# 1AC r2

#### Ethics must begin apriori –

#### Every agent has a practical identity that is the source of value.

Korsgaard Christine M. Korsgaard1992, professor of Philosophy at Harvard University. “The Sources of Normativity”, The Tanner Lectures on Human Values

Those who think that the human mind is internally luminous and transparent to itself think that the term “self-consciousness” is appropriate because what we get in human consciousness is a direct encounter with the self. Those who think that the human mind has a reflective structure use the term too, but for a different rea- son. The reflective structure of the mind is a source of “self- consciousness” because it forces us to have a conception of our- selves. As Kant argues, this is a fact about what it is like to be reflectively conscious and it does not prove the existence of a meta- physical self. From a third person point of view, outside of the deliberative standpoint, it may look as if what happens when someone makes a choice is that the strongest of his conflicting desires wins. But that isn’t the way it is for you when you deliber- ate. When you deliberate, it is as if there were something over and above all of your desires, something that is you, and that chooses which desire to act on. This means that the principle or law by which you determine your actions is one that you regard as being expressive of yourself. To identify with such a principle or law is to be, in St. Paul’s famous phrase, a law to yourself. An agent might think of herself as a Citizen in the Kingdom of Ends. Or she might think of herself as a member of a family or an ethnic group or a nation. She might think of herself as the steward of her own interests, and then she will be an egoist. Or she might think of herself as the slave of her passions, and then she will be a wanton. And how she thinks of herself will deter- mine whether it is the law of the Kingdom of Ends, or the law of some smaller group, or the law of the egoist, or the law of the wanton that is the law that she is to herself. The conception of one’s identity in question here is not a theo- retical one, a view about what as a matter of inescapable scientific fact you are. It is better understood as a description under which you value yourself, a description under which you find your life to be worth living and your actions to be worth undertaking. So I will call this a conception of your practical identity. Practical identity is a complex matter and for the average person there will be a jumble of such conceptions. You are a human being, a woman or a man, an adherent of a certain religion, a member of an ethnic group, someone’s friend, and so on. And all of these identities give rise to reasons and obligations. Your reasons express your identity, your nature; your obligations spring from what that identity forbids.

#### [A] Apriori Aposteriori Paradox – big bang proves our theory true – independent of material conditions there was some existence which necessitates objective truth absent material reality.

#### [B] Action theory – infinite division logically concludes from empiricism. i.e If I was brewing tea, I could break up that one big action into multiple small actions. Only our intention unifies these actions. If we were never able to unify action, we could never classify certain actions as moral or immoral.

#### [C] Constitutive Authority – reason is the only unescapable authority because to ask for why we should be reasoners concedes its authority since it uses reason – anything else is nonbinding and arbitrary.

#### [D] Naturalistic fallacy – experience only tells us what is since we can only perceive what is, not what ought to be.

#### [E] Korsgaards Wager – Korsgaard is or korsgaard is not – inconsistency with perfect duties means infinite badness, that means a 1% chance of apriori ethics being true means you affirm since anything else risks infinite immorality which outweighs any chance of it being wrong.

#### This means any valid practical judgment must be true for every agent. Agents cannot act on a maxim that hinders the outer freedom of others. This justifies universality. Any other norm justifies someone’s ability to impede on your ends, which also means universalizability acts as a side constraint on ends-based frameworks.

Siyar 1999 Jamsheed Aiam Siyar: Kant’s Conception of Practical Reason. Tufts University, 1999

Now, when I represent my end as to be done, I represent it as binding me to certain courses of action, precluding other actions, etc. Thus, my ends function as constraints for me in that they determine what I can or must do (at least if I am to be consistent). I may of course give up an end such as that of eating ice cream at a future point; yet while I have the end, I must see myself as bound to do what is necessary to realize it.35 Thus, I must represent my ends as constraints that I have adopted, constraints that structure the possible space of choice and action for me. Further, given that my end is rationally determined, I take it to be generally recognizable that my end functions as a rationally determined constraint. That is, I take it that other subjects can also recognize my end as an objective constraint, for I take it that they as well as myself can cognize its determining grounds—the source of its objective worth—through the exercise of reason. Indeed, in representing an end, I in effect demand recognition for it from other subjects: since the end functions as an objective though self-imposed constraint for me, I must demand that this constraint be recognized as such. The thought here is simply that if I am committed to some end, e.g. my ice cream eating policy, I must act in certain ways to realize it. In this context, I cannot be indifferent to the attitudes and actions of others, for these may either help or hinder my pursuit of my end. Hence, if I am in fact committed to realizing my end, i.e. if I represent an end at all, I must demand that the worth of my end, its status as to be done, be recognized by others.

#### Thus, the standard is consistency with the categorical imperative.

#### Prefer the standard:

#### [a] freedom is the key to the process of justification of arguments. Willing that we should abide by their ethical theory presupposes that we own ourselves in the first place. Thus, it is logically incoherent to justify the neg arguments/standard without first willing that we can pursue ends free from others.

### Advocacy

#### Plan Text – Resolved: A just government ought to recognize an unconditional right of workers to strike.

### Offense

#### [1] A right to strike defends workers to set and pursue their own ends and resist coercion, anything else is a violation of freedom.

**Gourevitch 18:** Gourevitch, Alex. “A Radical Defense of the Right to Strike.” *Jacobin* 2018. <https://jacobinmag.com/2018/07/right-to-strike-freedom-civil-liberties-oppression> // King CP recut

Workers have an interest in resisting the oppression of class society by using their collective power to reduce, or even overcome, that oppression. Their interest is a liberty interest in a double sense. First, resistance to that class-based oppression carries with it, at least implicitly, a demand for freedoms not yet enjoyed. A higher wage expands workers’ freedom of choice. Expanded labor rights increase workers’ collective freedom to influence the terms of employment. Whatever the concrete set of issues, workers’ strike demands are always also a demand for control over portions of one’s life that they do not yet enjoy. Second, strikes don’t just aim at winning more freedom — they are themselves expressions of freedom. When workers walk out, they’re using their own individual and collective agency to win the liberties they deserve. The same capacity for self-determination that workers invoke to demand more freedom is the capacity they exercise when winning their demands. Freedom, not industrial stability or simply higher living standards, is the name of their desire. Put differently, the right to strike has both an intrinsic and instrumental relation to freedom. It has intrinsic value as an (at least implicit) demand for self-emancipation. And it has instrumental value insofar as the strike is an effective means for resisting the oppressiveness of a class society and achieving new freedoms. But if all this is correct, and the right to strike is something that we should defend, then it also has to be *meaningful*. The right loses its connection to workers’ freedom if they have little chance of exercising it effectively. Otherwise they’re simply engaging in a symbolic act of defiance — laudable, perhaps, but not a tangible means of fighting oppression. The right to strike must therefore cover at least some of the coercive tactics that make strikes potent, like sit-downs and mass pickets. It is therefore often perfectly justified for strikers to exercise their right to strike by using these tactics, even when these tactics are illegal. Still, the question remains: why should the right to strike be given moral priority over other basic liberties? The reason is not just that liberal capitalism produces economic oppression but that the economic oppression that workers face is in part created and sustained by the very economic and civil liberties that liberal capitalism cherishes. Workers find themselves oppressed *because* of the way property rights, freedom of contract, corporate authority, and tax and labor law operate. Deeming these liberties inviolable doesn’t foster less oppressive, exploitative outcomes, as its defenders insist — quite the opposite. The right to strike has a stronger claim to be protecting a zone of activity that serves the aims of justice itself — coercing people into relations of less oppressive social cooperation. Simply put, to argue for the right to strike is to prioritize democratic freedoms over property rights.

#### [2] The humanity principle mandates no exploitation of agents since it’d be a contradiction in conception – if everyone were exploited there’d be no one to exploit.

**Lofaso 17** Anne Marie Lofaso, Workers’ Rights as Natural Human Rights, 71 U. Miami L. Rev. 565 (2017) Available at: https://repository.law.miami.edu/umlr/vol71/iss3/3 [Anne Marie Lofaso is Associate Dean for Faculty Research and Development and a professor at the West Virginia University College of Law. In 2010, she was named WVU College of Law Professor of the Year.] // King CP recut

It is the categorical imperative’s second formulation, known as the principle of ends, the principle of dignity, or the humanity principle, where Kant seems to add something more.202 Kant’s humanity principle tells us to treat people as if each person has intrinsic value simply because each person is human: “Act so that you use humanity, as much in your own person as in the person of every other, always at the same time as an end and never merely as a means.”203 The humanity principle forbids us to act in ways that exploit human beings or at least in ways that merely exploit human beings.204 Presumably, hiring workers per se does not violate the CI even though the employer uses its workers in furtherance of its purposes. The moral question inherent in a natural human rights approach to workers’ rights is whether these workers are being used merely as a means. Those interested in workers’ rights must determine whether, as a matter of fact (as opposed to a matter of law), workers are actually being used in an exploitative manner. This is essentially an empirical assessment of the moral claim: Are institutions, which are designed to protect workers, doing their job? It is also a legal strategy for developing positive labor standards, which reflect a particular conception of human dignity and autonomy while minimizing the impact of state and business coercion of workers.205 This particular formulation of the CI further and most clearly shows how the CI is in tension with political (or even economic) utilitarianism, by which majority rule governs and the ends justify the means.206 Morality requires that when people act we consider the humanity of each person and the effect of our actions on others’ humanity.

#### [3] A right to strike is key to support property rights

Chicktay 6 [Mohamed Alli Chicktay, academic at the University of the Witwatersrand, 2006, “PLACING THE RIGHT TO STRIKE WITHIN A HUMAN RIGHTS FRAMEWORK,” No Publication, [https://journals.co.za/doi/pdf/10.10520/EJC85180] //King](https://journals.co.za/doi/pdf/10.10520/EJC85180%5d%20//King) CP

In addition, in terms of the concept of “self-ownership” we are all owners of our own bodies and therefore should not be forced to do anything with our bodies against our will. We can do whatever we wish with our bodies, provided that we are not aggressive to others who also have “self-ownership” over their bodies (Cohen Self-ownership, Freedom and Equality (1995) 68). Since we own our bodies, we also own the labour that we can perform with our bodies just as we do any other property. Being forced to work without the right to strike could therefore be seen as an infringement of one’s property rights. One may also argue that our body belongs to us and hence is our property. By striking we are withholding the use of our body and any prevention of the right to strike would thus be a violation of our property rights. Israel has argued that the denial of the right to strike violates one’s freedom from forced labour. He argues that by prohibiting strikes or imposing criminal and civil sanctions upon strikers, one would be forcing employees to work, which would be a violation of their right not to be subjected to forced labour (Israel International Labour Standards (1989) 25). The right to strike is also a violation of one’s right to dignity. Workers find a sense of self-worth in their work, which is hindered if they are exploited by employers and have no say in this environment. One of the most effective ways in which workers can have a meaningful say in the workplace is if they have the power to halt production (Harmer “The Right to Strike Charter Implications and Interpretations” 1992 47 University of Toronto Faculty of Law Review 438).

#### [4] A right to strike is key to freedom of association and collective bargaining.

Vogt 16 [Jeffrey S Vogt, Legal Director of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), 2016, “The Right to Strike and the International Labour Organisation (ILO),” King’s Law Journal, <https://sci-hubtw.hkvisa.net/10.1080/09615768.2016.1148297>] //King CP recut

II. FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION AND THE RIGHT TO STRIKE The Employers’ Group relies on a deeply flawed argument in which the right to freedom of association is a self-contained, individual right, wholly divorced from the context of industrial relations. For them, freedom of association confers no more than the right to gather together into organisations. However, the right to freedom of association has long been understood also as a collective right, particularly in the context of industrial relations, and indeed is a bundle of rights exercised jointly and protected individually which enable those in the association to further the purposes for which it was formed. The right to associate in a trade union is commonly understood to include the right to strike (and to bargain collectively). Indeed, without these attendant rights, the right to association in the industrial relations context would be wholly meaningless. The theory of freedom of association applied in the industrial relations context by the ILO, human rights courts and high courts is specific to the context of the workplace. Combination in a trade union may be a function of individual liberty, but this liberty has little meaning if workers are unable to pursue their own interests through such organisations. Worker solidarity allows workers to overcome the limitations inherent in entering individual contracts of employment, to achieve fair conditions of employment and to participate in making decisions which affect their own lives and society at large. In the absence of a right to strike, it remains difficult (if not impossible) for workers to achieve these goals given the unequal power in the employment relationship. From this premise stems the view that freedom of association implies not only the right of workers and employers to form freely organisations of their own choosing, but also the right to pursue collective activities for the defence of workers’ occupational, social and economic interests. While some have sought to argue that freedom of association should be regarded as a mere individual liberty without reference to its context, here the industrial context,9 this is not a view which has held sway in academic10 or judicial opinion.11 The unquestioned (and unquestionable) international right to collective bargaining gives further support to the existence of the right to strike as a derivative right of freedom of association. While the right to strike is not to be confined to the advancement or defence of collective bargaining,12 the right to collective bargaining is, on the workers’ side, without practical effect in the absence of a right to strike. Without the latter right, a right to collective bargaining amounts to no more than a right to ‘collective begging’. 13 Given the palpable threats of dismissal and relocation which could be presented by an employer, the corresponding threat of temporary withdrawal of labour was all that most workers could offer in return. Certainly, as early as 1924, the ILO ‘Nicod’ Report considered freedom of association in tandem with industrial action, self-evidently seeing the two as linked.14 And the stated view of the International Labour Office by 1927 was that there was an ‘intimate relationship between the right to combine for trade union purposes and the right to strike’ with a strong case being made for international legislation relating to both.15 Space does not permit a full treatment of the legal foundations of the right to strike.16 However, I will here provide a brisk review of the right to strike as it has been developed by the ILO supervisory system as well as the jurisprudence of regional courts which have relied on the ILO’s views, consistent with the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, to interpret their own charters which protect freedom of association—and by extension the right to strike.

### Advantage 1

#### Climate strike participants get arrested now.

**Scanlan 19** [Quinn. Quinn Scanlan. Voting, campaigns & elections for [@ABC](https://twitter.com/ABC). “Jane Fonda arrested in climate change strike outside Capitol”. 10-11-2019. ABC News. https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/jane-fonda-arrested-climate-change-strike-capitol/story?id=66209415.]

Academy Award winning actress Jane Fonda, 81, was arrested by police with a group of about a dozen protesters Friday after being warned repeatedly to leave the steps of the U.S. Capitol. Inspired by youth climate activists like Sweden's Greta Thunberg, 16, who herself recently came to Washington to [testify in front of Congress](https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/greta-thunberg-teen-climate-activist-tells-us-lawmakers/story?id=65692288), Fonda, who, throughout her long career, has engaged in activism, dating as far back as the Vietnam War, recently told ABC News that while she's in the nation's capital, every Friday, she'll attend "Fire Drill Friday," a weekly event featuring scientists, celebrities and activists addressing the various facets and impacts of climate change. The event title is a play on Thunberg saying during a speech at the World Economic Forum's annual meeting in Davos, Switzerland in January, "I want you to act as if our house is on fire. Because it is." "11 o'clock every Friday morning come get arrested with me or choose not to it doesn't matter," told ABC News in an earlier interview about her planned effort. Fonda said she decided to leave her home, and comfort zone, through the holidays, and move to Washington for four months, because she wanted to "make a commitment to" the issue of climate change. In an interview with ABC News Deputy Political director MaryAlice Parks for an episode of of ABC News Live's "The Briefing Room," Fonda said that while they bear no blame for causing it, the [kids are leading the charge](https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/teenage-climate-change-activist-greta-thunbeerg-takes-global/story?id=65601228) on fighting climate change. "They're saying, 'Come on, you know, you're taking our future away from us. We need -- we need you to support us.' And so grandmas unite," she said. "I want to stand with them and raise up... their message. This is -- this is serious... This is a crisis unlike anything that has ever faced humankind." Stressing she was not being hyperbolic, Fonda said this is the "one issue" that matters because it "will [determine the survival of our species](https://abcnews.go.com/International/united-nations-report-details-looming-climate-crisis/story?id=58354235)," and said that's why she'll be attending Fire Drill Fridays weekly. David Swanson/AP, FILE *Actress and activist Jane Fonda talks to a crowd of protestors during a global climate rall...Read More* "I think every single human being has to say, 'What can I do to put this at the forefront?'" she said. "(With) everything that's going on in the news, well, we have to fight our way through that and find ways to get climate change in people's minds." The esteemed actress pushed back against criticism that Hollywood's presence could make climate change a more polarizing issue. "What we're facing is so important and so urgent, it doesn't matter. Those -- those things don't even matter," she told Parks. "This is the future. This is whether we're going to survive." Fonda also said that the United States needs "to lead the way" on this issue, so that other countries who contribute heavily to greenhouse gas emissions, like China and India, "follow suit." While she's been passionate about this issue for "decades," she credits her current endeavors on [Thunberg's recurring protest](https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/teenage-climate-change-activist-greta-thunbeerg-takes-global/story?id=65601228) outside Swedish parliament, and other student climate strikers around the world for taking on this issue so passionately.

#### Strikes incentivize companies to take climate action seriously.

**Ivanova 19** [Irin. Work, tech, climate and data for [@CBSNews](https://twitter.com/CBSNews). Priors: [@HuffPost](https://twitter.com/HuffPost), [@CrainsNewYork](https://twitter.com/CrainsNewYork), [@newmarkjschool](https://twitter.com/newmarkjschool). “These businesses are closing for Friday's climate strike”. 9-20-2019. No Publication. https://www.cbsnews.com/news/global-climate-strike-businesses-close-their-doors-in-time-for-climate-strike-2019/.]

Thousands of people are planning to walk out of work or school on Friday to press global leaders for solutions to rapidly escalating climate change. And while it was students who started the movement, more and more workers—and even companies—are joining them in support. Some businesses are letting workers take the day off to protest, while others plan to close their doors outright. They tend to be small or mid-sized businesses — most of the country's largest corporations have yet to weigh in on the strike, although plenty of people who work at them might yet participate when walkouts are set to start Friday afternoon. Here are the ways workers and companies are supporting the strike. **Walkouts** Amazon is expected to see more than 1,500 employees walk out, with the largest contingent exiting its Seattle headquarters, as they push the company to cut ties with fossil-fuel companies and stop funding groups that deny climate science. The company on Thursday announced it would make its operations carbon-neutral by 2040 and run entirely on renewable energy within a decade. More than 900 **Google** workers and unknown numbers of workers from **Facebook, Atlassian, Cobot, Ecosia, Microsoft** and **Twitter** are vowing walkouts. The strikers have details at [Tech Workers Coalition.](https://techworkerscoalition.org/climate-strike/) Some smaller companies are giving workers paid time off to participate in the walkouts. These include **Atlassian, Sustain Natural, Grove Collaborative** and others. **Closures** Ben & Jerry's corporate offices in South Burlington, Vermont, will be closed during the strike on Friday, while shops worldwide will either be closed or open later than usual. The company is also stopping production at its manufacturing plants in Vermont and the Netherlands, according to [Adweek](https://www.adweek.com/brand-marketing/brands-are-closing-their-doors-in-support-of-the-global-climate-strike/). "We recognize that climate change is an existential threat to our planet and all its inhabitants, and therefore we are proud standing with the youth-led movement demanding bold action in response to the climate emergency," a spokesperson said. **Patagonia** is closing its retail stores for 24 hours on Friday. "For decades, many corporations have single-mindedly pursued profits at the expense of everything else — employees, communities and the air, land and water we all share," CEO Rose Marcario wrote on [LinkedIn](https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/enough-join-climate-strikes-demand-action-rose-marcario/?sf219300827=1). "[C]apitalism needs to evolve if humanity is going to survive." Lush Cosmetics will close its manufacturing facilities and retail outlets on September 20 in the U.S. and on September 27 in Canada. It's also halting online sales on Friday. **Badger Balm** is closing for the day and giving workers paid time off to demonstrate or volunteer. The company is also donating 5% of online sales from September 16 to 27 to AmazonWatch.org to aid in preserving the shrinking Amazon's ecological systems, it said. **Burton**, the outdoor retailer, is closing its offices and owned retail stores on September 20th or 27th (depending on their country of location). It also won't make any online sales for 24 hours on Friday. **SodaStream**, the seltzer maker owned by PepsiCo, is shuttering its headquarters and closing e-commerce on Friday. **Digital doings and more** The heart of the strike will be in the streets, but that doesn't mean the action stops there. More than 7,000 [companies](https://digital.globalclimatestrike.net/) have pledged to draw attention to the protest by either donating ad space or putting banners on their sites. Participants include **Tumblr, WordPress, Imgur, Kickstarter, BitTorrent,** **Tor, BoingBoing**, **Greenpeace, Change.org**, among many others.

#### Extinction THIS OUTWEIGHS ALL OF THEIR CONSEQUENTALIST OFFENSE

Specktor 19 [Brandon writes about the science of everyday life for Live Science, and previously for Reader's Digest magazine, where he served as an editor for five years] 6-4-2019, "Human Civilization Will Crumble by 2050 If We Don't Stop Climate Change Now, New Paper Claims," livescience, <https://www.livescience.com/65633-climate-change-dooms-humans-by-2050.html> Justin

The current climate crisis, they say, is larger and more complex than any humans have ever dealt with before. General climate models — like the one that the [United Nations' Panel on Climate Change](https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/) (IPCC) used in 2018 to predict that a global temperature increase of 3.6 degrees Fahrenheit (2 degrees Celsius) could put hundreds of millions of people at risk — fail to account for the **sheer complexity of Earth's many interlinked geological processes**; as such, they fail to adequately predict the scale of the potential consequences. The truth, the authors wrote, is probably far worse than any models can fathom. How the world ends What might an accurate worst-case picture of the planet's climate-addled future actually look like, then? The authors provide one particularly grim scenario that begins with world governments "politely ignoring" the advice of scientists and the will of the public to decarbonize the economy (finding alternative energy sources), resulting in a global temperature increase 5.4 F (3 C) by the year 2050. At this point, the world's ice sheets vanish; brutal droughts kill many of the trees in the [Amazon rainforest](https://www.livescience.com/57266-amazon-river.html) (removing one of the world's largest carbon offsets); and the planet plunges into a feedback loop of ever-hotter, ever-deadlier conditions. "Thirty-five percent of the global land area, and **55 percent of the global population, are subject to more than 20 days a year of** [**lethal heat conditions**](https://www.livescience.com/55129-how-heat-waves-kill-so-quickly.html), beyond the threshold of human survivability," the authors hypothesized. Meanwhile, droughts, floods and wildfires regularly ravage the land. Nearly **one-third of the world's land surface turns to desert**. Entire **ecosystems collapse**, beginning with the **planet's coral reefs**, the **rainforest and the Arctic ice sheets.** The world's tropics are hit hardest by these new climate extremes, destroying the region's agriculture and turning more than 1 billion people into refugees. This mass movement of refugees — coupled with [shrinking coastlines](https://www.livescience.com/51990-sea-level-rise-unknowns.html) and severe drops in food and water availability — begin to **stress the fabric of the world's largest nations**, including the United States. Armed conflicts over resources, perhaps culminating in **nuclear war, are likely**. The result, according to the new paper, is "outright chaos" and perhaps "the end of human global civilization as we know it."

### Advantage 2

#### Global democracy is collapsing now.

Freedom House 3/3 [Freedom House. Freedom House works to defend human rights and promote democratic change, with a focus on political rights and civil liberties. We act as a catalyst for freedom through a combination of analysis, advocacy, and action. Our analysis, focused on 13 central issues, is underpinned by our international program work. “New Report: The global decline in democracy has accelerated”. 3-3-2021. . https://freedomhouse.org/article/new-report-global-decline-democracy-has-accelerated.]

Washington - March 3, 2021 — Authoritarian actors grew bolder during 2020 as major democracies turned inward, contributing to the 15th consecutive year of decline in global freedom, according to [***Freedom in the World 2021***](https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2021/democracy-under-siege), the annual country-by-country assessment of political rights and civil liberties released today by Freedom House. The report found that the share of countries designated Not Free has reached its highest level since the deterioration of democracy began in 2006, and that countries with declines in political rights and civil liberties outnumbered those with gains by the largest margin recorded during the 15-year period. The report downgraded the freedom scores of 73 countries, representing 75 percent of the global population. Those affected include not just authoritarian states like China, Belarus, and Venezuela, but also troubled democracies like the United States and India. In one of the year’s most significant developments, India’s status changed from Free to Partly Free, meaning less than 20 percent of the world’s people now live in a Free country—the smallest proportion since 1995. Indians’ political rights and civil liberties have been eroding since Narendra Modi became prime minister in 2014. His Hindu nationalist government has presided over increased pressure on human rights organizations, rising intimidation of academics and journalists, and a spate of bigoted attacks—including lynchings—aimed at Muslims. The decline deepened following Modi’s reelection in 2019, and the government’s response to the coronavirus pandemic in 2020 featured further abuses of fundamental rights. The changes in India formed part of a broader shift in the international balance between democracy and authoritarianism, with authoritarians generally enjoying impunity for their abuses and seizing new opportunities to consolidate power or crush dissent. In many cases, promising democratic movements faced major setbacks as a result. In Belarus and Hong Kong, for example, massive prodemocracy protests met with brutal crackdowns by governments that largely disregarded international criticism. The Azerbaijani regime’s military offensive in Nagorno-Karabakh indirectly threatened recent democratic gains in Armenia, while the armed conflict in Ethiopia’s Tigray Region dashed hopes for the tentative political opening in that country since 2018. All four of these cases notably featured some degree of intervention by an autocratic neighbor: Moscow provided a backstop for the regime in Belarus, Beijing propelled the repression in Hong Kong, Turkey’s government aided its Azerbaijani counterpart, and Ethiopia’s leader called in support from Eritrea. The malign influence of the regime in China, the world’s most populous dictatorship, ranged far beyond Hong Kong in 2020. Beijing ramped up its global disinformation and censorship campaign to counter the fallout from its cover-up of the initial coronavirus outbreak, which severely hampered a rapid global response in the pandemic’s early days. Its efforts also featured increased meddling in the domestic political discourse of foreign democracies, as well as transnational extensions of rights abuses common in mainland China. The Chinese regime has gained clout in multilateral institutions such as the UN Human Rights Council, which the United States abandoned in 2018, as Beijing pushed a vision of so-called noninterference that allows abuses of democratic principles and human rights standards to go unpunished while the formation of autocratic alliances is promoted. “This year’s findings make it abundantly clear that we have not yet stemmed the authoritarian tide,” said Sarah Repucci, vice president of research and analysis at Freedom House. “Democratic governments will have to work in solidarity with one another, and with democracy advocates and human rights defenders in more repressive settings, if we are to reverse 15 years of accumulated declines and build a more free and peaceful world.” **A need for reform in the United States** While still considered Free, the United States experienced further democratic decline during the final year of the Trump presidency. The US score in [Freedom in the World](https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2021/democracy-under-siege) has dropped by 11 points over the past decade, and fell by three points in 2020 alone. The changes have moved the country out of a cohort that included other leading democracies, such as France and Germany, and brought it into the company of states with weaker democratic institutions, such as Romania and Panama. Several developments in 2020 contributed to the United States’ current score. The Trump administration undermined government transparency by dismissing inspectors general, punishing or firing whistleblowers, and attempting to control or manipulate information on COVID-19. The year also featured mass protests that, while mostly peaceful, were accompanied by high-profile cases of violence, police brutality, and deadly confrontations with counterprotesters or armed vigilantes. There was a significant increase in the number of journalists arrested and physically assaulted, most often as they covered demonstrations. Finally, the outgoing president’s shocking attempts to overturn his election loss—culminating in his incitement of rioters who stormed the Capitol as Congress met to confirm the results in January 2021—put electoral institutions under severe pressure. In addition, the crisis further damaged the United States’ credibility abroad and underscored the menace of political polarization and extremism in the country. ”January 6 should be a wake-up call for many Americans about the fragility of American democracy,” said Michael J. Abramowitz, president of Freedom House. “Authoritarian powers, especially China, are advancing their interests around the world, while democracies have been divided and consumed by internal problems. For freedom to prevail on a global scale, the United States and its partners must band together and work harder to strengthen democracy at home and abroad. President Biden has pledged to restore America’s international role as a leading supporter of democracy and human rights, but to rebuild its leadership credentials, the country must simultaneously address the weaknesses within its own political system.” “Americans should feel gratified that the courts and other important institutions held firm during the postelection crisis, and that the country escaped the worst possible outcomes,” said Abramowitz. “But the Biden administration, the new Congress, and American civil society must fortify US democracy by strengthening and expanding political rights and civil liberties for all. People everywhere benefit when the United States serves as a positive model, and the country itself reaps ample returns from a more democratic world.” **The effects of COVID-19** Government responses to the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated the global democratic decline. Repressive regimes and populist leaders worked to reduce transparency, promote false or misleading information, and crack down on the sharing of unfavorable data or critical views. Many of those who voiced objections to their government’s handling of the pandemic faced harassment or criminal charges. Lockdowns were sometimes excessive, politicized, or brutally enforced by security agencies. And antidemocratic leaders worldwide used the pandemic as cover to weaken the political opposition and consolidate power. In fact, many of the year’s negative developments will likely have lasting effects, meaning the eventual end of the pandemic will not necessarily trigger an immediate revitalization of democracy. In Hungary, for example, the government of Prime Minister Viktor Orbán took on emergency powers during the health crisis and misused them to withdraw financial assistance from municipalities led by opposition parties. In Sri Lanka, President Gotabaya Rajapaksa dissolved Parliament in early March and, with new elections repeatedly delayed due to COVID-19, ruled without a legislature for several months. Later in the year, both Hungary and Sri Lanka passed constitutional amendments that further strengthened executive power. **The resilience of democracy** Despite the many losses for freedom recorded by [Freedom in the World](https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2021/democracy-under-siege) during 2020, people around the globe remained committed to fighting for their rights, and democracy continued to demonstrate its remarkable resilience. A number of countries held successful elections, independent courts provided checks on executive overreach, journalists in even the most repressive environments investigated government transgressions, and activists persisted in calling out undemocratic practices.

#### The plan solves:

#### First, civic engagement – strikes increase democratic participation which reinvigorates democracy.

McElwee 15 [Sean; Research Associate at Demos; “How Unions Boost Democratic Participation,” The American Prospect; 9/16/15; https://prospect.org/labor/unions-boost-democratic-participation/]

Labor organizer Helen Marot once observed, "The labor unions are group efforts in the direction of democracy." What she meant is that more than simply vehicles for the economic interests of workers (which they certainly are), labor unions also foster civic participation for workers. And nowhere is this clearer than in voter turnout, which has suffered in recent years along with union membership. Indeed, new data from the Census Bureau and a new analysis of American National Election Studies data support the case that unions' declining influence has also deeply harmed democracy.

In 2014, voter turnout was abysmal, even for a midterm. Census data suggest that only 41.9 percent of the citizen population over 18 turned out to vote. However, as I note in my new Demos report Why Voting Matters, there are dispiriting gaps in turnout across class, race, and age. To examine how unions might affect policy, I performed a new analysis of both Census Bureau and American National Election Studies data. The data below, from the 2014 election, show the differences in voter turnout between union and non-union workers (the sample only includes individuals who were employed, and does not include self-employed workers). While only 39 percent of non-union workers voted in 2014, fully 52 percent of union workers did.

As part of ongoing research, James Feigenbaum, an economics PhD candidate at Harvard, ran a regression using American National Election Studies data suggesting that union members are about 4 percentage points more likely to vote and 3 points more likely to register (after controlling for demographic factors) and individuals living in a union household are 2.5 points more likely to vote and register. This is largely in line with the earlier estimates of Richard Freeman.

These numbers may appear modest, but in a close national election they could be enough to change the result.

Other research has found an even stronger turnout effect from unions. Daniel Stegmueller and Michael Becher find that after applying numerous demographic controls, union members are 10 points more likely to vote.

What's particularly important is that unions boost turnout among low- and middle-income individuals. In a 2006 study, political scientists Jan Leighley and Jonathan Nagler found that, "the decline in union membership since 1964 has affected the aggregate turnout of both low and middle-income individuals more than the aggregate turnout of high-income individuals." In 2014, the gap between unions and non-union workers shrunk at the highest rung of the income ladder. There was a 15-point gap among those earning less than $25,000 (40 percent turnout for union workers, and 25 percent turnout for non-union workers). Among those earning more than $100,000, the gap was far smaller (49 percent for non-union workers and 52 percent for union workers).

Individuals living in union households are also more progressive than those in non-union households. I examined 2012 ANES data and find that union households aren't largely different from non-union households on many issues regarding government spending, but they are more likely to have voted for Obama, identify as Democratic, and support a robust role for the government in reducing income inequality. When looking at union members specifically, the gaps become slightly larger.

More upscale union members are far more progressive than their non-union counterparts. Non-union households with an income above $60,000 oppose government intervention to reduce inequality by 11 points, with 32.2 percent in favor and 43.4 percent against. But richer union households support government intervention, with 42.5 percent in favor and 29.9 percent opposed. As Richard B. Freeman has pointed out, "union members are more likely to vote for a Democrat for the House or Presidency than demographically comparable nonunion voters." He similarly finds that "unionism moves members to the left of where they would be given their socioeconomic status," in line with the data I examined from 2012.

A 2013 study by Jasmine Kerrissey and Evan Schofer finds that union members are not only more likely to vote, but also more likely to belong to other associations, and to protest. They also find that these effects are strongest among people with lower levels of education, suggesting that unions may help mobilize the least politically active groups. A recent study of European countries finds union members vote more and identifies those aspects of union membership that contribute to the higher turnout.

The strongest factor is that workers who engage in democratic organizations in the workplace (via collective bargaining) are more likely to engage in democracy more broadly by, for instance, voting.

Other studies support the idea that civic participation creates a feedback loop that leads to higher voting rates. Another factor is that union members make more money, and higher income is correlated with voting behavior. Finally, union members are encouraged by peers and the union to engage in politics, which also contributes to higher levels of turnout.

It's not entirely surprising that politicians who savage unions often share a similar contempt for the right to vote. Democracy in the workplace leads to democracy more broadly throughout society. Workers with more democratic workplaces are more likely to democratically engage in in society. Further, when unions and progressives demonstrate that government can benefit them, Americans are more likely to want to participate in decision-making. For all these reasons, unions play a unique and indispensable role in the progressive project. As Larry Summers, certainly not a leftist, recently argued, "the weakness of unions leaves a broad swath of the middle class largely unrepresented in the political process."

#### Second, corruption reduction – the right to strike fights concentration of power while reducing inequality.

IER 17 [Institute of Employment Rights. The IER exists to inform the debate around trade union rights and labour law by providing information, critical analysis, and policy ideas through our network of academics, researchers and lawyers. “UN Rights Expert: Right to strike is essential to democracy”. 3-10-2017. . https://www.ier.org.uk/news/un-rights-expert-right-strike-essential-democracy/.]

The United Nations’ Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association, Maina Kiai, has reminded member states of the International Labour Organization (ILO) – including the UK – that they have a positive obligation to uphold the right to strike. Speaking at an ILO meeting on Monday 06 March 2017 in Geneva, Kiai argued that the right to strike is fundamental to the preservation of democracy. “The concentration of power in one sector – whether in the hands of government or business – inevitably leads to the erosion of democracy, and an increase in inequalities and marginalization with all their attendant consequences. The right to strike is a check on this concentration of power,” he explained. The right to strike has been established in international law as a corollary to the right of freedom of association for decades, and is enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights as Article 11. As a member state of the ILO and of the EU, the UK is legally obliged to uphold the right to strike, although through the Trades Union Act 2016 and the anti-trade union laws that preceded it, the government is making it harder and harder for trade unions to take industrial action. Kiai criticised such actions, saying government’s have a duty not to impede workers’ ability to take industrial action. “I deplore the various attempts made to erode the right to strike at national and multilateral levels,” the expert said, reminding delegates: “Protest action in relation to government social and economic policy, and against negative corporate practices, forms part of the basic civil liberties whose respect is essential for the meaningful exercise of trade union rights. This right enables them to engage with companies and governments on a more equal footing, and Member States have a positive obligation to protect this right, and a negative obligation not to interfere with its exercise.”

#### Democratic backsliding causes extinction.

Kendall-Taylor 16 [Andrea; Deputy national intelligence officer for Russia and Eurasia at the National Intelligence Council, Senior associate in the Human Rights Initiative at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington; “How Democracy’s Decline Would Undermine the International Order,” CSIS; 7/15/16; <https://www.csis.org/analysis/how-democracy%E2%80%99s-decline-would-undermine-international-order>/]

It is rare that policymakers, analysts, and academics agree. But there is an emerging consensus in the world of foreign policy: threats to the stability of the current international order are rising. The norms, values, laws, and institutions that have undergirded the international system and governed relationships between nations are being gradually dismantled. The most discussed sources of this pressure are [the ascent of China](http://nationalinterest.org/feature/how-china-sees-world-order-15846) and other non-Western countries, Russia’s assertive foreign policy, and the diffusion of power from traditional nation-states to nonstate actors, such as nongovernmental organizations, multinational corporations, and technology-empowered individuals. Largely missing from these discussions, however, is the [specter of widespread democratic decline](http://www.journalofdemocracy.org/article/facing-democratic-recession). Rising challenges to democratic governance across the globe are a major strain on the international system, but they receive [far less attention](http://www.iiss.org/en/publications/survival/sections/2016-5e13/survival--global-politics-and-strategy-april-may-2016-eb2d/58-2-03-boyle-6dbd) in discussions of the shifting world order.

In the 70 years since the end of World War II, the United States has fostered a global order dominated by states that are liberal, capitalist, and democratic. The United States has promoted the spread of democracy to strengthen global norms and rules that constitute the foundation of our current international system. However, despite the steady rise of democracy since the end of the Cold War, over the last 10 years we have seen dramatic reversals in respect for democratic principles across the globe. [A 2015 Freedom House report](https://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/01152015_FIW_2015_final.pdf) stated that the “acceptance of democracy as the world’s dominant form of government—and of an international system built on democratic ideals—is under greater threat than at any point in the last 25 years.”

Although the number of democracies in the world is at an all-time high, there are a number of [key trends](file:///C:\Users\PMeylan\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary%20Internet%20Files\Content.Outlook\5V2CJVRN\160715_KendallTaylor_DemocracysDecline_Commentary.docx#http://www.journalofdemocracy.org/article/democracy-decline) that are working to undermine democracy. The rollback of democracy in a few influential states or even in a number of less consequential ones would almost certainly accelerate meaningful changes in today’s global order.

Democratic decline would weaken U.S. partnerships and erode an important foundation for U.S. cooperation abroad. [Research demonstrates](file:///C:\Users\PMeylan\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary%20Internet%20Files\Content.Outlook\5V2CJVRN\160715_KendallTaylor_DemocracysDecline_Commentary.docx#http://cmp.sagepub.com/content/18/1/49.abstract) that domestic politics are a key determinant of the international behavior of states. In particular, democracies are more likely to form alliances and cooperate more fully with other democracies than with autocracies. Similarly, authoritarian countries have established mechanisms for cooperation and sharing of “worst practices.” An increase in authoritarian countries, then, would provide a broader platform for coordination that could enable these countries to overcome their divergent histories, values, and interests—factors that are frequently cited as obstacles to the formation of a cohesive challenge to the U.S.-led international system.

Recent examples support the empirical data. Democratic backsliding in Hungary and the hardening of Egypt’s autocracy under Abdel Fattah el-Sisi have led to enhanced relations between these countries and Russia. Likewise, democratic decline in Bangladesh has led Sheikh Hasina Wazed and her ruling Awami League to seek closer relations with China and Russia, in part to mitigate Western pressure and bolster the regime’s domestic standing.

Although none of these burgeoning relationships has developed into a highly unified partnership, democratic backsliding in these countries has provided a basis for cooperation where it did not previously exist. And while the United States certainly finds common cause with authoritarian partners on specific issues, the depth and reliability of such cooperation is limited. Consequently, further democratic decline could seriously compromise the United States’ ability to form the kinds of deep partnerships that will be required to confront today’s increasingly complex challenges. Global issues such as climate change, migration, and violent extremism demand the coordination and cooperation that democratic backsliding would put in peril. Put simply, the United States is a less effective and influential actor if it loses its ability to rely on its partnerships with other democratic nations.

A slide toward authoritarianism could also challenge the current global order by diluting U.S. influence in critical international institutions, including the [United Nations](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/christopher-walker-authoritarian-regimes-are-changing-how-the-world-defines-democracy/2014/06/12/d1328e3a-f0ee-11e3-bf76-447a5df6411f_story.html) , the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Democratic decline would weaken Western efforts within these institutions to advance issues such as Internet freedom and the responsibility to protect. In the case of Internet governance, for example, Western democracies support an open, largely private, global Internet. Autocracies, in contrast, promote state control over the Internet, including laws and other mechanisms that facilitate their ability to censor and persecute dissidents. Already many autocracies, including Belarus, China, Iran, and Zimbabwe, have coalesced in the “Likeminded Group of Developing Countries” within the United Nations to advocate their interests.

Within the IMF and World Bank, autocracies—along with other developing nations—seek to water down conditionality or the reforms that lenders require in exchange for financial support. If successful, diminished conditionality would enfeeble an important incentive for governance reforms. In a more extreme scenario, the rising influence of autocracies could enable these countries to bypass the IMF and World Bank all together. For example, the Chinese-created Asian Infrastructure and Investment Bank and the BRICS Bank—which includes Russia, China, and an increasingly authoritarian South Africa—provide countries with the potential to bypass existing global financial institutions when it suits their interests. Authoritarian-led alternatives pose the risk that global economic governance will become [fragmented and less effective](http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00396338.2016.1161899?journalCode=tsur20#.V2H3MRbXgdI).

Violence and instability would also likely increase if more democracies give way to autocracy. [International relations literature](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/china/1995-05-01/democratization-and-war) tells us that democracies are less likely to fight wars against other democracies, suggesting that interstate wars would rise as the number of democracies declines. Moreover, within countries that are already autocratic, additional movement away from democracy, or an “authoritarian hardening,” would increase global instability. Highly repressive autocracies are the most likely to experience state failure, as was the case in the Central African Republic, Libya, Somalia, Syria, and Yemen. In this way, democratic decline would significantly strain the international order because rising levels of instability would exceed the West’s ability to respond to the tremendous costs of peacekeeping, humanitarian assistance, and refugee flows.

Finally, widespread democratic decline would contribute to rising anti-U.S. sentiment that could fuel a global order that is increasingly antagonistic to the United States and its values. Most autocracies are highly suspicious of U.S. intentions and view the creation of an external enemy as an effective means for boosting their own public support. Russian president Vladimir Putin, Venezuelan president Nicolas Maduro, and Bolivian president Evo Morales regularly accuse the United States of fomenting instability and supporting regime change. This vilification of the United States is a convenient way of distracting their publics from regime shortcomings and fostering public support for strongman tactics.

Since 9/11, and particularly in the wake of the Arab Spring, Western enthusiasm for democracy support has waned. Rising levels of instability, including in Ukraine and the Middle East, fragile governance in Afghanistan and Iraq, and sustained threats from terrorist groups such as ISIL have increased Western focus on security and stability. U.S. preoccupation with intelligence sharing, basing and overflight rights, along with the perception that autocracy equates with stability, are trumping democracy and human rights considerations.

While rising levels of global instability explain part of Washington’s shift from an historical commitment to democracy, the nature of the policy process itself is a less appreciated factor. Policy discussions tend to occur on a country-by-country basis—leading to choices that weigh the costs and benefits of democracy support within the confines of a single country. From this perspective, the benefits of counterterrorism cooperation or access to natural resources are regularly judged to outweigh the perceived costs of supporting human rights. A serious problem arises, however, when this process is replicated across countries. The bilateral focus rarely incorporates the risks to the U.S.-led global order that arise from widespread democratic decline across multiple countries.

Many of the threats to the current global order, such as China’s rise or the diffusion of power, are driven by factors that the United States and West more generally have little leverage to influence or control. Democracy, however, is an area where Western actions can affect outcomes. Factoring in the risks that arise from a global democratic decline into policy discussions is a vital step to building a comprehensive approach to democracy support. Bringing this perspective to the table may not lead to dramatic shifts in foreign policy, but it would ensure that we are having the right conversation.