

VOX MEDIA, WHERE YOU CAN MAKE \$15 AN HOUR TO INSINUATE FIGHT FOR \$15 IS JUST ABOUT ALLITERATION

A lot of people are bitching about the sheer snottiness of this passage in a Vox piece arguing that fighting for \$15 minimum wage will lead, instead, to the automation of those minimum wage jobs.

The McDonald's experiment with touchscreen ordering systems illustrates the potential problem with making high minimum wages effective across big states like California and New York – both of which passed minimum wage increases this year. If McDonald's automates its locations in Manhattan, San Francisco, and Silicon Valley, displaced workers shouldn't have too much trouble finding alternative work in the booming economies of these cities as barbers, servers at full-service restaurants, nannies, and so forth. With lots of wealthy customers around, there's a robust demand for unskilled service workers there.

But the outlook might not be so rosy in cities like Fresno, California, or Rochester, New York, where the economy is not booming and average wages are much lower. If a \$15 minimum wage causes fast-food jobs to be automated in these cities, workers may not be able to find alternate work. A law designed to put more money in workers' pockets could wind up putting a lot less money in their pockets instead.

It's easy to get people fired up about

an alliterative slogan like “Fight for \$15.” But alliteration isn’t necessarily a good way to choose a policy goal. The implicit idea here – that people everywhere should get the same minimum wage whether they live in a booming, expensive metropolis or a struggling town with a low cost of living – doesn’t make a lot of sense. [my emphasis]

The Fight for 15 has more to do with what is a living wage than poetic devices. Indeed, even \$15 actually doesn’t pay enough to rent an apartment, even in the hinterlands.

But I’m just as disgusted by the suggestion that if people live in booming economies, they can get jobs making \$15 an hour as a barber or a restaurant server.

They also could, with some prior experience, apply to be Vox’s “race and identities” writing fellow for ... \$15 an hour.

VOX MEDIA 

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Writing Fellow: Race & Identities

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Washington, DC

Understanding America's racial dynamics will be more crucial than ever with a Trump presidency on the horizon. That's why Vox.com is seeking a writing fellow focused on race and identity to provide daily reporting, analysis and context for readers who see us as a resource in understanding the news and the world around us.

This position is a hands-on opportunity to pitch, write, and create visual content for Vox, focused on race and ethnicity, and how they intersect with other identities including gender, religion, sexual orientation.

In addition to contributing to the site's daily coverage, fellows will work closely with senior writers on big projects and are encouraged to pitch their own reported features and multimedia projects. Vox fellows are integral and important members of the writing staff, and they can expect to get lots of bylines while working closely alongside and learning from Vox's senior editors and experienced writers.

This is a one-year, full-time fellowship. The salary is \$30,000 and includes benefits.

We're looking for someone with:

- A demonstrated passion for writing and reporting about race
- An interest in explaining the news
- A previous internship in a newsroom or equivalent experience

And that’s to live in NYC or DC, cities where \$15 an hour is well below a living wage.

Maybe Vox just plans on automating their race coverage if no one will take this job?

Update: Vox’s Managing Editor just announced on Twitter they will be increasing the rate for this and other fellowships. Good!