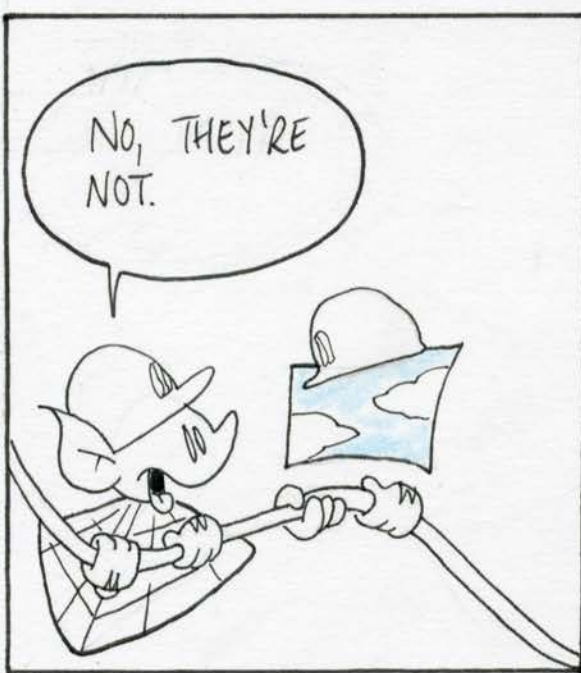


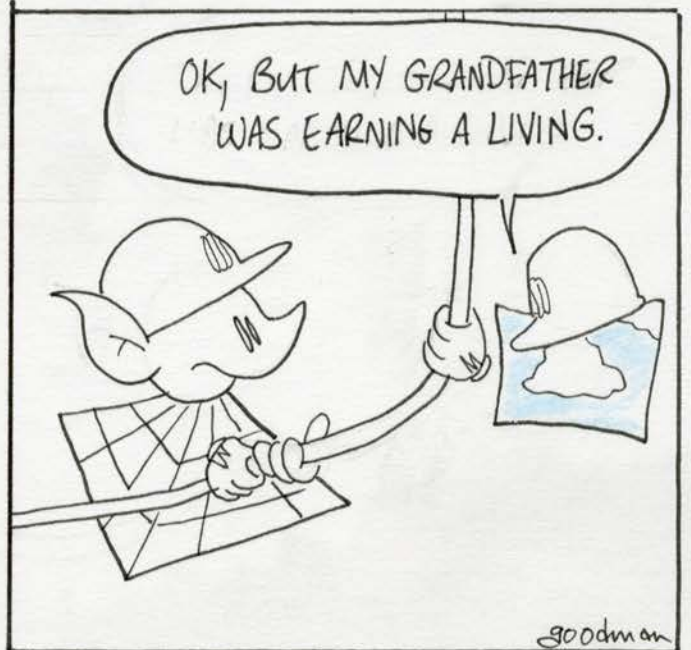
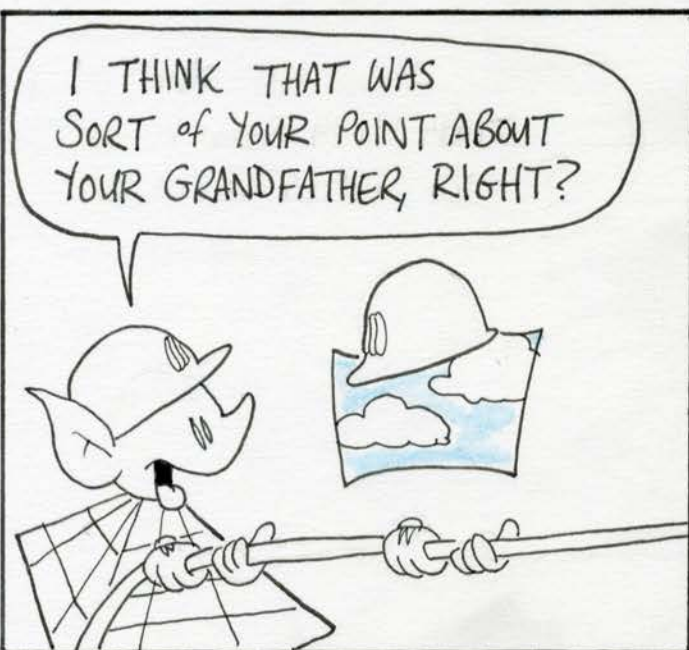
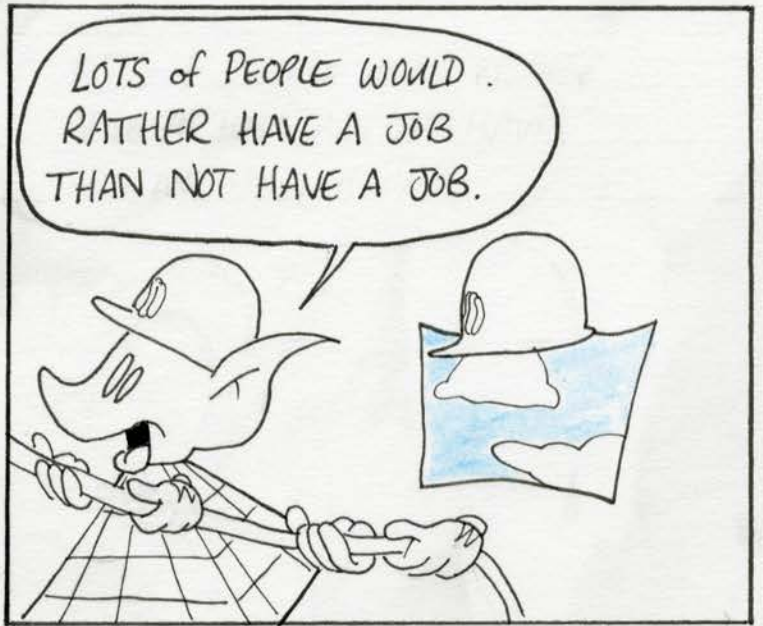
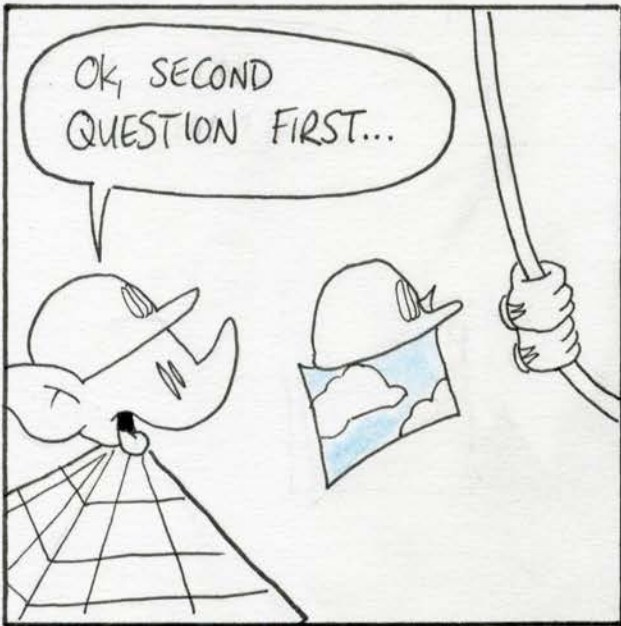
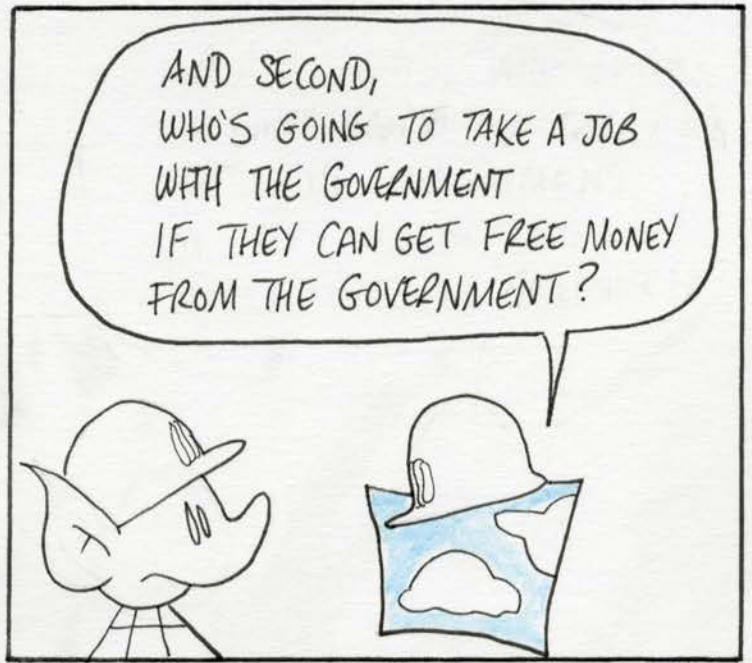
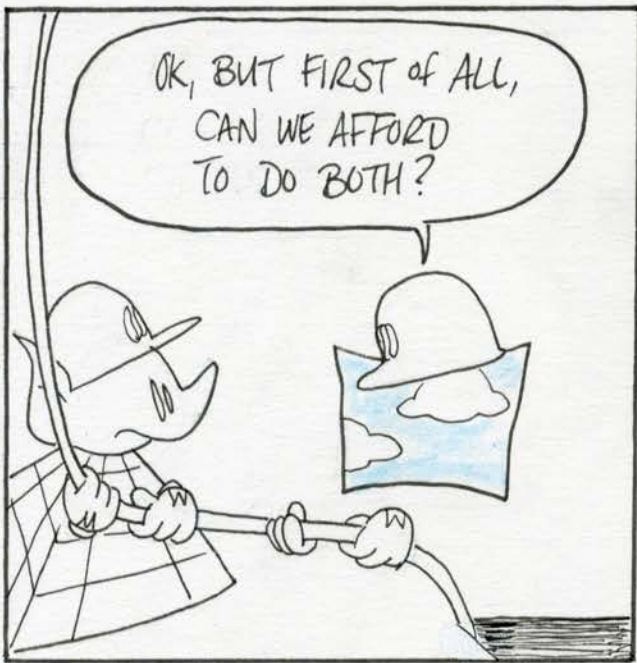
WHY GUARANTEE EMPLOYMENT
WHEN INSTEAD WE CAN
GUARANTEE THE RIGHT
NOT TO BE EMPLOYED?

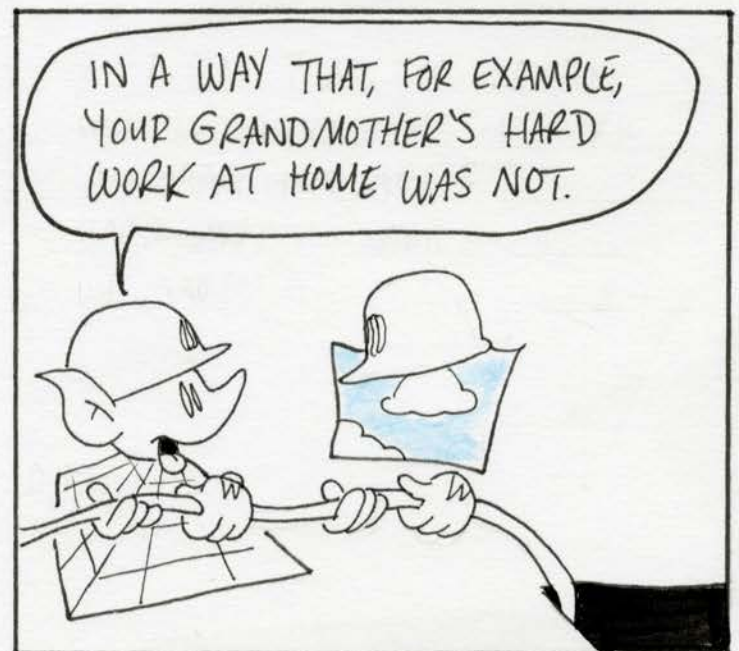
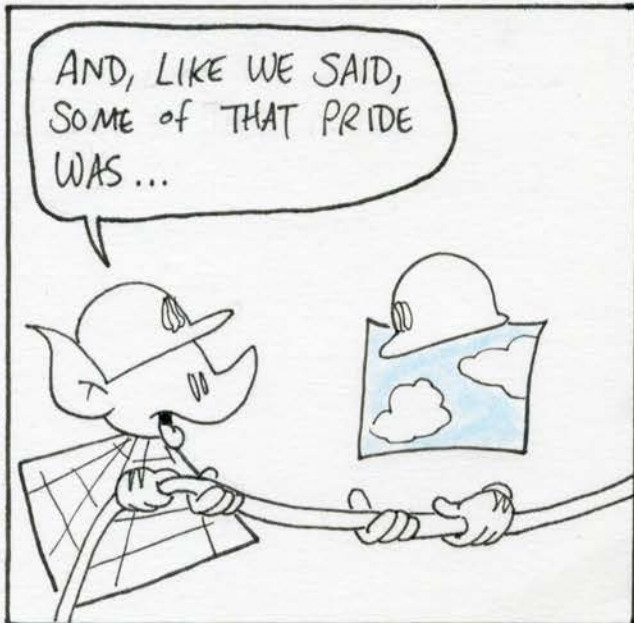
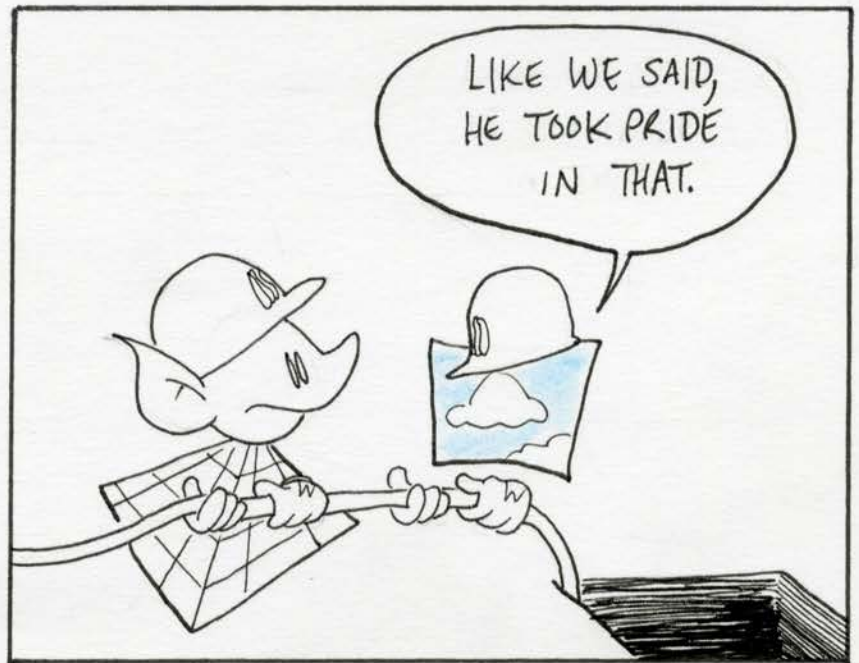




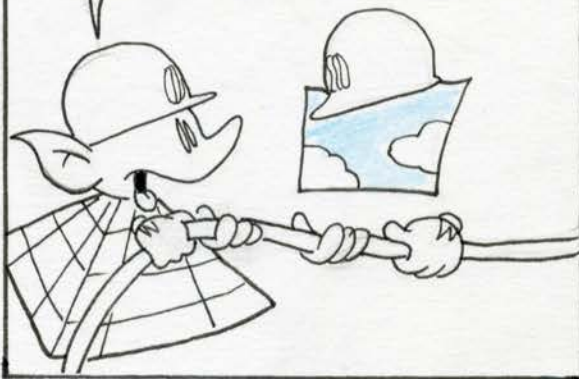




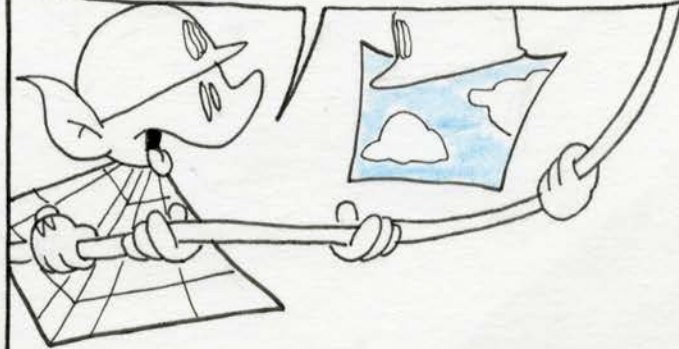




EVEN THOUGH BOTH THEIR LABOR WAS AIMED AT SUSTAINING AND SUPPORTING THE FAMILY.

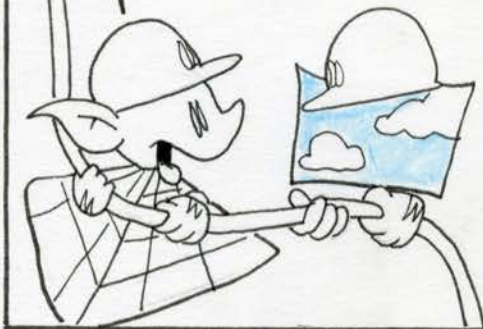


AND AS WE'VE SAID, THE KIND OF WORK YOUR GRANDFATHER WAS DOING IS NOT BEING REWARDED FINANCIALLY IN THE SAME WAY TODAY.

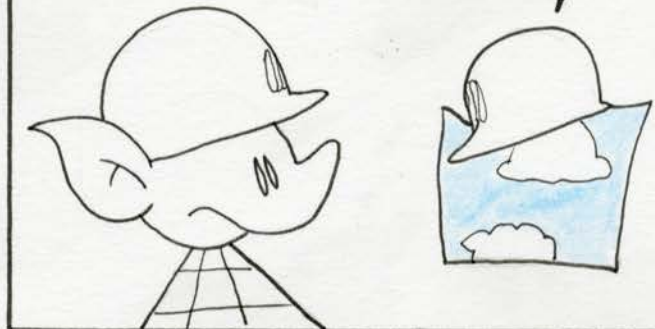


goodman

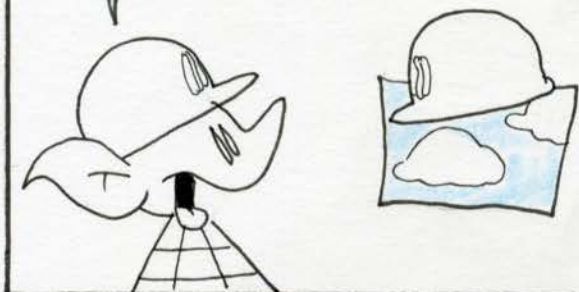
AND SO, I THINK WE HAVE TO MOVE FORWARD FROM THAT.



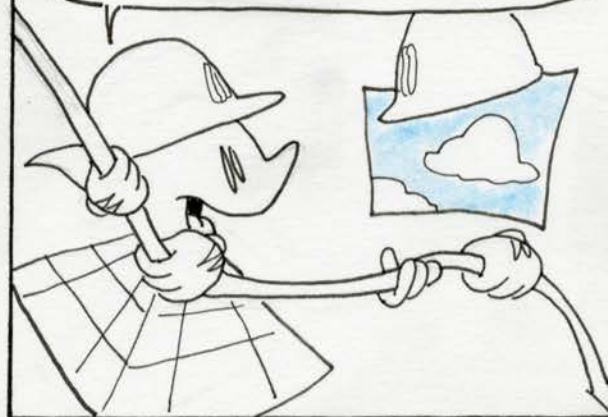
I THINK THAT'D BE HARD FOR A LOT OF PEOPLE TO HEAR.



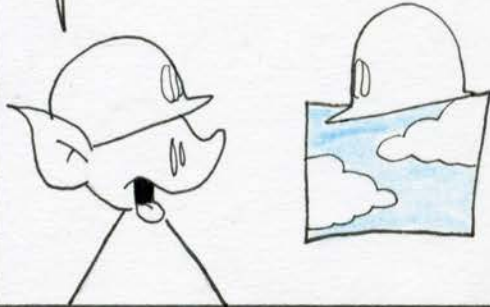
YES, BUT IT'S ONLY BECAUSE CAPITALISM HAS REDUCED LABOR TO PROFITABILITY THAT WE'RE IN THIS SITUATION.



THOSE PEOPLE ARE NOT WRONG THAT HUMAN LABOR OUGHT TO HAVE INHERENT VALUE.



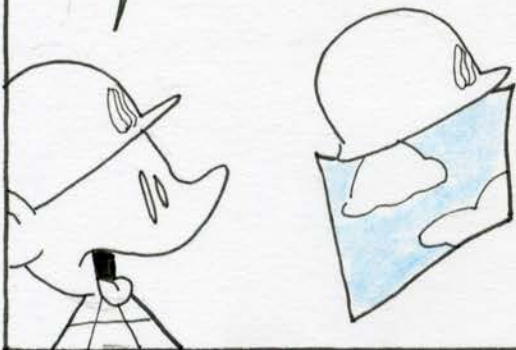
BUT IT CAN ONLY REALLY HAVE THAT INHERENT VALUE IF WE CAN LET GO OF THE IDEA THAT IT HAS INHERENT FINANCIAL VALUE.



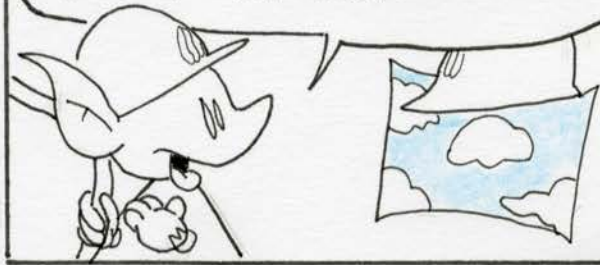
BECAUSE, RIGHT NOW, WE HAVE TROUBLE SEEING THAT THINGS HAVE VALUE IF THEY DON'T HAVE VALUE IN THE MARKETPLACE.



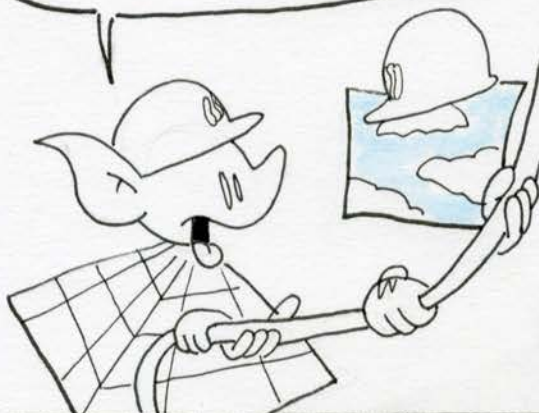
THAT'S WHAT WE WERE TALKING ABOUT WITH THE HOUSEWIVES GOING NEXT DOOR.



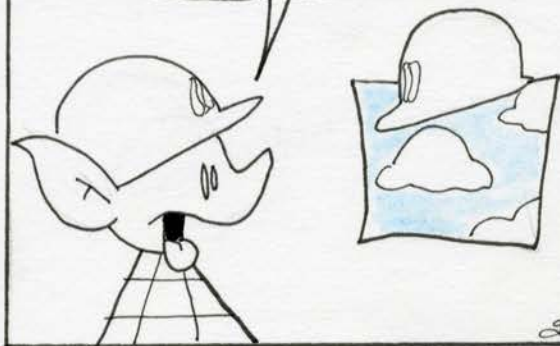
AND THE FACT IS THAT AS WE GO FORWARD, HUMAN WORK IS GOING TO HAVE A HARDER AND HARDER TIME COMPETING WITH MACHINE WORK IN THE MARKETPLACE...



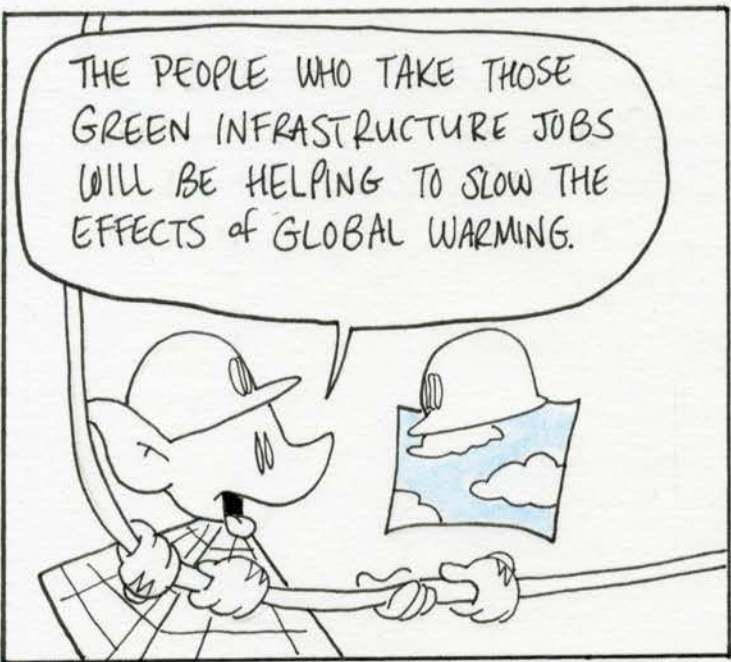
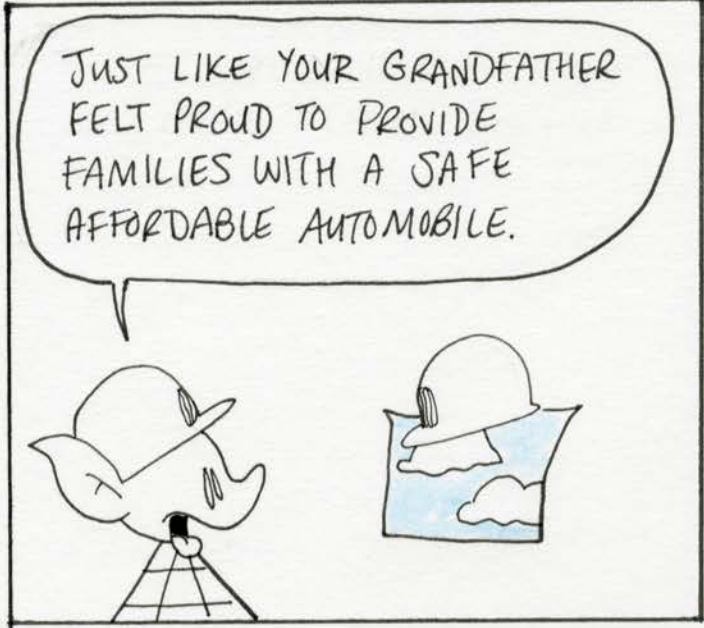
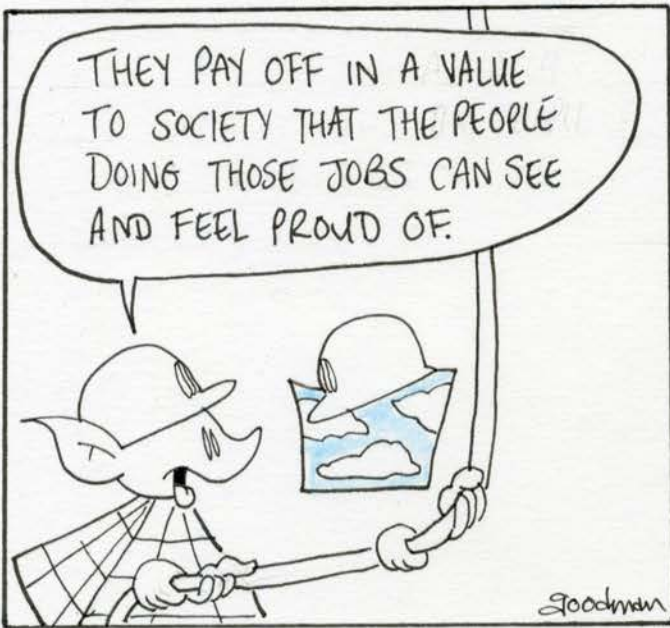
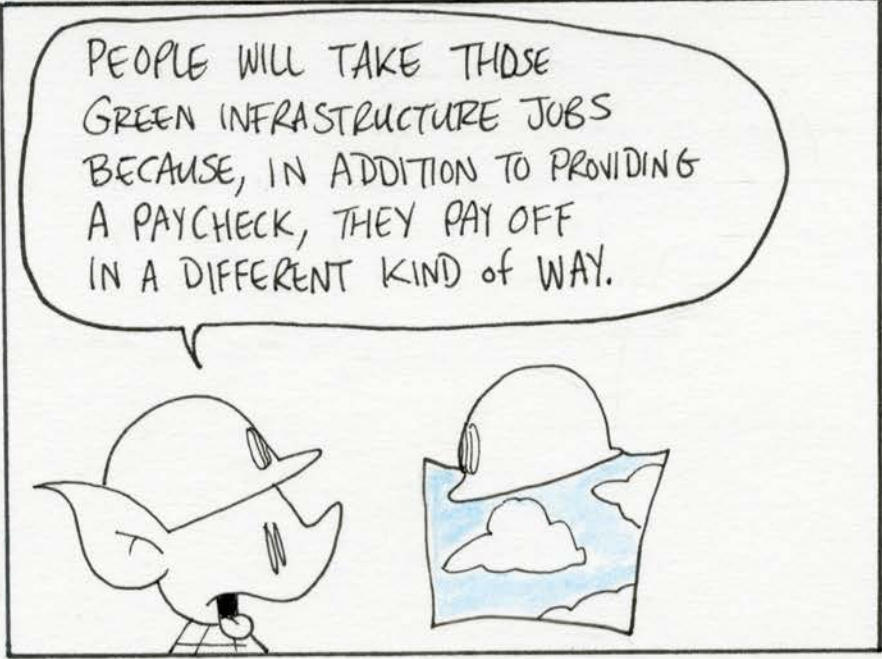
GIVEN THE WAY THAT WE HAVE THE MARKETPLACE SET UP RIGHT NOW.

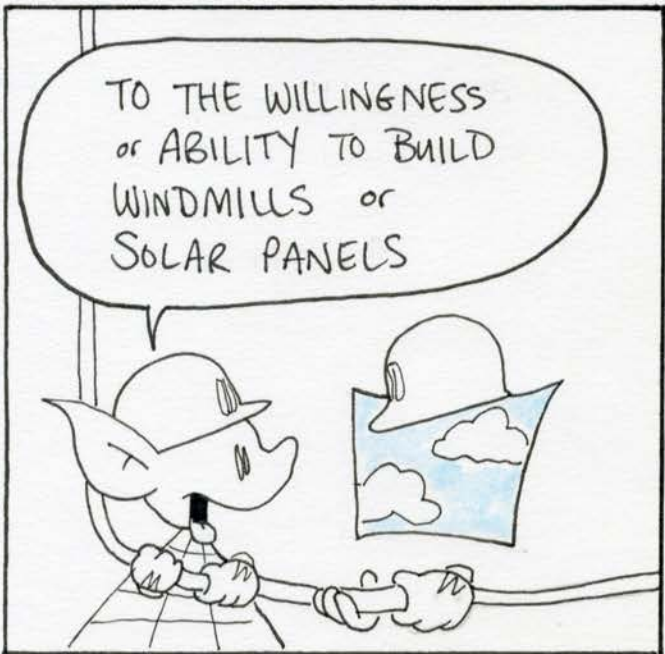
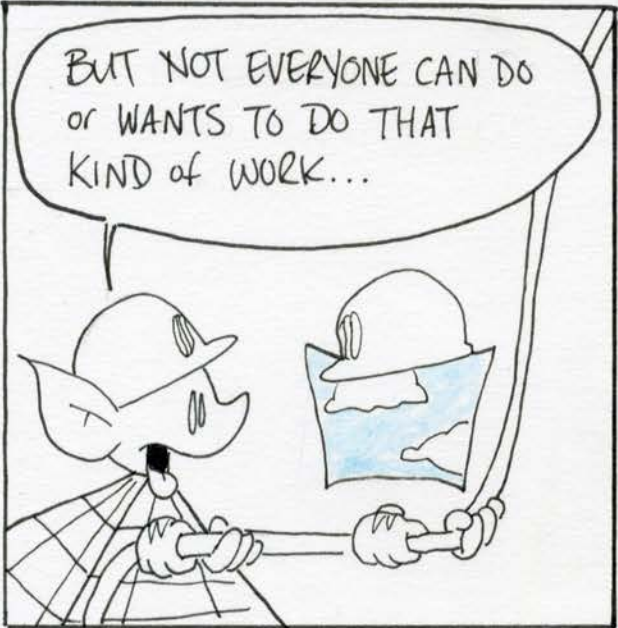
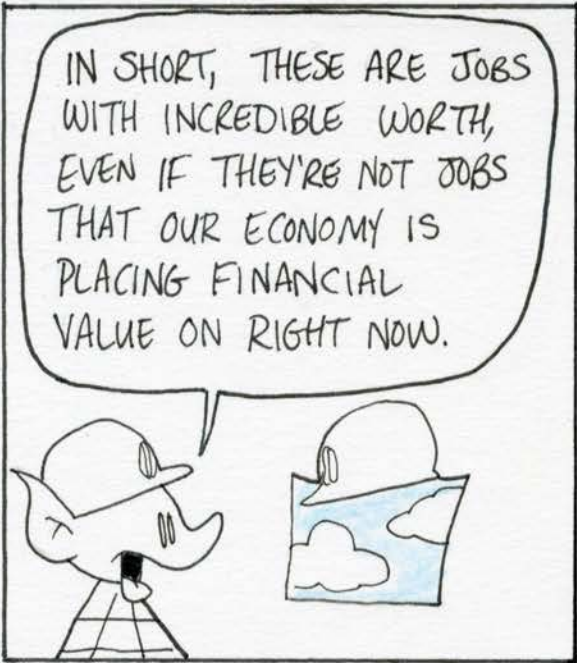


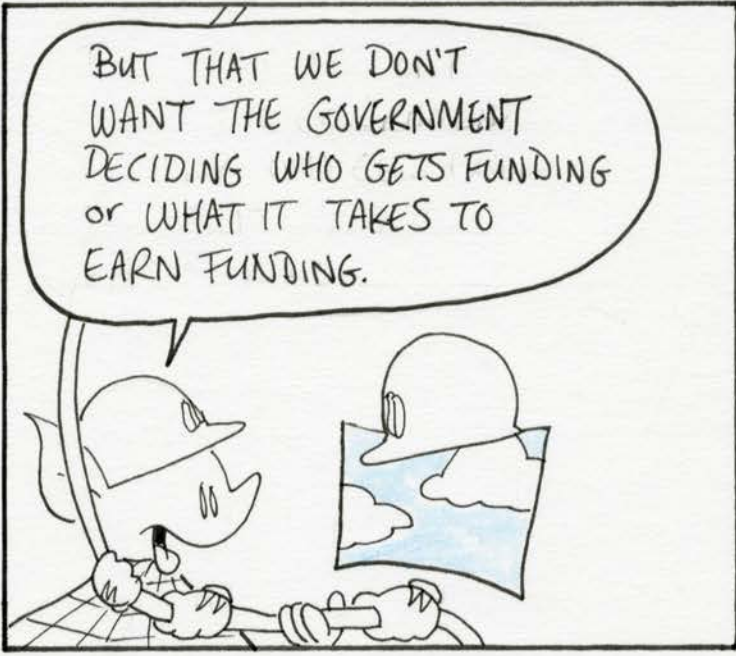
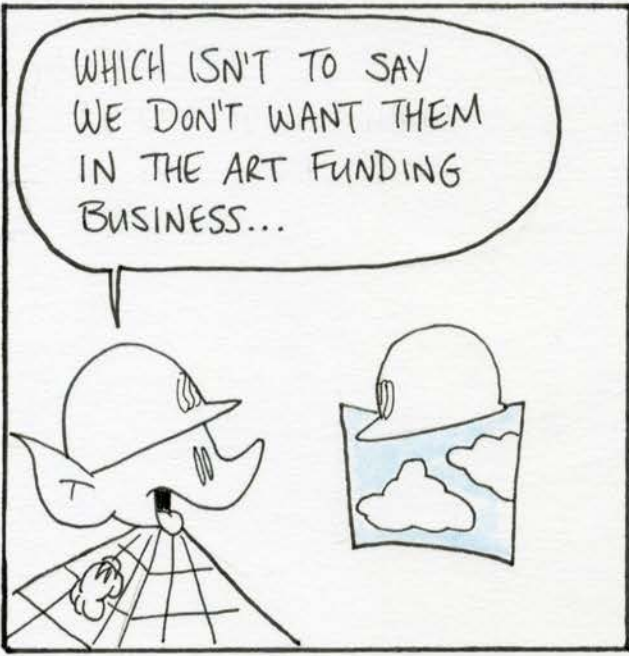
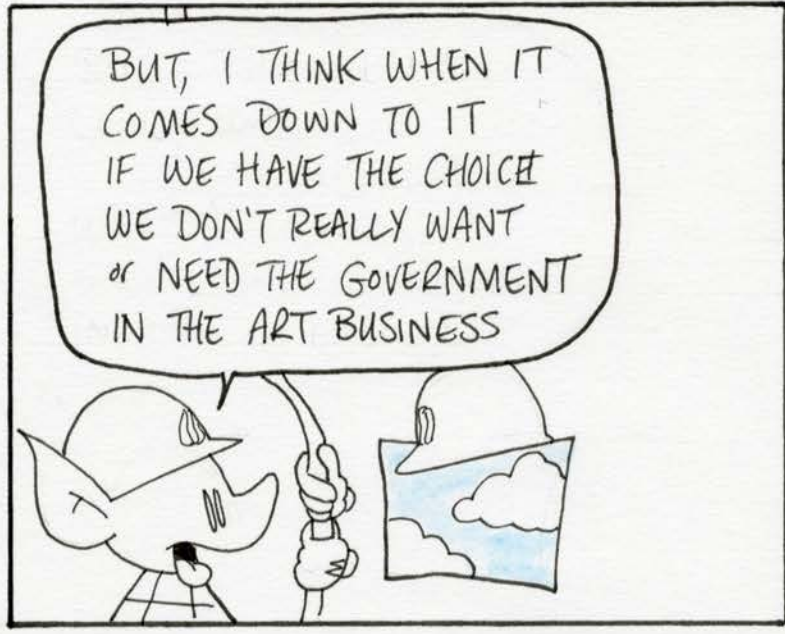
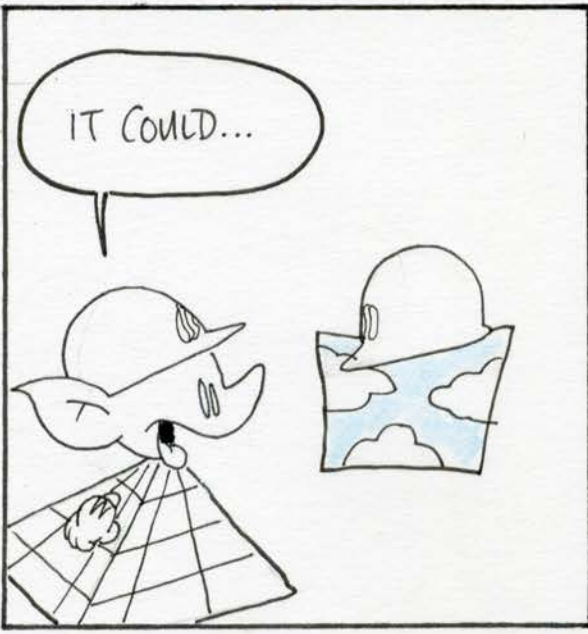
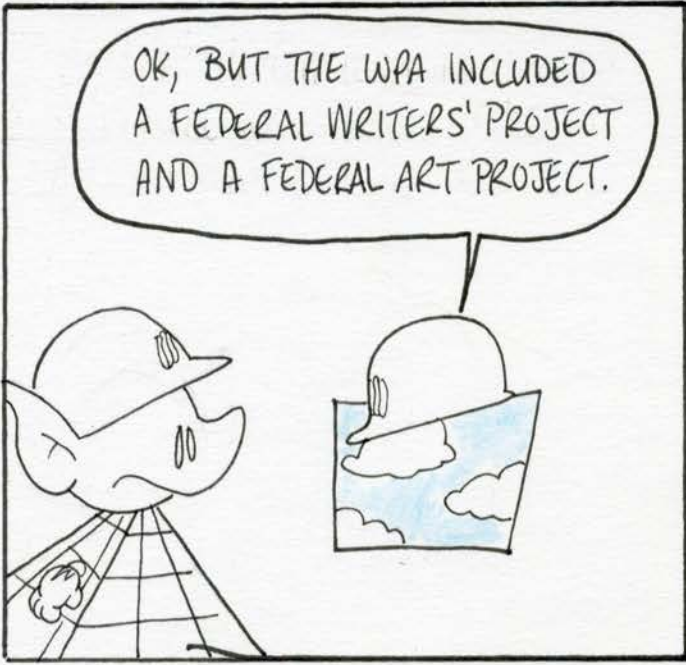
WHICH MEANS THAT WE'RE GOING TO HAVE TO GET BACK IN TOUCH WITH ANOTHER KIND OF VALUE.

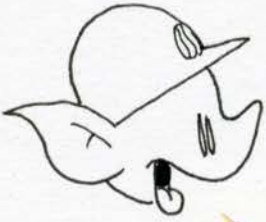


goodman





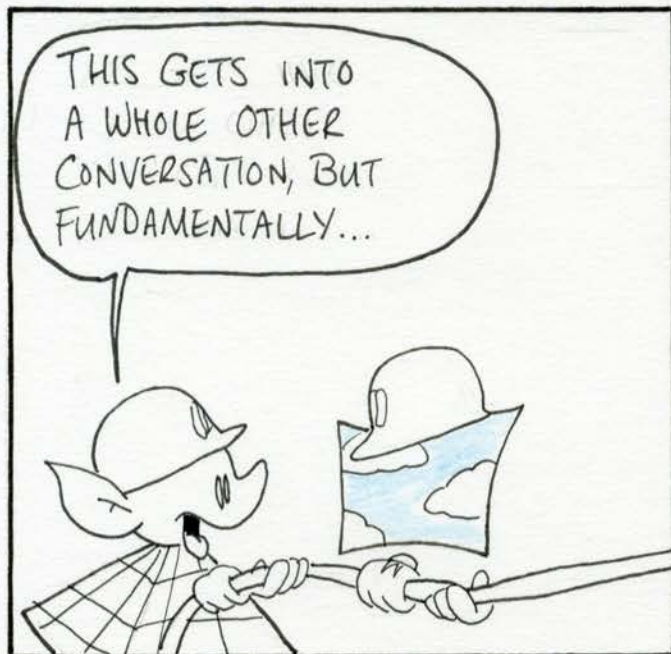
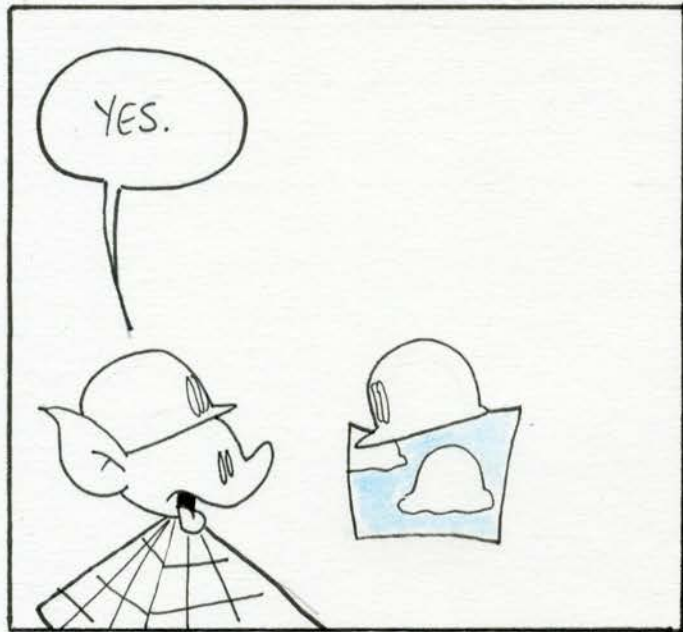
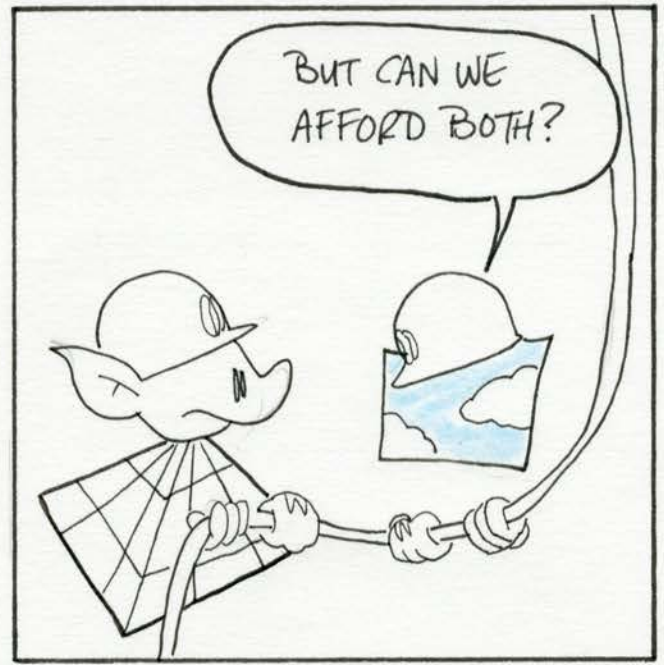
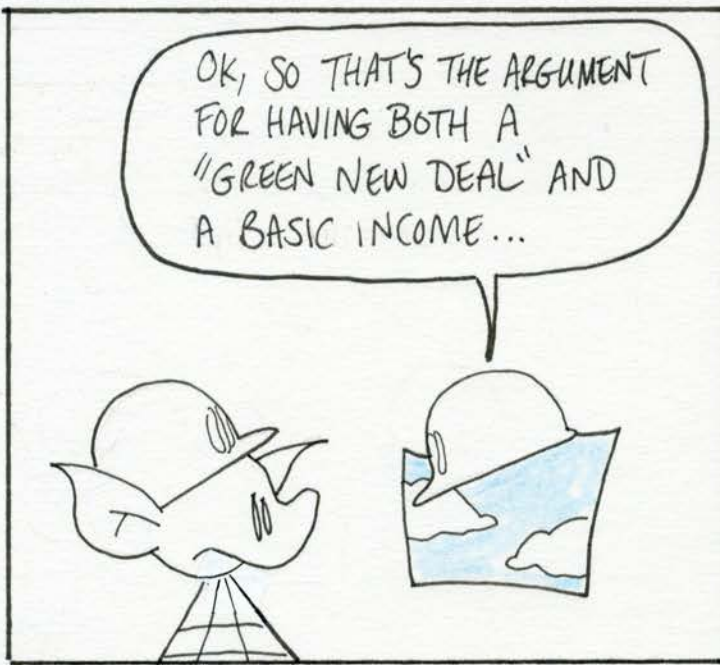


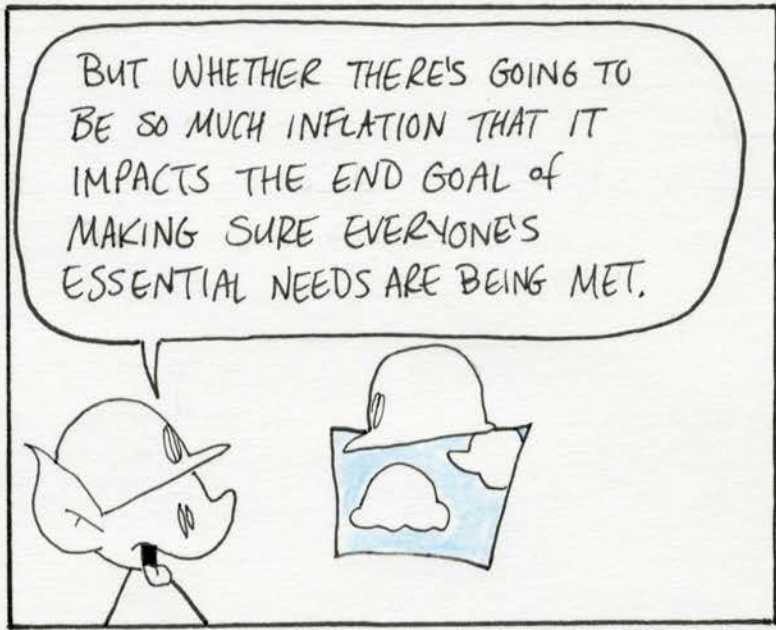
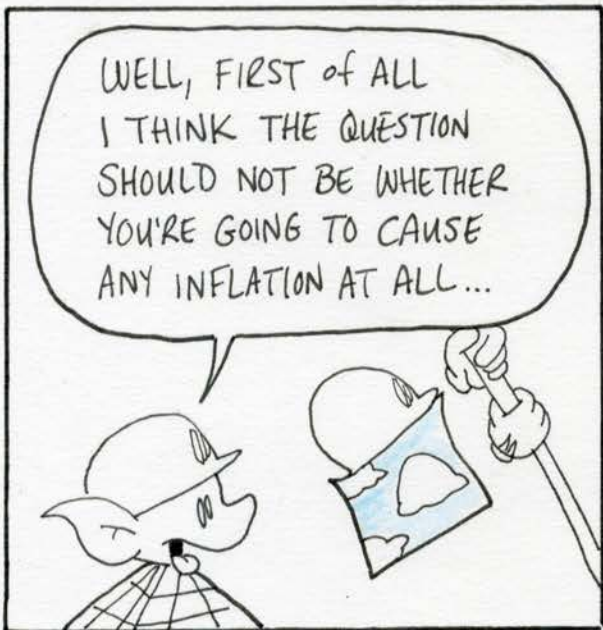
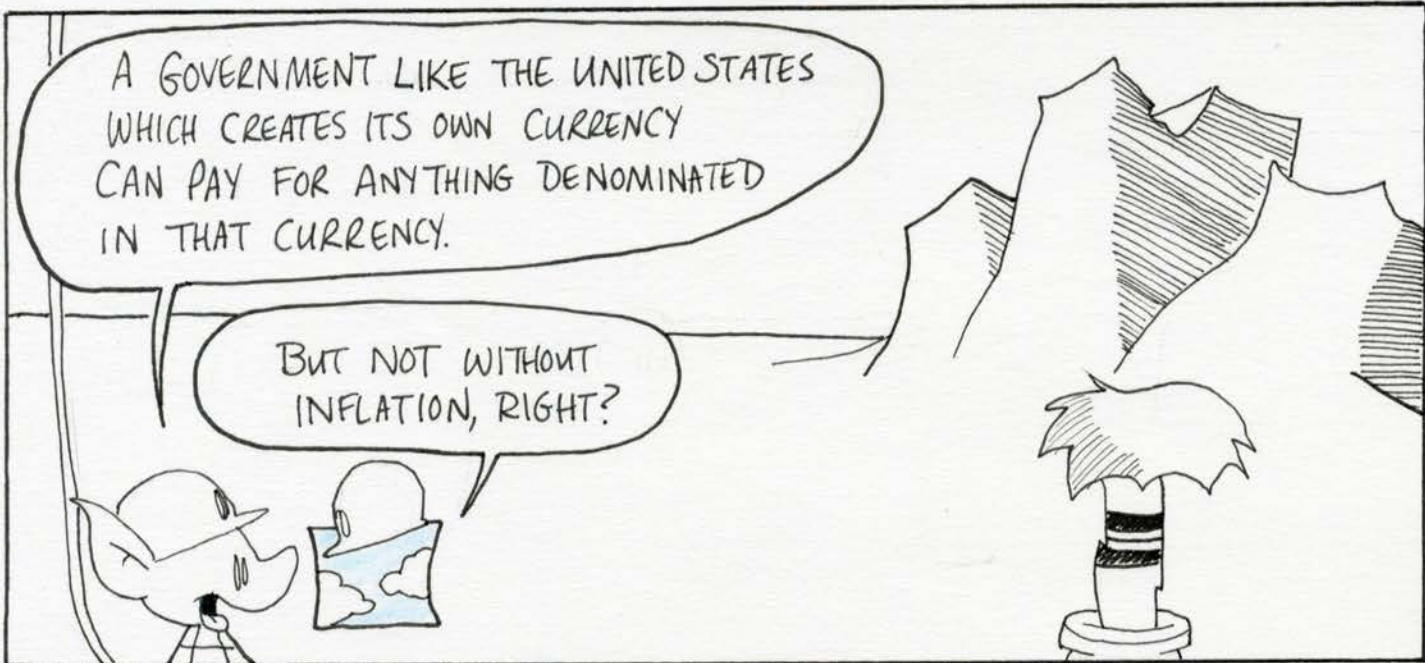


I think that the Green New Deal idea makes sense because I think that it does take government intervention to push the kind of long-range thinking and planning involved in growing clean energy infrastructure & infrastructure in general. There's no way that that can really come from individual initiative, so it's either got to come from corporate initiative or from government initiative and I think that there's no question that, when it's in place, we'd rather have that infrastructure be publicly-owned rather than monopolized the way utilities like internet and mobile services have been.

But, I think that, by contrast, art and other kinds of innovation do come from unencumbered individual impulses and inspiration. —not that collaboration doesn't play an important part, But I don't think that oversight does. So, I think that we're better off lifting everyone with basic income just like the parents of forty percent of (mostly white) millennials are already doing and letting people decide for themselves what they do with that boost.

And, again, not everyone wants to make art or write and no matter how many new public works projects we come up with, we're always going to be leaving people out.





If the goal that we're setting is to make sure that everyone is having certain essential needs met, the question is whether there are enough human and natural resources available to meet those needs.

I think there are.

Take food for example:

Tons of food gets thrown away every day by grocery stores and restaurants in the US.

If you gave people money to buy that food, you wouldn't cause inflation, because the food already exists to be bought. Inflation only comes about when there's more money going after the same finite amount of goods, like, say, imported oil in the 70s.

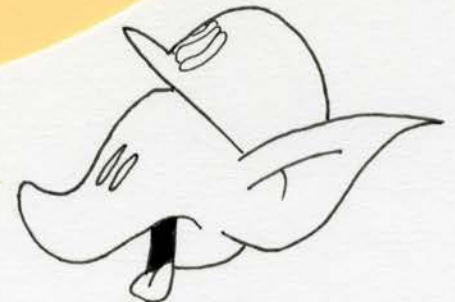
(yet another argument for renewable energy)

So, providing a basic level of dignity for everyone without causing inflation is really just a matter of finding the right way to manage resources.

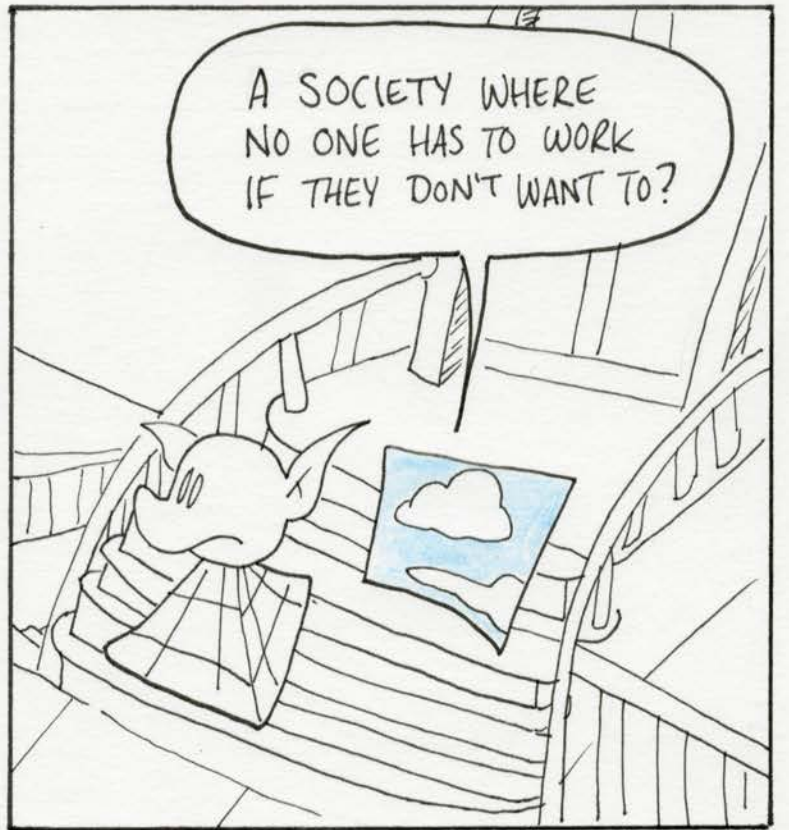
The answer is probably some combination of basic income, socializing universal needs like healthcare, government initiatives like a Green New Deal, and affordable credit for people looking to start new businesses.

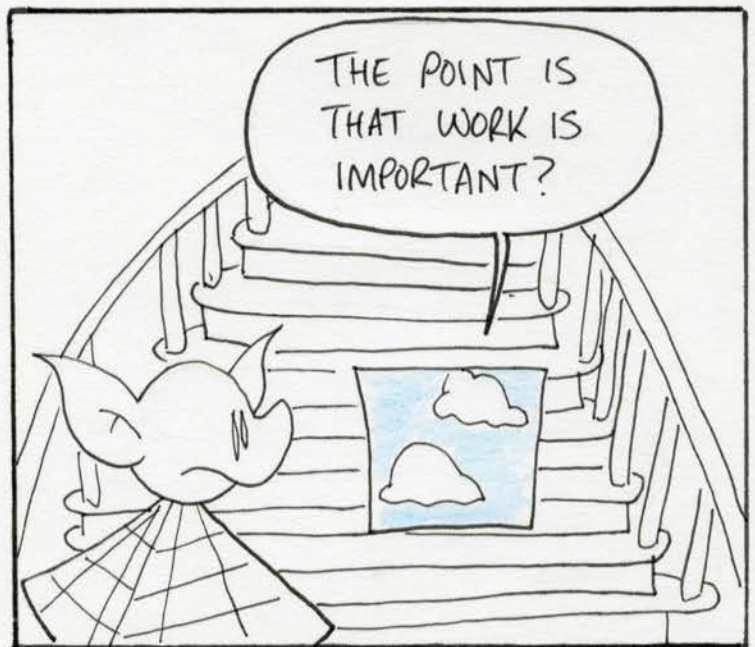
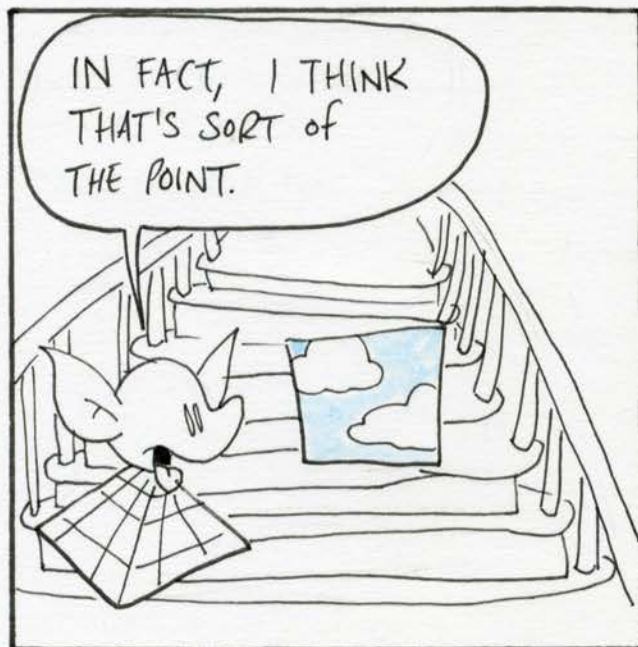
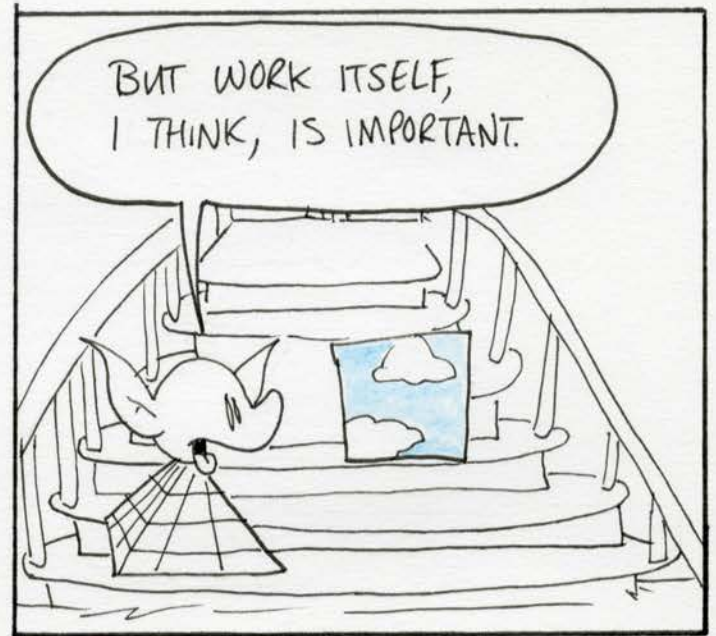
But the question is not whether we can afford it. Again, without getting into the macroeconomics of sovereign currencies, the United States can afford anything that is priced in dollars and is in the best interests of the people of the United States of America.

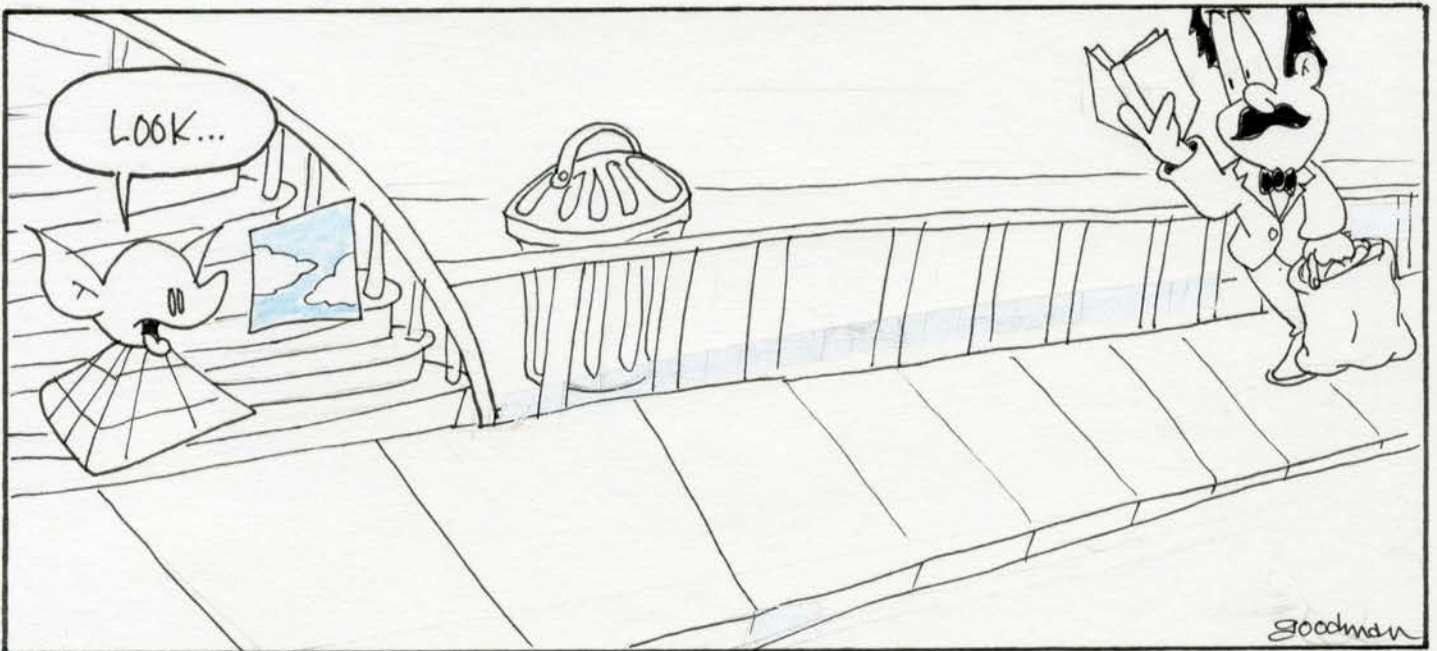
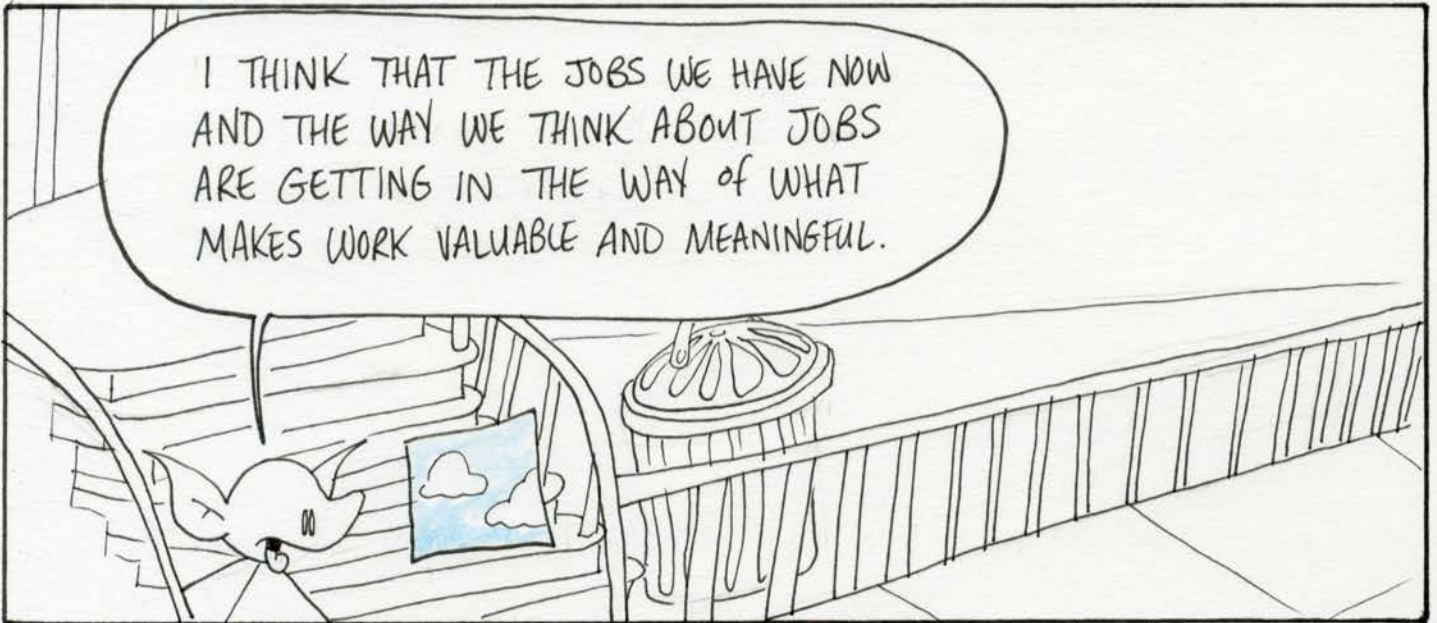
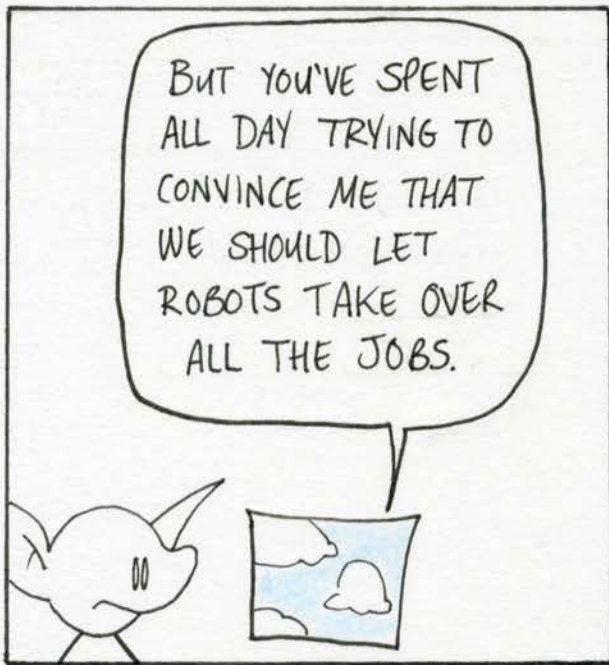
The real question, at the risk of sounding glib, is whether we can afford not to do this.



goodman





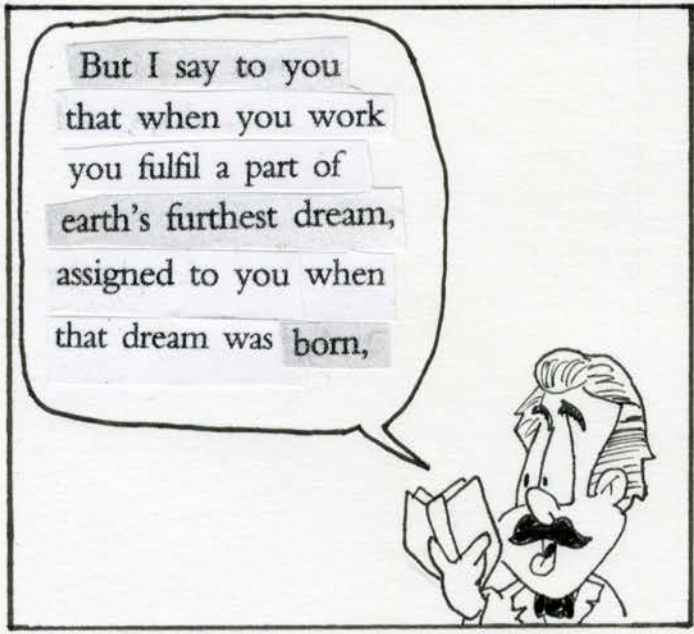


goodman

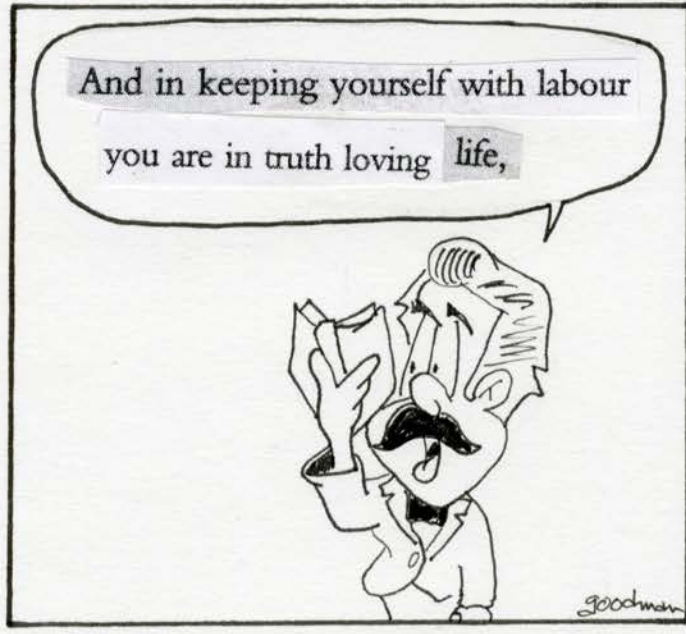


KAHLIL GIBRAN HAS A SECTION OF HIS POEM THE PROPHET CALLED "ON WORK" IN WHICH HE WRITES...

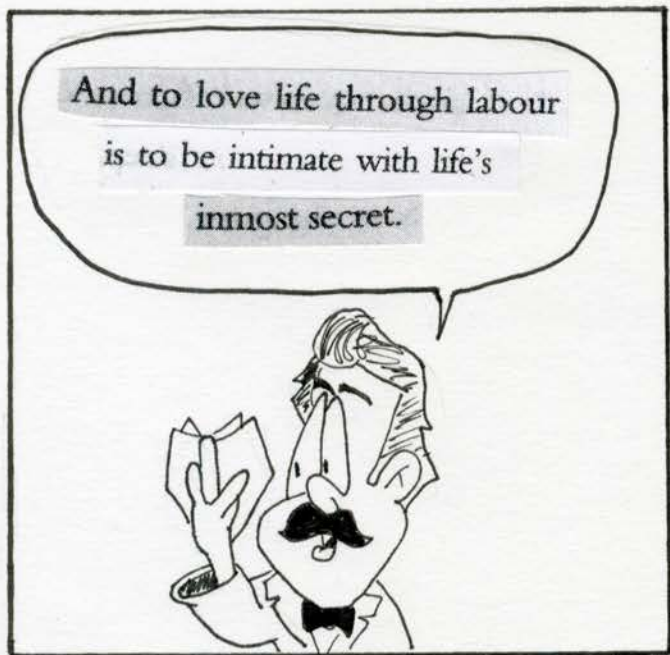
Always you have been told that work is a curse and labour a misfortune.



But I say to you that when you work you fulfil a part of earth's furthest dream, assigned to you when that dream was born,



And in keeping yourself with labour you are in truth loving life,

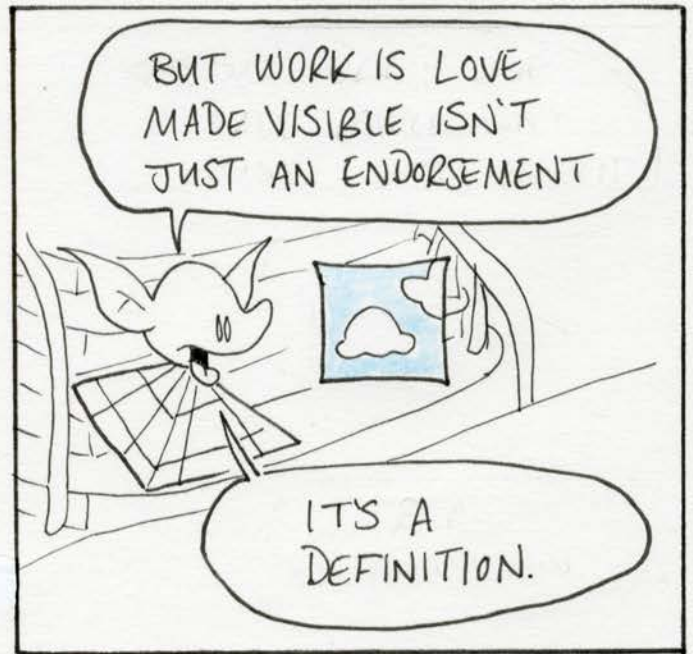
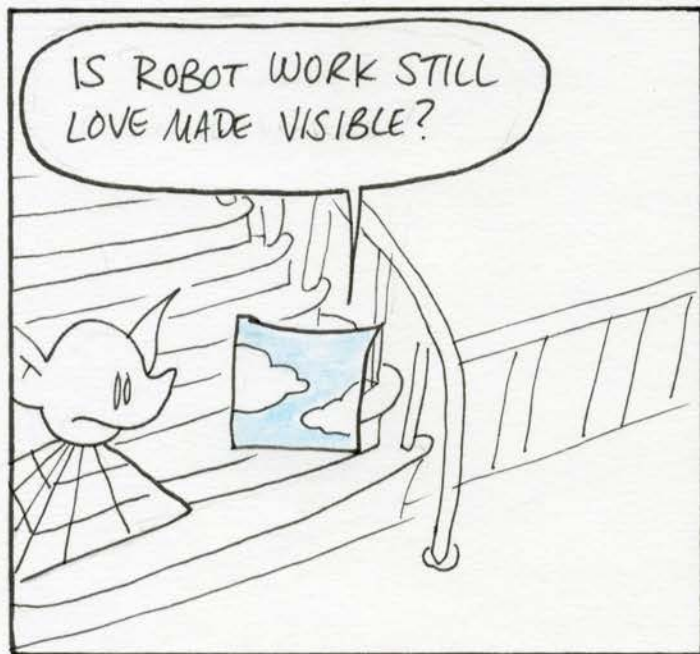
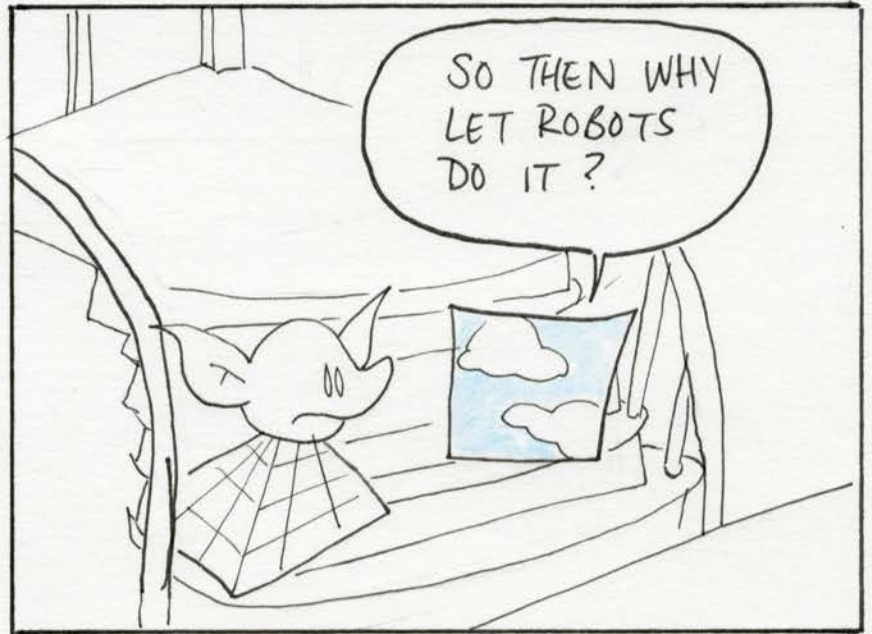


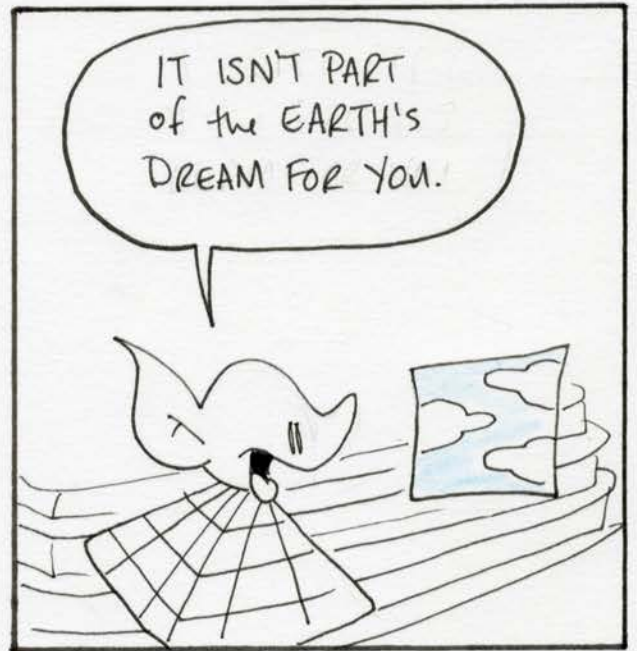
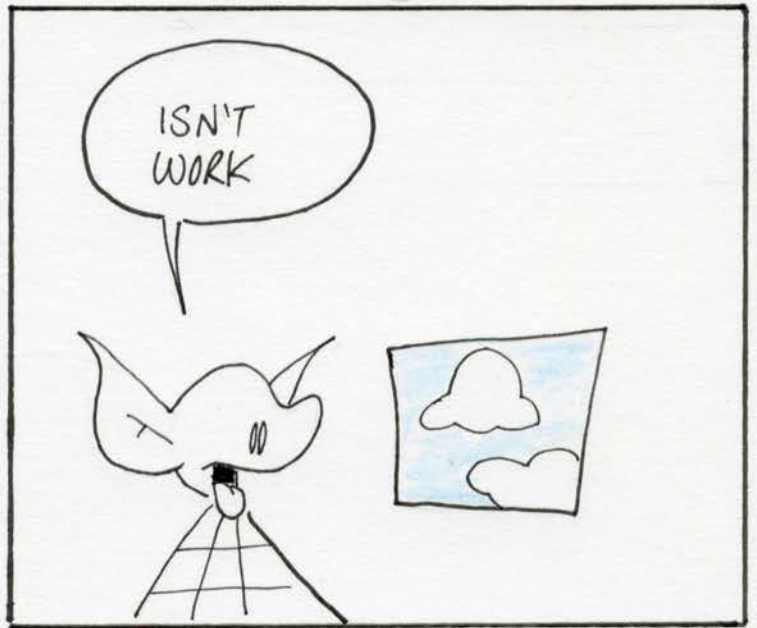
And to love life through labour is to be intimate with life's inmost secret.

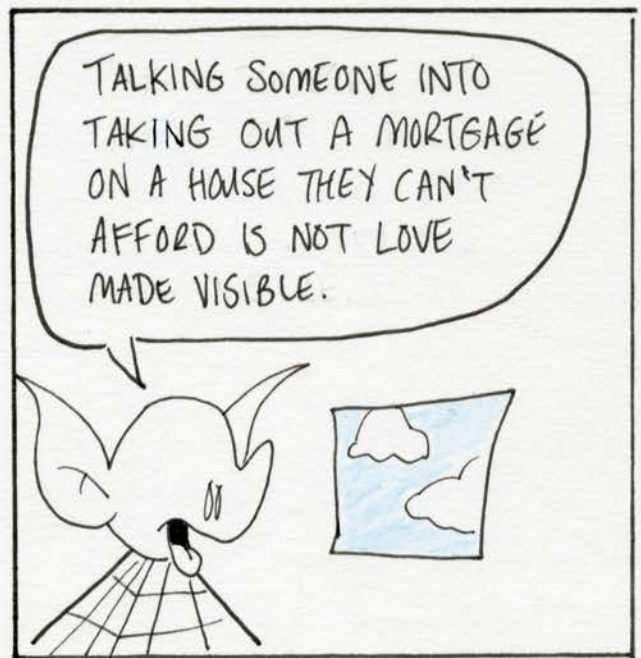
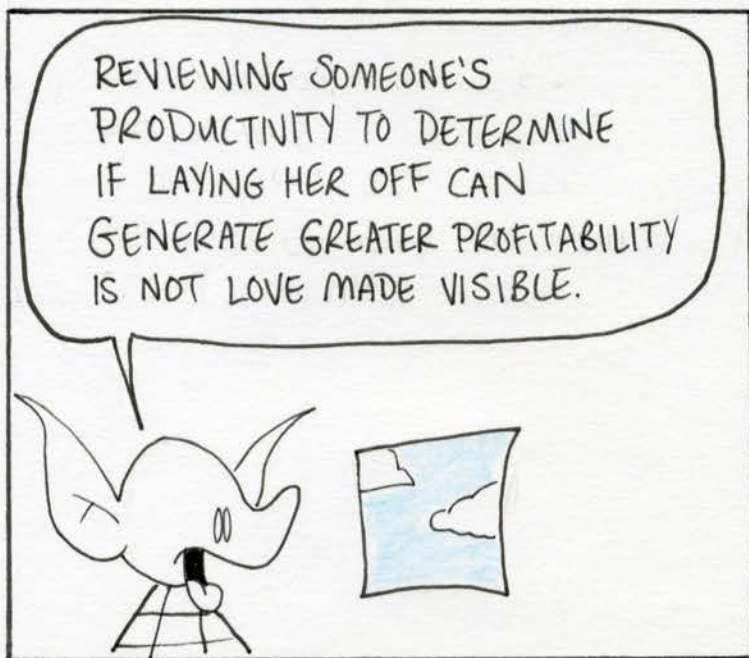
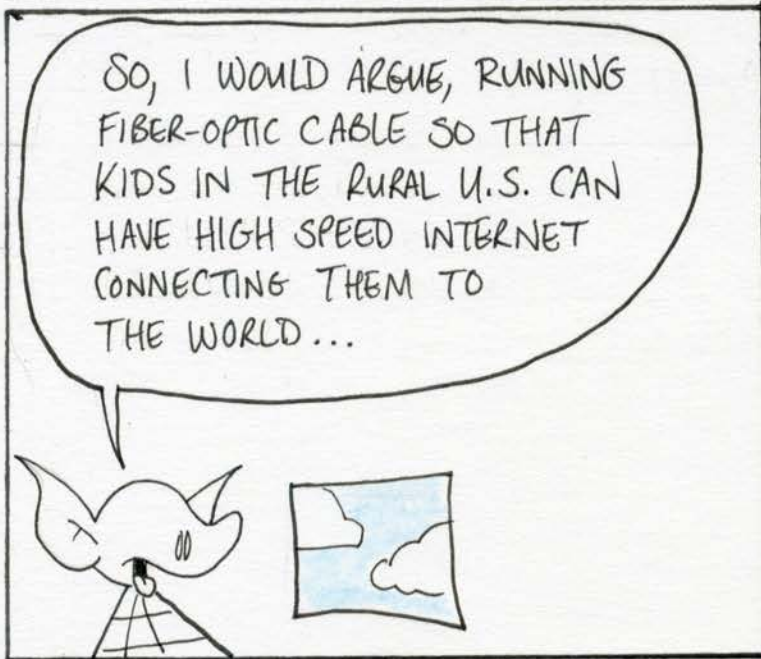


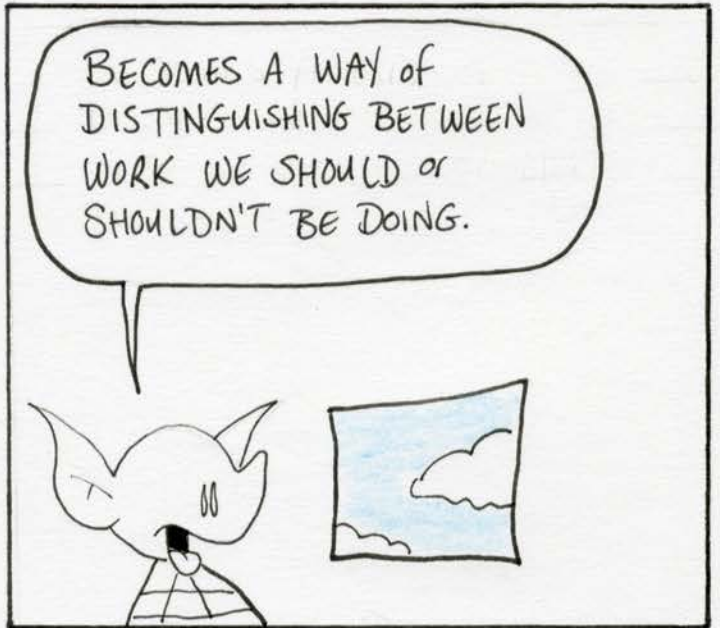
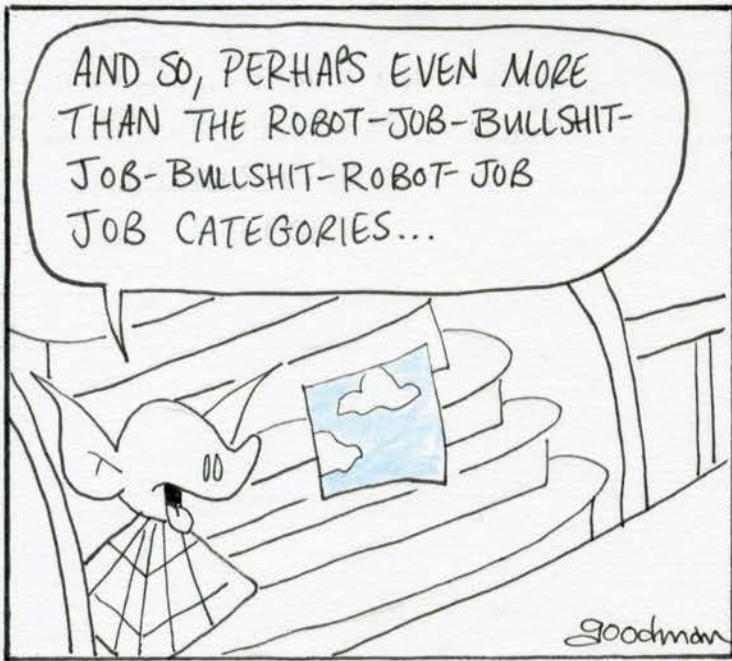
AND HE GOES ON TO SAY:

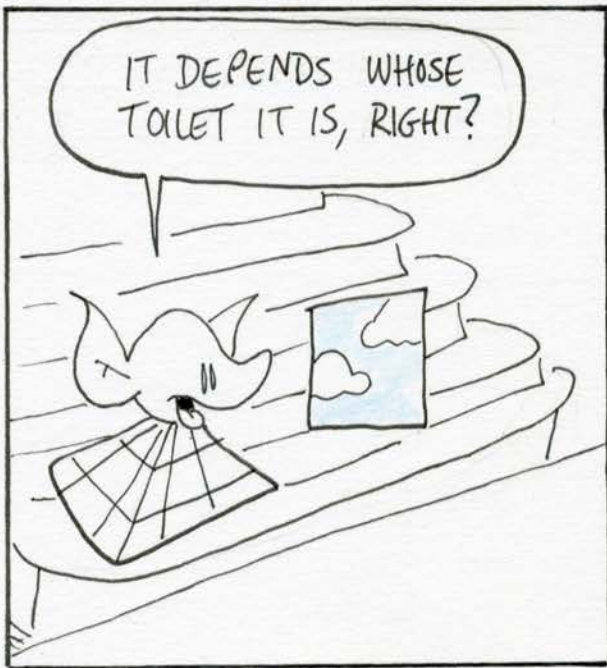
Work is love made visible.













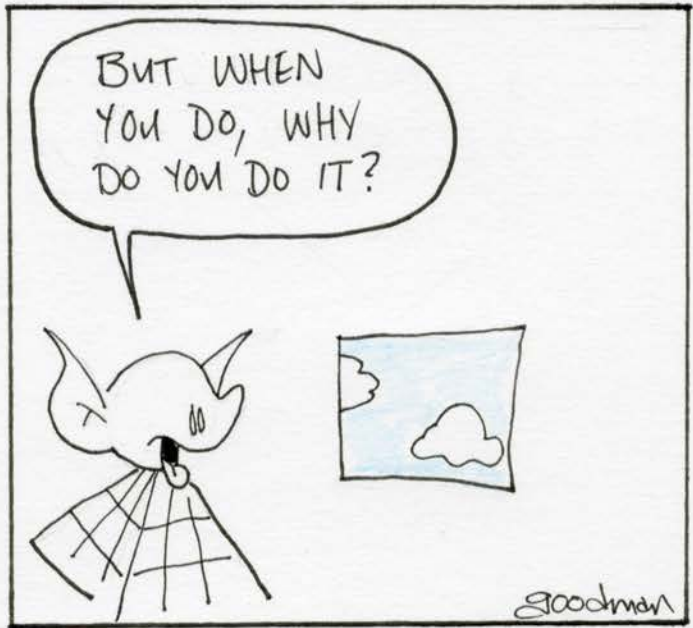
UNTIL IT GETS REALLY GROSS



OR I HAVE PEOPLE COMING OVER.



I KNOW I SHOULD CLEAN IT MORE, I JUST DON'T.



BUT WHEN YOU DO, WHY DO YOU DO IT?

goodman



SO IT'LL BE CLEAN



SO YOU CLEAN IT SO IT'LL BE CLEAN...

You clean it to create a more hygienic,
more pleasant, bathroom experience
for yourself, for your guests,
for your spouse or your roommates.

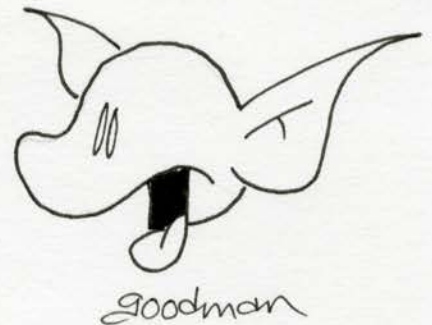
I would argue that cleaning your own toilet
is a labor of at least a little love,
whether it's love for yourself
or your guests
or love for the people you live with
who won't have to clean it because you've cleaned it.

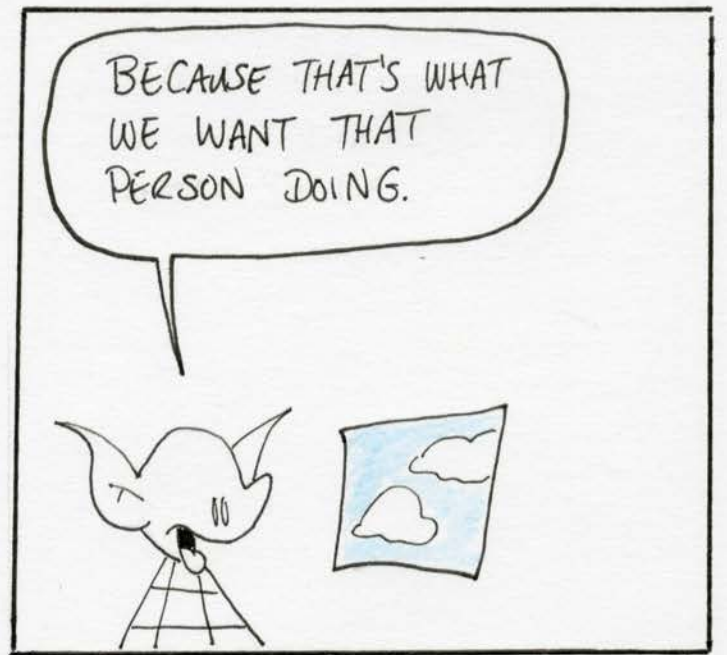
That doesn't mean you love doing it—
if a robot could do it, that would probably be fine with you—
but cleaning your own bathroom makes visible some love
for the users of your bathroom.

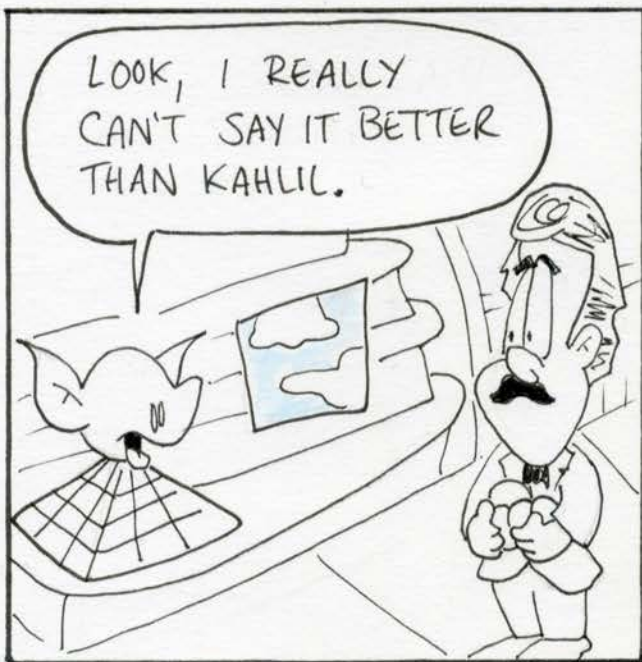
Cleaning someone else's bathroom,
though,
is not fundamentally love made visible.
(& here I'm not talking about
cleaning the bathroom of someone you love;
I'm talking about bathroom cleaning as a job

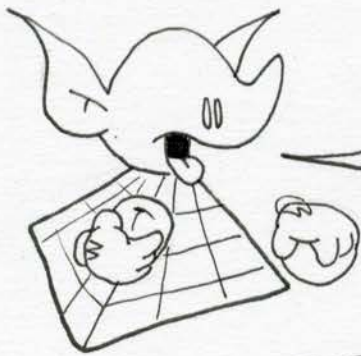
And, in fact,
that's the line:
If you love someone enough to clean their bathroom,
whether it's your child
or your significant other
or a sick friend or relative
who can't do it for themselves
or a stranger in a nursing home
or kids at an understaffed school,
that's love made visible.
That's work.
The rest is not.

The rest is a punishment
that capitalism inflicts on people
for the crime of needing money.
And every moment spent serving that sentence
is a moment not spent making love visible.









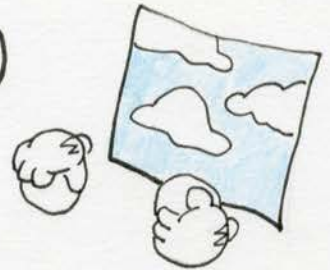
Work is love made visible.

And if you cannot work with love but only with distaste, it is better that you should leave your work and sit at the gate of the temple and take alms of those who work with joy.

For if you bake bread with indifference, you bake a bitter bread that feeds but half man's hunger.

And if you grudge the crushing of the grapes, your grudge distils a poison in the wine.

And if you sing though as angels, and love not the singing, you muffle man's ears to the voices of the day and the voices of the night.



goodman

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