## 1NC- PIC

#### We endorse the entirety of the 1AC with the exception of mining in space

#### Private companies are key to a growing space mining sector – investors, profitability, and market demand.

Krishnan 20 [C A Krishnan, 8-6-2020, "Space mining: Just around the corner?," Week, <https://www.theweek.in/news/sci-tech/2020/08/06/Space-mining-Just-around-the-corner.html> [accessed 12-6-21] lydia

A Mars mission carrying 100 metric tons cargo in 2022 followed by a manned mission by 2024 are the immediate milestones of Elon Musk’s SpaceX plan which aims to create a self sustaining Mars city by 2050. Just a few decades back this would have sounded as fantasy, but today it looks as if this time frame may actually be bettered. Space missions are set to undergo revolutionary changes and Elon Musk’s vision and timelines are indicators of this. Space is increasingly being seen as a treasure trove of precious minerals and also a place for future human habitation beyond the earth. Global private space industry investors believe that space mining has the potential to shape and define the 21st Century. NASA estimates that the 'Asteroid belt’ holds minerals worth quintillion of dollars. American astrophysicist Neil Degrasse Tyson believes, “The first trillioners will be those who mine asteroids”. The “Main Asteroid Belt” is located between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter, about 450 to 650 million Kilometers from earth, with million asteroids in it. Over the decades, apart from Moon and Mars, governments and private agencies have been carrying out extensive research and studying asteroids for their composition, possibility of mining them and their mining value —Asteriod ‘Bennu’ has been assessed at $670 million and asteroid ‘2011 UW158’ at $ 5.7 trillion. Transportation of the mined resources for utilisation, however, poses major hurdles. A ‘BBC Future’ report by Sarah Cruddas puts the cost of shipping a ton of water into space at about $ 50 million. As per Chris Lewicki, president of Planetary Resources, an asteroid mining company, it takes more energy to escape the first 300 kilometers from the Earth than the next 300 million kilometers. Similarly, bringing back anything more than a few kilograms of samples from space to the Earth would be even more complex in terms of logistics. To start with, therefore, global space industry investors are focusing on keeping mined space resources in space itself for ‘in situ resource utilisation’. Availability of water on the Moon, Mars and asteroids offer very attractive prospects; apart from being crucial for supporting life and growing food, it also opens the possibility of using its constituents, hydrogen and oxygen, for making rocket fuel. Today, the possibility of manufacturing tools and even building habitats on Moon or Mars with the help of 3D printers using iron, nickel, cobalt, gold, platinum, and iridium etc which are available on the Moon, Mars and asteroids seem within reach. Researchers are working on using regolith, the weathered rock particles found on lunar surface for making moon bricks using 3D printers. These bricks will form the basic construction material for the first moon station and even the first moon hotel. Space industry players believe that an investment of $ 4 billion in water mining in space can generate annual revenue worth about $2.4 billion. Similarly, there is a new community of customers who are already looking for buying propellant in space. American space launch provider, United Launch Alliance (ULA), a Lockheed Martin and Boeing joint venture that provides launch rockets, has made it known that, ULA is willing to pay about $ 3000 a Kg for propellant in low earth orbit. Fast paced developments are taking place in the field of space mining technology with private players in the lead. Optical mining using concentrated sunlight, robotics, automated mining applications, advanced drilling machines etc are just a few examples. Participation of private players has reduced the investment burden and greatly enhanced the width and pace of innovation. It is believed that launch of the first asteroid mining vehicle as well as setting up of the first fuelling stations on the Moon and in low earth orbit could become a reality within a decade. Japanese mission ‘Hayabusa’ was the first to bring samples from an asteroid to earth in 2010. ‘Hayabusa - 2’ made its rendezvous with the near earth asteroid ‘162173 RYUGU’ in June 2018, left the asteroid after collecting samples in November 2019 and will be back on earth on December 6, 2020. Similarly the NASA mission OSIRIS-REx, costing about $ 1 billion, launched in 2016 is due to return to earth with samples of asteroid ‘101955 Bennu’ on September 24, 2023. The latest US space mission, ‘Perseverance’ launched on July 30, 2020 will land on Mars on February 18, 2021. It will be using a helicopter on Mars, set to be the first use of a helicopter outside the earth. Apart from collecting samples from Mars and search for signs of habitable conditions on Mars, it will also test the possibility of manufacturing molecular oxygen from the carbon dioxide-rich Mars atmosphere. Beyond the technological capability, there are, however, complex legal issues. While making fuel and water in space and its ‘in situ resource utilisation’ may pass the scrutiny, commercial exploitation of space through minerals mining, tourism, real estate etc may prove hugely contentious in terms of international legal framework for space. The current legal frameworks were adopted when space activities were entirely within the domain of national governments and were confined to research alone. But with the nature of space activities moving from purely research activities to military applications to commercial activities and with the entry of private players and a new community of consumers in space, the vintage outer space treaty has been rendered grossly inadequate; vagueness of the treaty does not cater for the ‘new types of uses’ or the ‘new users’ of space. Louis de Gouyon Matignon, in a thesis on the subject observed that “some states have already taken the absence of express prohibition as a sign that the utilisation of space resources is permissible, and both the USA and Luxembourg recently adopted national legislations expressly allowing it”. This has, however, triggered a response from the international community denouncing such unilateral initiatives and recommending a collective approach on the lines of the laws for high seas and deep sea bed. Whether a widely acceptable new space treaty comes through or not, Space mining is a reality and the early entrants are likely to retain monopoly and huge economic advantages for a very long time.

#### Space mining is key to sustain global resources -- otherwise, resource wars.

MacWhorter 16 [Kevin; J.D. Candidate, William & Mary Law School, "Sustainable Mining: Incentivizing Asteroid Mining in the Name of Environmentalism", William & Mary Environmental Law and Policy Review, Vol 40, Issue 2, Article 11, <https://scholarship.law.wm.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google.com/&httpsredir=1&article=1653&context=wmelpr>] brett

A. Rare Element Mining on Earth

In the next sixty years, scientists predict that certain elements crucial to modern industry such as platinum, zinc, copper, phosphorous, lead, gold, and indium could be exhausted on Earth. 12 Many of these have no synthetic alternative, unlike chemical elements such as oil or diamonds.13 Liquid-crystal display (LCD) televisions, cellphones, and laptops are among the various consumer technologies that use precious metals.14Further, green technologies including wind turbines, solar panels, and catalytic converters require these rare elements. 15 As demand rises for both types of technologies, and as reserves of rare metals fall, prices skyrocket.16 Demand for nonrenewable resources creates conflict, and consumerism in rich countries results in harsh labor treatment for poorer countries.17

In general, the mining industry is extremely destructive to Earth’s environment.18 In fact, depending on the method employed, mining can destroy entire ecosystems by polluting water sources and contributing to deforestation.19 It is by its nature an unsustainable practice, because it involves the extraction of a finite and non-renewable resource.20 Moreover, by extracting tiny amounts of metals from relatively large quantities of ore, the mining industry contributes the largest portion of solid wastes in the world.21 The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) describes the industry as the source of more toxic and hazardous waste than any other industrial sector [in the United States], costing billions of dollars to address the public health and environmental threats to communities. 22 Poor regulations and oxymoronic corporate definitions of sustainability, however, make it unclear as to just how much waste the industry actually produces.23

Platinum provides an excellent case study of the issue, because it is an extremely rare and expensive metal—an ore expected to exist in vast quantities in asteroids.24 Further, production of platinum has increased sharply in the past sixty years in order to keep up with growing demand for use in new technologies.25 In fact, despite their high costs, platinum group metals are so useful that [one] of [four] industrial goods on Earth require them in production. 26 Scholars do not expect demand to slow any time soon.27 Among other technologies, industries use platinum in products such as catalytic converters, jewelry production, various catalysts for chemical processing, and hydrogen fuel cells.28 While there is no consensus on how far the Earth’s reserves of platinum will take humanity, many scientists agree that platinum ore reserves will deplete in a relatively short amount of time.29

With the rate of mining at an all-time high,30 it is increasingly clear that historical patterns of mineral resources and development cannot simply be assumed to continue unaltered into the future. 31 The platinum mining industry, however, has a strong incentive to increase its rate of extraction as profits grow with the rate of demand. Without any alternative, this destructive practice will continue into the future.32

So-called platinum-group metal (PGM) ores are mined through underground or open cut techniques.33 Due to these practices, all but a very small fraction of the mined platinum ore is disposed of as solid waste.34 The environmental consequences of platinum production are thus quite significant, but like the mining industry in general, the amount of waste is typically under-reported.35

While this is due to high production levels at the moment, those levels will only increase given the estimated future demand of platinum.36 In spite of the negative consequences, mining continues unabated because it is economically important to many areas.37 The future environmental costs provide a major challenge in creating a sustainable system. Relegating at least some mining companies to near-Earth asteroids would reduce the negative effects of future mining levels on Earth. The economic benefits of mining need not be sacrificed for the sake of the environment.38

#### Terrestrial resource scarcity goes nuclear---we outweigh on timeframe, just the prospect of shortages triggers escalation.

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Brace yourself. You may not be able to tell yet, but according to global experts and the US intelligence community, the earth is already shifting under you. Whether you know it or not, you’re on a new planet, a resource-shock world of a sort humanity has never before experienced.

Two nightmare scenarios—a global scarcity of vital resources and the onset of extreme climate change—are already beginning to converge and in the coming decades are likely to produce a tidal wave of unrest, rebellion, competition and conflict. Just what this tsunami of disaster will look like may, as yet, be hard to discern, but experts warn of “water wars” over contested river systems, global food riots sparked by soaring prices for life’s basics, mass migrations of climate refugees (with resulting anti-migrant violence) and the breakdown of social order or the collapse of states. At first, such mayhem is likely to arise largely in Africa, Central Asia and other areas of the underdeveloped South, but in time, all regions of the planet will be affected.

To appreciate the power of this encroaching catastrophe, it’s necessary to examine each of the forces that are combining to produce this future cataclysm.

Resource Shortages and Resource Wars

Start with one simple given: the prospect of future scarcities of vital natural resources, including energy, water, land, food and critical minerals. This in itself would guarantee social unrest, geopolitical friction and war.

It is important to note that absolute scarcity doesn’t have to be on the horizon in any given resource category for this scenario to kick in. A lack of adequate supplies to meet the needs of a growing, ever more urbanized and industrialized global population is enough. Given the wave of extinctions that scientists are recording, some resources—particular species of fish, animals and trees, for example—will become less abundant in the decades to come, and may even disappear altogether. But key materials for modern civilization like oil, uranium and copper will simply prove harder and more costly to acquire, leading to supply bottlenecks and periodic shortages.

Oil—the single most important commodity in the international economy—provides an apt example. Although global oil supplies may actually grow in the coming decades, many experts doubt that they can be expanded sufficiently to meet the needs of a rising global middle class that is, for instance, expected to buy millions of new cars in the near future. In its 2011 World Energy Outlook, the International Energy Agency claimed that an anticipated global oil demand of 104 million barrels per day in 2035 will be satisfied. This, the report suggested, would be thanks in large part to additional supplies of “unconventional oil” (Canadian tar sands, shale oil and so on), as well as 55 million barrels of new oil from fields “yet to be found” and “yet to be developed.”

However, many analysts scoff at this optimistic assessment, arguing that rising production costs (for energy that will be ever more difficult and costly to extract), environmental opposition, warfare, corruption and other impediments will make it extremely difficult to achieve increases of this magnitude. In other words, even if production manages for a time to top the 2010 level of 87 million barrels per day, the goal of 104 million barrels will never be reached and the world’s major consumers will face virtual, if not absolute, scarcity.

Water provides another potent example. On an annual basis, the supply of drinking water provided by natural precipitation remains more or less constant: about 40,000 cubic kilometers. But much of this precipitation lands on Greenland, Antarctica, Siberia and inner Amazonia where there are very few people, so the supply available to major concentrations of humanity is often surprisingly limited. In many regions with high population levels, water supplies are already relatively sparse. This is especially true of North Africa, Central Asia and the Middle East, where the demand for water continues to grow as a result of rising populations, urbanization and the emergence of new water-intensive industries. The result, even when the supply remains constant, is an environment of increasing scarcity.

Wherever you look, the picture is roughly the same: supplies of critical resources may be rising or falling, but rarely do they appear to be outpacing demand, producing a sense of widespread and systemic scarcity. However generated, a perception of scarcity—or imminent scarcity—regularly leads to anxiety, resentment, hostility and contentiousness. This pattern is very well understood, and has been evident throughout human history.

In his book Constant Battles, for example, Steven LeBlanc, director of collections for Harvard’s Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, notes that many ancient civilizations experienced higher levels of warfare when faced with resource shortages brought about by population growth, crop failures or persistent drought. Jared Diamond, author of the bestseller Collapse, has detected a similar pattern in Mayan civilization and the Anasazi culture of New Mexico’s Chaco Canyon. More recently, concern over adequate food for the home population was a significant factor in Japan’s invasion of Manchuria in 1931 and Germany’s invasions of Poland in 1939 and the Soviet Union in 1941, according to Lizzie Collingham, author of The Taste of War.

Although the global supply of most basic commodities has grown enormously since the end of World War II, analysts see the persistence of resource-related conflict in areas where materials remain scarce or there is anxiety about the future reliability of supplies. Many experts believe, for example, that the fighting in Darfur and other war-ravaged areas of North Africa has been driven, at least in part, by competition among desert tribes for access to scarce water supplies, exacerbated in some cases by rising population levels.

“In Darfur,” says a 2009 report from the UN Environment Programme on the role of natural resources in the conflict, “recurrent drought, increasing demographic pressures, and political marginalization are among the forces that have pushed the region into a spiral of lawlessness and violence that has led to 300,000 deaths and the displacement of more than two million people since 2003.”

Anxiety over future supplies is often also a factor in conflicts that break out over access to oil or control of contested undersea reserves of oil and natural gas. In 1979, for instance, when the Islamic revolution in Iran overthrew the Shah and the Soviets invaded Afghanistan, Washington began to fear that someday it might be denied access to Persian Gulf oil. At that point, President Jimmy Carter promptly announced what came to be called the Carter Doctrine. In his 1980 State of the Union Address, Carter affirmed that any move to impede the flow of oil from the Gulf would be viewed as a threat to America’s “vital interests” and would be repelled by “any means necessary, including military force.”

In 1990, this principle was invoked by President George H.W. Bush to justify intervention in the first Persian Gulf War, just as his son would use it, in part, to justify the 2003 invasion of Iraq. Today, it remains the basis for US plans to employ force to stop the Iranians from closing the Strait of Hormuz, the strategic waterway connecting the Persian Gulf to the Indian Ocean through which about 35 percent of the world’s seaborne oil commerce passes.

Recently, a set of resource conflicts have been rising toward the boiling point between China and its neighbors in Southeast Asia when it comes to control of offshore oil and gas reserves in the South China Sea. Although the resulting naval clashes have yet to result in a loss of life, a strong possibility of military escalation exists. A similar situation has also arisen in the East China Sea, where China and Japan are jousting for control over similarly valuable undersea reserves. Meanwhile, in the South Atlantic Ocean, Argentina and Britain are once again squabbling over the Falkland Islands (called Las Malvinas by the Argentinians) because oil has been discovered in surrounding waters.

By all accounts, resource-driven potential conflicts like these will only multiply in the years ahead as demand rises, supplies dwindle and more of what remains will be found in disputed areas. In a 2012 study titled Resources Futures, the respected British think-tank Chatham House expressed particular concern about possible resource wars over water, especially in areas like the Nile and Jordan River basins where several groups or countries must share the same river for the majority of their water supplies and few possess the wherewithal to develop alternatives. “Against this backdrop of tight supplies and competition, issues related to water rights, prices, and pollution are becoming contentious,” the report noted. “In areas with limited capacity to govern shared resources, balance competing demands, and mobilize new investments, tensions over water may erupt into more open confrontations.”

## 1NC- Util

#### The meta-ethic is phenomenalism – induction first

Sayre-McCord 1 Geoffrey Sayre-McCord, Philosophy, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, "Mill's “Proof” Of The Principle of Utility: A More Than Half-Hearted Defense", Social Philosophy and Policy, 2001, accessed: 1 April 2020, https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/social-philosophy-and-policy/article/mills-proof-of-the-principle-of-utility-a-more-than-halfhearted-defense/FDBE07CBE08D4E17523930BF8C7BBC32, R.S.

When it comes to visibility, no less than desirability, Mill explicitly denies that a "proof" in the "ordinary acceptation of the term" can be offered.25 As he notes, "To be incapable of proof by reasoning is com mon to all first principles; to the first premises of our knowledge, as well as to those of our conduct."26 Nonetheless, support -- that is, evidence, though not proof -- for the first premises of our knowledge is provided by "our senses, and our internal consciousness." Mill's suggestion is that, when it comes to the first principles of conduct, desire play the same epistemic role that the senses play, when it comes to the first principles of knowledge. To understand this role, it is important to distinguish the fact that someone is sensing something from what is sensed, which is a distinction mirrored in the contrast bet ween the fact that someone is desiring something and what is desired. In the case of our senses, the evidence we have for our judgments concerning sensible qualities traces back to what is sensed, to the content of our sense-experience. Likewise, Mill is suggesting, in the case of value, the evidence we have for our judgments concerning value traces back to what is desired, to the content of our desires. Ultimately, the grounds we have for holding the principles we do must, he thinks, be traced back to our experience, to our senses and desires. Yet the evidence we have is not that we are sensing or desiring something but what it is that is sensed or desired. When we are having sensations of red, when what we are looking at appears red to us, we have evidence (albeit overrideable and defeasible evidence) that the thing is red. Moreover, if things never looked red to us, we could never get evidence that things were red, and would indeed never have developed the concept of redness. Similarly, when we are desiring things, when what we are considering appears good to us, we have evidence (albeit overrideable and defeasible evidence) that the thing is good. Moreover, if we never desired things, we could never get evidence that things were good, and would indeed never have developed the concept of value. Recall that desire, for Mill, like taste, touch, sight, and smell, is a "passive sensibility." All of these, he holds, provide us with both the content that makes thought possible and the evidence we have for the conclusions that thought leads us to embrace. "Desiring a thing" and "thinking of it as desirable (unless for the sake of its consequences)" are treated by Mill as one an d the same, just as seeing a thing as red and thinking of it as red are one and the same. Accordingly, a person who desires x is a person who ipso facto sees x as desirable. Desiring something, for Mill, is a matter of seeing it under the guise of the good. This means that it is important, in the context of Mill's argument, that one not think of desires as mere preferences or as just any sort of motive. They constitute, according to Mill, a distinctive subclass of our motivational states, and are distinguished (at least in part) by t heir evaluative content. Thus, Mill is neither assuming nor arguing that something is good because we desire it; rather, he is depending on our desiring it as establishing that we see it as good. At the same time, while desiring something is a matter of seeing it as good, one could, on Mill's view, believe that something is good without desiring it, just as one can believe something is red without seeing it as red. While desire is supposed to be the fundamental source of our concept of, and evidence for, desirability, once the concept is in place there are contexts in which we will have reason to think it applies even when the corresponding sensible experience is lacking. Indeed, in Chapter IV, Mill is concerned not with generating a desire, but with justifying the belief that happiness is desirable, and the only thing desirable, as an end, and so concerned with defending the standard for determining what should be desired. Mill's aim is to take what people already, and he thinks inevitably, see as desirable and argue that those views commit them to the value of the general happiness (whet her or not their desires follow the deliverances of t heir reason). Those who, like Mill, desire the general happiness already hold the view that the general happiness is desirable. They accept the claim that Mill is trying to defend. As Mill knows, however, there are many who do not have this desire -- many who desire only their own happiness, and some who even desire that others suffer. These are the people he sets out to persuade, along with others who are more generous and benevolent, but who nonetheless do not see happiness as desirable, and the only thin g desirable, as an end. Mill's argument is directed at convincing t hem all -- whether their desires follow or not -- that they have grounds for, and are in fact already com mitted to, regarding the happiness of others as valuable as an end. Mill recognizes that whatever argument he might hope to offer will need to appeal to evaluative claims people already accept (since he takes to heart Hume's caution concerning inferring an 'ought' from an 'is'). The claim Mill thinks he can appeal to -- that one's own happiness is a good (i.e. desirable) -- is something licensed as available by people desiring their own happiness. Yet he is not supposing here that the fact that they desire their own happiness, or anything else, is proof that it is desirable, just as he would not suppose that the fact that someone sees something as red is proof that it is. Rather, he is supposing that if people desire their own happiness, or see something as red, one can rely on t hem having available, as a premise for further argument, the claim that their own happiness is desirable or that the thing is red (at least absent contrary evidence). As he puts it in the third paragraph, "If the end which the utilitarian doctrine proposes to itself were not, in theory and in practice, acknowledged to be an end nothing could ever convince any person that it was so." Thus, in appealing to the analogy bet ween judgments of sensible qualities and judgments of value, Mill is not trading on an ambiguity, nor does his argument here involve identifying being desirable with being desired or assuming that "desirable" means "desired." He is instead relying consistently on an empiricist account of concepts and their application -- on a view according to which we have the concepts, evidence, and knowledge we do only thanks to our having experiences of a certain sort. In the absence of the relevant experiences, he holds (with other empiricists), we would not only lack the required evidence for our judgments, we would lack the capacity to make the judgments in the first place. In the presence of the relevant experiences, though, we have both the concepts and the required evidence -- "not only all the proof which the case admits of, but all which it is possible to require."

#### The standard is maximizing expected wellbeing. Pleasure and pain are intrinsic value and disvalue – everything else regresses – robust neuroscience.

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**Pleasure** is not only one of the three primary reward functions but it also **defines reward.** As homeostasis explains the functions of only a limited number of rewards, the principal reason why particular stimuli, objects, events, situations, and activities are rewarding may be due to pleasure. This applies first of all to sex and to the primary homeostatic rewards of food and liquid and extends to money, taste, beauty, social encounters and nonmaterial, internally set, and intrinsic rewards. Pleasure, as the primary effect of rewards, drives the prime reward functions of learning, approach behavior, and decision making and provides the basis **for hedonic** theories of reward function. We are attracted by most rewards and exert intense efforts to obtain them, just because they are enjoyable [10]. Pleasure is a passive reaction that derives from the experience or prediction of reward and may lead to a long-lasting state of happiness. The word happiness is difficult to define. In fact, just obtaining physical pleasure may not be enough. One key to happiness involves a network of good friends. However, it is not obvious how the higher forms of satisfaction and pleasure are related to an ice cream cone, or to your team winning a sporting event. Recent multidisciplinary research, using both humans and detailed invasive brain analysis of animals has discovered some critical ways that the brain processes pleasure [14]. Pleasure as a hallmark of reward is sufficient for defining a reward, but it may not be necessary. A reward may generate positive learning and approach behavior simply because it contains substances that are essential for body function. When we are hungry, we may eat bad and unpleasant meals. A monkey who receives hundreds of small drops of water every morning in the laboratory is unlikely to feel a rush of pleasure every time it gets the 0.1 ml. Nevertheless, with these precautions in mind, we may define any stimulus, object, event, activity, or situation that has the potential to produce pleasure as a reward. In the context of reward deficiency or for disorders of addiction, homeostasis pursues pharmacological treatments: drugs to treat drug addiction, obesity, and other compulsive behaviors. The theory of allostasis suggests broader approaches - such as re-expanding the range of possible pleasures and providing opportunities to expend effort in their pursuit. [15]. It is noteworthy, the first animal studies eliciting approach behavior by electrical brain stimulation interpreted their findings as a discovery of the brain’s pleasure centers [16] which were later partly associated with midbrain dopamine neurons [17–19] despite the notorious difficulties of identifying emotions in animals. Evolutionary theories of pleasure: The love connection BO:D Charles Darwin and other biological scientists that have examined the biological evolution and its basic principles found various mechanisms that steer behavior and biological development. Besides their theory on natural selection, it was particularly the sexual selection process that gained significance in the latter context over the last century, especially when it comes to the question of what makes us “what we are,” i.e., human. However, the capacity to sexually select and evolve is not at all a human accomplishment alone or a sign of our uniqueness; yet, we humans, as it seems, are ingenious in fooling ourselves and others–when we are in love or desperately search for it. It is well established that modern biological theory conjectures that **organisms are** the **result of evolutionary competition.** In fact, Richard Dawkins stresses gene survival and propagation as the basic mechanism of life [20]. Only genes that lead to the fittest phenotype will make it. It is noteworthy that the phenotype is selected based on behavior that maximizes gene propagation. To do so, the phenotype must survive and generate offspring, and be better at it than its competitors. Thus, the ultimate, distal function of rewards is to increase evolutionary fitness by ensuring the survival of the organism and reproduction. It is agreed that learning, approach, economic decisions, and positive emotions are the proximal functions through which phenotypes obtain other necessary nutrients for survival, mating, and care for offspring. Behavioral reward functions have evolved to help individuals to survive and propagate their genes. Apparently, people need to live well and long enough to reproduce. Most would agree that homo-sapiens do so by ingesting the substances that make their bodies function properly. For this reason, foods and drinks are rewards. Additional rewards, including those used for economic exchanges, ensure sufficient palatable food and drink supply. Mating and gene propagation is supported by powerful sexual attraction. Additional properties, like body form, augment the chance to mate and nourish and defend offspring and are therefore also rewards. Care for offspring until they can reproduce themselves helps gene propagation and is rewarding; otherwise, many believe mating is useless. According to David E Comings, as any small edge will ultimately result in evolutionary advantage [21], additional reward mechanisms like novelty seeking and exploration widen the spectrum of available rewards and thus enhance the chance for survival, reproduction, and ultimate gene propagation. These functions may help us to obtain the benefits of distant rewards that are determined by our own interests and not immediately available in the environment. Thus the distal reward function in gene propagation and evolutionary fitness defines the proximal reward functions that we see in everyday behavior. That is why foods, drinks, mates, and offspring are rewarding. There have been theories linking pleasure as a required component of health benefits salutogenesis, (salugenesis). In essence, under these terms, pleasure is described as a state or feeling of happiness and satisfaction resulting from an experience that one enjoys. Regarding pleasure, it is a double-edged sword, on the one hand, it promotes positive feelings (like mindfulness) and even better cognition, possibly through the release of dopamine [22]. But on the other hand, pleasure simultaneously encourages addiction and other negative behaviors, i.e., motivational toxicity. It is a complex neurobiological phenomenon, relying on reward circuitry or limbic activity. It is important to realize that through the “Brain Reward Cascade” (BRC) endorphin and endogenous morphinergic mechanisms may play a role [23]. While natural rewards are essential for survival and appetitive motivation leading to beneficial biological behaviors like eating, sex, and reproduction, crucial social interactions seem to further facilitate the positive effects exerted by pleasurable experiences. Indeed, experimentation with addictive drugs is capable of directly acting on reward pathways and causing deterioration of these systems promoting hypodopaminergia [24]. Most would agree that pleasurable activities can stimulate personal growth and may help to induce healthy behavioral changes, including stress management [25]. The work of Esch and Stefano [26] concerning the link between compassion and love implicate the brain reward system, and pleasure induction suggests that social contact in general, i.e., love, attachment, and compassion, can be highly effective in stress reduction, survival, and overall health. Understanding the role of neurotransmission and pleasurable states both positive and negative have been adequately studied over many decades [26–37], but comparative anatomical and neurobiological function between animals and homo sapiens appear to be required and seem to be in an infancy stage. Finding happiness is different between apes and humans As stated earlier in this expert opinion one key to happiness involves a network of good friends [38]. However, it is not entirely clear exactly how the higher forms of satisfaction and pleasure are related to a sugar rush, winning a sports event or even sky diving, all of which augment dopamine release at the reward brain site. Recent multidisciplinary research, using both humans and detailed invasive brain analysis of animals has discovered some critical ways that the brain processes pleasure. Remarkably, there are pathways for ordinary liking and pleasure, which are limited in scope as described above in this commentary. However, there are **many brain regions**, often termed hot and cold spots, that significantly **modulate** (increase or decrease) our **pleasure or** even produce the opposite of pleasure— that is disgust and fear [39]. One specific region of the nucleus accumbens is organized like a computer keyboard, with particular stimulus triggers in rows— producing an increase and decrease of pleasure and disgust. Moreover, the cortex has unique roles in the cognitive evaluation of our feelings of pleasure [40]. Importantly, the interplay of these multiple triggers and the higher brain centers in the prefrontal cortex are very intricate and are just being uncovered. Desire and reward centers It is surprising that many different sources of pleasure activate the same circuits between the mesocorticolimbic regions (Figure 1). Reward and desire are two aspects pleasure induction and have a very widespread, large circuit. Some part of this circuit distinguishes between desire and dread. The so-called pleasure circuitry called “REWARD” involves a well-known dopamine pathway in the mesolimbic system that can influence both pleasure and motivation. In simplest terms, the well-established mesolimbic system is a dopamine circuit for reward. It starts in the ventral tegmental area (VTA) of the midbrain and travels to the nucleus accumbens (Figure 2). It is the cornerstone target to all addictions. The VTA is encompassed with neurons using glutamate, GABA, and dopamine. The nucleus accumbens (NAc) is located within the ventral striatum and is divided into two sub-regions—the motor and limbic regions associated with its core and shell, respectively. The NAc has spiny neurons that receive dopamine from the VTA and glutamate (a dopamine driver) from the hippocampus, amygdala and medial prefrontal cortex. Subsequently, the NAc projects GABA signals to an area termed the ventral pallidum (VP). The region is a relay station in the limbic loop of the basal ganglia, critical for motivation, behavior, emotions and the “Feel Good” response. This defined system of the brain is involved in all addictions –substance, and non –substance related. In 1995, our laboratory coined the term “Reward Deficiency Syndrome” (RDS) to describe genetic and epigenetic induced hypodopaminergia in the “Brain Reward Cascade” that contribute to addiction and compulsive behaviors [3,6,41]. Furthermore, ordinary “liking” of something, or pure pleasure, is represented by small regions mainly in the limbic system (old reptilian part of the brain). These may be part of larger neural circuits. In Latin, hedus is the term for “sweet”; and in Greek, hodone is the term for “pleasure.” Thus, the word Hedonic is now referring to various subcomponents of pleasure: some associated with purely sensory and others with more complex emotions involving morals, aesthetics, and social interactions. The capacity to have pleasure is part of being healthy and may even extend life, especially if linked to optimism as a dopaminergic response [42]. Psychiatric illness often includes symptoms of an abnormal inability to experience pleasure, referred to as anhedonia. A negative feeling state is called dysphoria, which can consist of many emotions such as pain, depression, anxiety, fear, and disgust. Previously many scientists used animal research to uncover the complex mechanisms of pleasure, liking, motivation and even emotions like panic and fear, as discussed above [43]. However, as a significant amount of related research about the specific brain regions of pleasure/reward circuitry has been derived from invasive studies of animals, these cannot be directly compared with subjective states experienced by humans. In an attempt to resolve the controversy regarding the causal contributions of mesolimbic dopamine systems to reward, we have previously evaluated the three-main competing explanatory categories: “liking,” “learning,” and “wanting” [3]. That is, dopamine may mediate (a) liking: the hedonic impact of reward, (b) learning: learned predictions about rewarding effects, or (c) wanting: the pursuit of rewards by attributing incentive salience to reward-related stimuli [44]. We have evaluated these hypotheses, especially as they relate to the RDS, and we find that the incentive salience or “wanting” hypothesis of dopaminergic functioning is supported by a majority of the scientific evidence. Various neuroimaging studies have shown that anticipated behaviors such as sex and gaming, delicious foods and drugs of abuse all affect brain regions associated with reward networks, and may not be unidirectional. Drugs of abuse enhance dopamine signaling which sensitizes mesolimbic brain mechanisms that apparently evolved explicitly to attribute incentive salience to various rewards [45]. Addictive substances are voluntarily self-administered, and they enhance (directly or indirectly) dopaminergic synaptic function in the NAc. This activation of the brain reward networks (producing the ecstatic “high” that users seek). Although these circuits were initially thought to encode a set point of hedonic tone, it is now being considered to be far more complicated in function, also encoding attention, reward expectancy, disconfirmation of reward expectancy, and incentive motivation [46]. The argument about addiction as a disease may be confused with a predisposition to substance and nonsubstance rewards relative to the extreme effect of drugs of abuse on brain neurochemistry. The former sets up an individual to be at high risk through both genetic polymorphisms in reward genes as well as harmful epigenetic insult. Some Psychologists, even with all the data, still infer that addiction is not a disease [47]. Elevated stress levels, together with polymorphisms (genetic variations) of various dopaminergic genes and the genes related to other neurotransmitters (and their genetic variants), and may have an additive effect on vulnerability to various addictions [48]. In this regard, Vanyukov, et al. [48] suggested based on review that whereas the gateway hypothesis does not specify mechanistic connections between “stages,” and does not extend to the risks for addictions the concept of common liability to addictions may be more parsimonious. The latter theory is grounded in genetic theory and supported by data identifying common sources of variation in the risk for specific addictions (e.g., RDS). This commonality has identifiable neurobiological substrate and plausible evolutionary explanations. Over many years the controversy of dopamine involvement in especially “pleasure” has led to confusion concerning separating motivation from actual pleasure (wanting versus liking) [49]. We take the position that animal studies cannot provide real clinical information as described by self-reports in humans. As mentioned earlier and in the abstract, on November 23rd, 2017, evidence for our concerns was discovered [50] In essence, although nonhuman primate brains are similar to our own, the disparity between other primates and those of human cognitive abilities tells us that surface similarity is not the whole story. Sousa et al. [50] small case found various differentially expressed genes, to associate with pleasure related systems. Furthermore, the dopaminergic interneurons located in the human neocortex were absent from the neocortex of nonhuman African apes. Such differences in neuronal transcriptional programs may underlie a variety of neurodevelopmental disorders. In simpler terms, the system controls the production of dopamine, a chemical messenger that plays a significant role in pleasure and rewards. The senior author, Dr. Nenad Sestan from Yale, stated: “Humans have evolved a dopamine system that is different than the one in chimpanzees.” This may explain why the behavior of humans is so unique from that of non-human primates, even though our brains are so surprisingly similar, Sestan said: “It might also shed light on why people are vulnerable to mental disorders such as autism (possibly even addiction).” Remarkably, this research finding emerged from an extensive, multicenter collaboration to compare the brains across several species. These researchers examined 247 specimens of neural tissue from six humans, five chimpanzees, and five macaque monkeys. Moreover, these investigators analyzed which genes were turned on or off in 16 regions of the brain. While the differences among species were subtle, **there was** a **remarkable contrast in** theneocortices, specifically in an area of the brain that is much more developed in humans than in chimpanzees. In fact, these researchers found that a gene called tyrosine hydroxylase (TH) for the enzyme, responsible for the production of dopamine, was expressed in the neocortex of humans, but not chimpanzees. As discussed earlier, dopamine is best known for its essential role within the brain’s reward system; the very system that responds to everything from sex, to gambling, to food, and to addictive drugs. However, dopamine also assists in regulating emotional responses, memory, and movement. Notably, abnormal dopamine levels have been linked to disorders including Parkinson’s, schizophrenia and spectrum disorders such as autism and addiction or RDS. Nora Volkow, the director of NIDA, pointed out that one alluring possibility is that the neurotransmitter dopamine plays a substantial role in humans’ ability to pursue various rewards that are perhaps months or even years away in the future. This same idea has been suggested by Dr. Robert Sapolsky, a professor of biology and neurology at Stanford University. Dr. Sapolsky cited evidence that dopamine levels rise dramatically in humans when we anticipate potential rewards that are uncertain and even far off in our futures, such as retirement or even the possible alterlife. This may explain what often motivates people to work for things that have no apparent short-term benefit [51]. In similar work, Volkow and Bale [52] proposed a model in which dopamine can favor NOW processes through phasic signaling in reward circuits or LATER processes through tonic signaling in control circuits. Specifically, they suggest that through its modulation of the orbitofrontal cortex, which processes salience attribution, dopamine also enables shilting from NOW to LATER, while its modulation of the insula, which processes interoceptive information, influences the probability of selecting NOW versus LATER actions based on an individual’s physiological state. This hypothesis further supports the concept that disruptions along these circuits contribute to diverse pathologies, including obesity and addiction or RDS.

#### Prefer:

#### 1] Actor spec—states must use util because they don’t have intentions and are constantly dealing with tradeoffs—outweighs since different agents have different obligations.

#### 2] Only consequentialism explains degrees of wrongness—if I break a promise to meet up for lunch, that is not as bad as breaking a promise to take a dying person to the hospital. Only the consequences of breaking the promise explain why the second one is much worse than the first which is the most intuitive. That outweighs:

#### A] Parsimony – metaphysics relies on long chains of questionable claims that make conclusions less likely.

#### B] Hijacks – intuitions are inevitable since even every framework must take some unjustified assumption as a starting point.

#### 3] TJFs -- Prioritize utilitarianism with a focus on existential risk in the context of debates about outer space.

Baum 16 [Seth, @ Global Catastrophic Risk Institute, In “The Ethics of Space Exploration”, ed. James S.J. Schwartz & Tony Milligan, Springer, 2016, pages 109-123. This version 29 July 2016. <https://sethbaum.com/ac/2016_SpaceEthics.pdf>] brett

A basic conclusion of this paper is that consequentialists should pay attention to outer space. This is because outer space can be the location of immense consequences (via space colonization) and because outer space scenarios can force us to rethink our consequentialist ethics (via ETI encounter).

Attention to outer space prompts us to recognize the big picture. This holds for consequentialist ethics as much as it does for anything else. Only by thinking through the possibilities of outer space can we understand how our lives could matter in the grand scheme of things. And the fact of the matter is that our lives can matter immensely. We can set the pieces in motion for an immense cosmic civilization. We can help prevent civilization-ending global catastrophe so as to enable future space colonization. And we can determine whether or not to try messaging to ETI.

Should we do these things? Answering this all-important question requires ethics. Therefore, just as consequentialists should pay attention to outer space, so too should outer space analysts pay attention to consequentialism, and indeed to ethics in general. Defensible forms of consequentialism will generally conclude that (1) humanity today should focus on avoiding global catastrophe, (2) space colonization should proceed with caution, but ultimately should proceed at immense scale, and (3) high-power/long-duration METI should not be conducted until more effort is put to assessing whether the consequences are likely to be good.

The ethical arguments and empirical analyses in this paper are quite brief and are not the final word on the subject. I have said little in defense of consequentialism and my preferred form of it. The analyses of space colonization and ETI encounter are likewise at best only approximate and leaving much for future work. Some of it is due to space constraints in this paper, but much of it is due to the fact that the research simply has not yet been performed. Outer space consequentialism could make for a fruitful line of inquiry.

The merits of this line of inquiry are diminished by the conclusion to focus on avoiding global catastrophe. Any global catastrophe would preclude the possibility of future research on all topics, including outer space consequentialism. Likewise, any hopes of resolving the ethical dilemmas and empirical uncertainties depend on us surviving long enough to do the research. An argument can thus be made against any work on outer space in favor of work on the global catastrophic risks. My own view is that work on outer space should be pursued mainly to the extent that it is instrumentally valuable towards reducing the global catastrophic risks. To that end it can be quite instrumentally valuable. Outer space can offer great motivation due to its immense opportunities, and it can be deeply inspirational due to its beauty and wonder and the big-picture perspective it offers. While attention to outer space should not distract humanity from the urgent threats that it faces, some attention is very much worthwhile.

#### That outweighs -- util is key to research around space because analysis of consequences is critical to any research about the big picture of space exploration, mining, satellites, etc. Two impacts:

#### 1] Fairness, as it’s most predictable to topic-oriented prep, so any alternative framework throws away the hard work of novices and well-prepared debaters,

#### 2] Education, absent an incentive to go deep into the topic literature we lose out on research skills that we take out of this space and benefit us for our entire lives.

#### 4] Extinction must outweigh – moral uncertainty demands we preserve the conditions for life, even a tiny risk outweighs, and future gains in quality of life ensure it’s a prior question

Todd 17 [Ben has a 1st from Oxford in Physics and Philosophy, has published in Climate Physics, once kick-boxed for Oxford, and speaks Chinese, badly. "The case for reducing extinction risk." <https://80000hours.org/articles/extinction-risk/>] brett

In this new age, what should be our biggest priority as a civilisation? Improving technology? Helping the poor? Changing the political system? Here’s a suggestion that’s not so often discussed: our first priority should be to survive. So long as civilisation continues to exist, we’ll have the chance to solve all our other problems, and have a far better future. But if we go extinct, that’s it. Why isn’t this priority more discussed? Here’s one reason: many people don’t yet appreciate the change in situation, and so don’t think our future is at risk. Social science researcher Spencer Greenberg surveyed Americans on their estimate of the chances of human extinction within 50 years. The results found that many think the chances are extremely low, with over 30% guessing they’re under one in ten million.3 We used to think the risks were extremely low as well, but when we looked into it, we changed our minds. As we’ll see, researchers who study these issues think the risks are over one thousand times higher, and are probably increasing. These concerns have started a new movement working to safeguard civilisation, which has been joined by Stephen Hawking, Max Tegmark, and new institutes founded by researchers at Cambridge, MIT, Oxford, and elsewhere. In the rest of this article, we cover the greatest risks to civilisation, including some that might be bigger than nuclear war and climate change. We then make the case that reducing these risks could be the most important thing you do with your life, and explain exactly what you can do to help. If you would like to use your career to work on these issues, we can also give one-on-one support. Reading time: 25 minutes How likely are you to be killed by an asteroid? An overview of naturally occurring existential risks A one in ten million chance of extinction in the next 50 years — what many people think the risk is — must be an underestimate. Naturally occurring existential risks can be estimated pretty accurately from history, and are much higher. If Earth was hit by a 1km-wide asteroid, there’s a chance that civilisation would be destroyed. By looking at the historical record, and tracking the objects in the sky, astronomers can estimate the risk of an asteroid this size hitting Earth as about 1 in 5000 per century.4 That’s higher than most people’s chances of being in a plane crash (about one in five million per flight), and already about 1000-times higher than the one in ten million risk that some people estimated.5 Some argue that although a 1km-sized object would be a disaster, it wouldn’t be enough to cause extinction, so this is a high estimate of the risk. But on the other hand, there are other naturally occurring risks, such as supervolcanoes.6 All this said, natural risks are still quite small in absolute terms. An upcoming paper by Dr. Toby Ord estimated that if we sum all the natural risks together, they’re very unlikely to add up to more than a 1 in 300 chance of extinction per century.7 Unfortunately, as we’ll now show, the natural risks are dwarfed by the human-caused ones. And this is why the risk of extinction has become an especially urgent issue. A history of progress, leading to the start of the most dangerous epoch in human history If you look at history over millennia, the basic message is that for a long-time almost everyone was poor, and then in the 18th century, that changed.8 Large economic growth created the conditions in which now face anthropogenic existential risks This was caused by the industrial revolution — perhaps the most important event in history. It wasn’t just wealth that grew. The following chart shows that over the long-term, life expectancy, energy use and democracy have all grown rapidly, while the percentage living in poverty has dramatically decreased.9 Chart prepared by Luke Muehlhauser in 2017. Literacy and education levels have also dramatically increased: Image source. People also seem to become happier as they get wealthier. In The Better Angels of Our Nature, Steven Pinker argues that violence is going down.10 Individual freedom has increased, while racism, sexism and homophobia have decreased. Many people think the world is getting worse,11 and it’s true that modern civilisation does some terrible things, such as factory farming. But as you can see in the data, many important measures of progress have improved dramatically. More to the point, no matter what you think has happened in the past, if we look forward, improving technology, political organisation and freedom gives our descendants the potential to solve our current problems, and have vastly better lives.12 It is possible to end poverty, prevent climate change, alleviate suffering, and more. But also notice the purple line on the second chart: war-making capacity. It’s based on estimates of global military power by the historian Ian Morris, and it has also increased dramatically. Here’s the issue: improving technology holds the possibility of enormous gains, but also enormous risks. Each time we discover a new technology, most of the time it yields huge benefits. But there’s also a chance we discover a technology with more destructive power than we have the ability to wisely use. And so, although the present generation lives in the most prosperous period in human history, it’s plausibly also the most dangerous. The first destructive technology of this kind was nuclear weapons. Nuclear weapons: a history of near-misses Today we all have North Korea’s nuclear programme on our minds, but current events are just one chapter in a long saga of near misses. We came near to nuclear war several times during the Cuban Missile crisis alone.13 In one incident, the Americans resolved that if one of their spy planes were shot down, they would immediately invade Cuba without a further War Council meeting. The next day, a spy plane was shot down. JFK called the council anyway, and decided against invading. An invasion of Cuba might well have triggered nuclear war; it later emerged that Castro was in favour of nuclear retaliation even if “it would’ve led to the complete annihilation of Cuba”. Some of the launch commanders in Cuba also had independent authority to target American forces with tactical nuclear weapons in the event of an invasion. In another incident, a Russian nuclear submarine was trying to smuggle materials into Cuba when they were discovered by the American fleet. The fleet began to drop dummy depth charges to force the submarine to surface. The Russian captain thought they were real depth charges and that, while out of radio communication, the third world war had started. He ordered a nuclear strike on the American fleet with one of their nuclear torpedoes. Fortunately, he needed the approval of other senior officers. One, Vasili Arkhipov, disagreed, preventing war. Thanks to Vasili Arkhipov, we narrowly averted a global catastrophic risk from nuclear weapons Thank you Vasili Arkhipov. Putting all these events together, JFK later estimated that the chances of nuclear war were “between one in three and even”.14 There have been plenty of other close calls with Russia, even after the Cold War, as listed on this nice Wikipedia page. And those are just the ones we know about. Nuclear experts today are just as concerned about tensions between India and Pakistan, which both possess nuclear weapons, as North Korea.15 The key problem is that several countries maintain large nuclear arsenals that are ready to be deployed in minutes. This means that a false alarm or accident can rapidly escalate into a full-blown nuclear war, especially in times of tense foreign relations. Would a nuclear war end civilisation? It was initially thought that a nuclear blast might be so hot that it would ignite the atmosphere and make the Earth uninhabitable. Scientists estimated this was sufficiently unlikely that the weapons could be “safely” tested, and we now know this won’t happen. In the 1980s, the concern was that ash from burning buildings would plunge the Earth into a long-term winter that would make it impossible to grow crops for decades.16 Modern climate models suggest that a nuclear winter severe enough to kill everyone is very unlikely, though it’s hard to be confident due to model uncertainty.17 Even a “mild” nuclear winter, however, could still cause mass starvation.18 For this and other reasons, a nuclear war would be extremely destabilising, and it’s unclear whether civilisation could recover. How likely is a nuclear war to permanently end civilisation? It’s very hard to estimate, but it seems hard to conclude that the chance of a civilisation-ending nuclear war in the next century isn’t over 0.3%. That would mean the risks from nuclear weapons are greater than all the natural risks put together. (Read more about nuclear risks.) This is why the 1950s marked the start of a new age for humanity. For the first time in history, it became possible for a small number of decision-makers to wreak havoc on the whole world. We now pose the greatest threat to our own survival — that makes today the most dangerous point in human history. And nuclear weapons aren’t the only way we could end civilisation. How big is the risk of run-away climate change? In 2015, President Obama said in his State of the Union address that:19 “No challenge  poses a greater threat to future generations than climate change” Climate change is certainly a major risk to civilisation. The graph below shows estimates of climate sensitivity. Climate sensitivity is how much warming to expect in the long-term if CO2 concentrations double, which is roughly what’s expected within the century. Does climate change pose an existential risk? Wagner and Weitzman predict a greater than 10% chance of greater than 6 degrees celsius of warming. Image source The most likely outcome is 2-4 degrees of warming, which would be bad, but survivable. However, these estimates give a 10% chance of warming over 6 degrees, and perhaps a 1% chance of warming of 9 degrees. That would render large fractions of the Earth functionally uninhabitable, requiring at least a massive reorganisation of society. It would also probably increase conflict, and make us more vulnerable to other risks. (If you’re sceptical of climate models, then you should increase your uncertainty, which makes the situation more worrying.) So, it seems like the chance of a massive climate disaster created by CO2 is perhaps similar to the chance of a nuclear war. Researchers who study these issues think nuclear war seems more likely to result in outright extinction, due to the possibility of nuclear winter, which is why we think nuclear weapons pose an even greater risk than climate change. That said, climate change is certainly a major problem, which should raise our estimate of the risks even higher. (Read more about run-away climate change.) What new technologies might be as dangerous as nuclear weapons? The invention of nuclear weapons led to the anti-nuclear movement just a decade later in the 1960s, and the environmentalist movement soon adopted the cause of fighting climate change. What’s less appreciated is that new technologies will present further catastrophic risks. This is why we need a movement that is concerned with safeguarding civilisation in general. Predicting the future of technology is difficult, but because we only have one civilisation, we need to try our best. Here are some candidates for the next technology that’s as dangerous as nuclear weapons. In 1918-1919, over 3% of the world’s population died of the Spanish Flu.20 If such a pandemic arose today, it might be even harder to contain due to rapid global transport. What’s more concerning, though, is that it may soon be possible to genetically engineer a virus that’s as contagious as the Spanish Flu, but also deadlier, and which could spread for years undetected. That would be a weapon with the destructive power of nuclear weapons, but far harder to prevent from being used. Nuclear weapons require huge factories and rare materials to make, which makes them relatively easy to control. Designer viruses might be possible to create in a lab with a couple of biology PhDs. In fact, in 2006, The Guardian was able to receive segments of the extinct smallpox virus by mail order.21 Some terrorist groups have expressed interest in using indiscriminate weapons like these. (Read more about pandemic risks.) In fact, in 2006, The Guardian was able to receive segments of the extinct smallpox virus by mail order. Relevant experts suggest synthetic pathogens could potentially pose a global catastrophic risk. Who ordered the smallpox? Credit: The Guardian Another new technology with huge potential power is artificial intelligence. The reason that humans are in charge and not chimps is purely a matter of intelligence. Our large and powerful brains give us incredible control of the world, despite the fact that we are so much physically weaker than chimpanzees. So then what would happen if one day we created something much more intelligent than ourselves? In 2017, 350 researchers who have published peer-reviewed research into artificial intelligence at top conferences were polled about when they believe that we will develop computers with human-level intelligence: that is, a machine that is capable of carrying out all work tasks better than humans. The median estimate was that there is a 50% chance we will develop high-level machine intelligence in 45 years, and 75% by the end of the century.22 Graph of expert prediction from Grace et al: The median estimate was that there is a 50% chance we will develop high-level machine intelligence in 45 years These probabilities are hard to estimate, and the researchers gave very different figures depending on precisely how you ask the question.23 Nevertheless, it seems there is at least a reasonable chance that some kind of transformative machine intelligence is invented in the next century. Moreover, greater uncertainty means that it might come sooner than people think rather than later. What risks might this development pose? The original pioneers in computing, like Alan Turing and Marvin Minsky, raised concerns about the risks of powerful computer systems,24 and these risks are still around today. We’re not talking about computers “turning evil”. Rather, one concern is that a powerful AI system could be used by one group to gain control of the world, or otherwise be mis-used. If the USSR had developed nuclear weapons 10 years before the USA, the USSR might have become the dominant global power. Powerful computer technology might pose similar risks. Another concern is that deploying the system could have unintended consequences, since it would be difficult to predict what something smarter than us would do. A sufficiently powerful system might also be difficult to control, and so be hard to reverse once implemented. These concerns have been documented by Oxford Professor Nick Bostrom in Superintelligence and by AI pioneer Stuart Russell. Most experts think that better AI will be a hugely positive development, but they also agree there are risks. In the survey we just mentioned, AI experts estimated that the development of high-level machine intelligence has a 10% chance of a “bad outcome” and a 5% chance of an “extremely bad” outcome, such as human extinction.22 And we should probably expect this group to be positively biased, since, after all, they make their living from the technology. Putting the estimates together, if there’s a 75% chance that high-level machine intelligence is developed in the next century, then this means that the chance of a major AI disaster is 5% of 75%, which is about 4%. (Read more about risks from artificial intelligence.) People have raised concern about other new technologies, such as other forms of geo-engineering and atomic manufacturing, but they seem significantly less imminent, so are widely seen as less dangerous than the other technologies we’ve covered. You can see a longer list of existential risks here. What’s probably more concerning is the risks we haven’t thought of yet. If you had asked people in 1900 what the greatest risks to civilisation were, they probably wouldn’t have suggested nuclear weapons, genetic engineering or artificial intelligence, since none of these were yet invented. It’s possible we’re in the same situation looking forward to the next century. Future “unknown unknowns” might pose a greater risk than the risks we know today. Each time we discover a new technology, it’s a little like betting against a single number on a roulette wheel. Most of the time we win, and the technology is overall good. But each time there’s also a small chance the technology gives us more destructive power than we can handle, and we lose everything. Each new technology we develop has both unprecedented potential and perils. Image source. What’s the total risk of human extinction if we add everything together? Many experts who study these issues estimate that the total chance of human extinction in the next century is between 1 and 20%. For instance, an informal poll in 2008 at a conference on catastrophic risks found they believe it’s pretty likely we’ll face a catastrophe that kills over a billion people, and estimate a 19% chance of extinction before 2100.25 Risk At least 1 billion dead Human extinction Number killed by molecular nanotech weapons. 10% 5% Total killed by superintelligent AI. 5% 5% Total killed in all wars (including civil wars). 30% 4% Number killed in the single biggest engineered pandemic. 10% 2% Total killed in all nuclear wars. 10% 1% Number killed in the single biggest nanotech accident. 1% 0.5% Number killed in the single biggest natural pandemic. 5% 0.05% Total killed in all acts of nuclear terrorism. 1% 0.03% Overall risk of extinction prior to 2100 n/a 19% These figures are about one million times higher than what people normally think. In our podcast episode with Will MacAskill we discuss why he puts the risk of extinction this century at around 1%. In his his book The Precipice: Existential Risk and the Future of Humanity, Dr Toby Ord gives his guess at our total existential risk this century as 1 in 6 — a roll of the dice. Listen to our episode with Toby. What should we make of these estimates? Presumably, the researchers only work on these issues because they think they’re so important, so we should expect their estimates to be high (“selection bias”). But does that mean we can dismiss their concerns entirely? Given this, what’s our personal best guess? It’s very hard to say, but we find it hard to confidently ignore the risks. Overall, we guess the risk is likely over 3%. Why helping to safeguard the future could be the most important thing you can do with your life How much should we prioritise working to reduce these risks compared to other issues, like global poverty, ending cancer or political change? At 80,000 Hours, we do research to help people find careers with positive social impact. As part of this, we try to find the most urgent problems in the world to work on. We evaluate different global problems using our problem framework, which compares problems in terms of: Scale – how many are affected by the problem Neglectedness -how many people are working on it already Solvability – how easy it is to make progress If you apply this framework, we think that safeguarding the future comes out as the world’s biggest priority. And so, if you want to have a big positive impact with your career, this is the top area to focus on. In the next few sections, we’ll evaluate this issue on scale, neglectedness and solvability, drawing heavily on Existential Risk Prevention as a Global Priority by Nick Bostrom and unpublished work by Toby Ord, as well as our own research. First, let’s start with the scale of the issue. We’ve argued there’s likely over a 3% chance of extinction in the next century. How big an issue is this? One figure we can look at is how many people might die in such a catastrophe. The population of the Earth in the middle of the century will be about 10 billion, so a 3% chance of everyone dying means the expected number of deaths is about 300 million. This is probably more deaths than we can expect over the next century due to the diseases of poverty, like malaria.26 Many of the risks we’ve covered could also cause a “medium” catastrophe rather than one that ends civilisation, and this is presumably significantly more likely. The survey we covered earlier suggested over a 10% chance of a catastrophe that kills over 1 billion people in the next century, which would be at least another 100 million deaths in expectation, along with far more suffering among those who survive. So, even if we only focus on the impact on the present generation, these catastrophic risks are one of the most serious issues facing humanity. But this is a huge underestimate of the scale of the problem, because if civilisation ends, then we give up our entire future too. Most people want to leave a better world for their grandchildren, and most also think we should have some concern for future generations more broadly. There could be many more people having great lives in the future than there are people alive today, and we should have some concern for their interests. There’s a possibility that human civilization could last for millions of years, so when we consider the impact of the risks on future generations, the stakes are millions of times higher — for good or evil. As Carl Sagan wrote on the costs of nuclear war in Foreign Affairs: A nuclear war imperils all of our descendants, for as long as there will be humans. Even if the population remains static, with an average lifetime of the order of 100 years, over a typical time period for the biological evolution of a successful species (roughly ten million years), we are talking about some 500 trillion people yet to come. By this criterion, the stakes are one million times greater for extinction than for the more modest nuclear wars that kill “only” hundreds of millions of people. There are many other possible measures of the potential loss–including culture and science, the evolutionary history of the planet, and the significance of the lives of all of our ancestors who contributed to the future of their descendants. Extinction is the undoing of the human enterprise. We’re glad the Romans didn’t let humanity go extinct, since it means that all of modern civilisation has been able to exist. We think we owe a similar responsibility to the people who will come after us, assuming (as we believe) that they are likely to lead fulfilling lives. It would be reckless and unjust to endanger their existence just to make ourselves better off in the short-term. It’s not just that there might be more people in the future. As Sagan also pointed out, no matter what you think is of value, there is potentially a lot more of it in the future. Future civilisation could create a world without need or want, and make mindblowing intellectual and artistic achievements. We could build a far more just and virtuous society. And there’s no in-principle reason why civilisation couldn’t reach other planets, of which there are some 100 billion in our galaxy.27 If we let civilisation end, then none of this can ever happen. We’re unsure whether this great future will really happen, but that’s all the more reason to keep civilisation going so we have a chance to find out. Failing to pass on the torch to the next generation might be the worst thing we could ever do. So, a couple of percent risk that civilisation ends seems likely to be the biggest issue facing the world today. What’s also striking is just how neglected these risks are. Why these risks are some of the most neglected global issues Here is how much money per year goes into some important causes:28 Cause Annual targeted spending from all sources (highly approximate) Global R&D $1.5 trillion Luxury goods $1.3 trillion US social welfare $900 billion Climate change >$300 billion To the global poor >$250 billion Nuclear security $1-10 billion Extreme pandemic prevention $1 billion AI safety research $10 million As you can see, we spend a vast amount of resources on R&D to develop even more powerful technology. We also expend a lot in a (possibly misguided) attempt to improve our lives by buying luxury goods. Far less is spent mitigating catastrophic risks from climate change. Welfare spending in the US alone dwarfs global spending on climate change. But climate change still receives enormous amounts of money compared to some of these other risks we’ve covered. We roughly estimate that the prevention of extreme global pandemics receives under 300 times less, even though the size of the risk seems about the same. Research to avoid accidents from AI systems is the most neglected of all, perhaps receiving 100-times fewer resources again, at around only $10m per year. You’d find a similar picture if you looked at the number of people working on these risks rather than money spent, but it’s easier to get figures for money. If we look at scientific attention instead, we see a similar picture of neglect (though, some of the individual risks receive significant attention, such as climate change): Existential risk research receives less funding than dung beetle research. Credit: Nick Bostrom Our impression is that if you look at political attention, you’d find a similar picture to the funding figures. An overwhelming amount of political attention goes on concrete issues that help the present generation in the short-term, since that’s what gets votes. Catastrophic risks are far more neglected. Then, among the catastrophic risks, climate change gets the most attention, while issues like pandemics and AI are the most neglected. This neglect in resources, scientific study and political attention is exactly what you’d expect to happen from the underlying economics, and are why the area presents an opportunity for people who want to make the world a better place. First, these risks aren’t the responsibility of any single nation. Suppose the US invested heavily to prevent climate change. This benefits everyone in the world, but only about 5% of the world’s population lives in the US, so US citizens would only receive 5% of the benefits of this spending. This means the US will dramatically underinvest in these efforts compared to how much they’re worth to the world. And the same is true of every other country. This could be solved if we could all coordinate — if every nation agreed to contribute its fair share to reducing climate change, then all nations would benefit by avoiding its worst effects. Unfortunately, from the perspective of each individual nation, it’s better if every other country reduces their emissions, while leaving their own economy unhampered. So, there’s an incentive for each nation to defect from climate agreements, and this is why so little progress gets made (it’s a prisoner’s dilemma). And in fact, this dramatically understates the problem. The greatest beneficiaries of efforts to reduce catastrophic risks are future generations. They have no way to stand up for their interests, whether economically or politically. If future generations could vote in our elections, then they’d vote overwhelmingly in favour of safer policies. Likewise, if future generations could send money back in time, they’d be willing to pay us huge amounts of money to reduce these risks. (Technically, reducing these risks creates a trans-generational, global public good, which should make them among the most neglected ways to do good.) Our current system does a poor job of protecting future generations. We know people who have spoken to top government officials in the UK, and many want to do something about these risks, but they say the pressures of the news and election cycle make it hard to focus on them. In most countries, there is no government agency that naturally has mitigation of these risks in its remit. This is a depressing situation, but it’s also an opportunity. For people who do want to make the world a better place, this lack of attention means there are lots high-impact ways to help. What can be done about these risks? We’ve covered the scale and neglectedness of these issues, but what about the third element of our framework, solvability? It’s less certain that we can make progress on these issues than more conventional areas like global health. It’s much easier to measure our impact on health (at least in the short-run) and we have decades of evidence on what works. This means working to reduce catastrophic risks looks worse on solvability. However, there is still much we can do, and given the huge scale and neglectedness of these risks, they still seem like the most urgent issues. We’ll sketch out some ways to reduce these risks, divided into three broad categories: 1. Targeted efforts to reduce specific risks One approach is to address each risk directly. There are many concrete proposals for dealing with each, such as the following: Many experts agree that better disease surveillance would reduce the risk of pandemics. This could involve improved technology or better collection and aggregation of existing data, to help us spot new pandemics faster. And the faster you can spot a new pandemic, the easier it is to manage. There are many ways to reduce climate change, such as helping to develop better solar panels, or introducing a carbon tax. With AI, we can do research into the “control problem” within computer science, to reduce the chance of unintended damage from powerful AI systems. A recent paper, Concrete problems in AI safety, outlines some specific topics, but only about 20 people work full-time on similar research today. In nuclear security, many experts think that the deterrence benefits of nuclear weapons could be maintained with far smaller stockpiles. But, lower stockpiles would also reduce the risks of accidents, as well as the chance that a nuclear war, if it occurred, would end civilisation. We go into more depth on what you can do to tackle each risk within our problem profiles: AI safety Pandemic prevention Nuclear security Run-away climate change We don’t focus on naturally caused risks in this section, because they’re much less likely and we’re already doing a lot to deal with some of them. Improved wealth and technology makes us more resilient to natural risks, and a huge amount of effort already goes into getting more of these. 2. Broad efforts to reduce risks Rather than try to reduce each risk individually, we can try to make civilisation generally better at managing them. The “broad” efforts help to reduce all the threats at once, even those we haven’t thought of yet. For instance, there are key decision-makers, often in government, who will need to manage these risks as they arise. If we could improve the decision-making ability of these people and institutions, then it would help to make society in general more resilient, and solve many other problems. Recent research has uncovered lots of ways to improve decision-making, but most of it hasn’t yet been implemented. At the same time, few people are working on the issue. We go into more depth in our write-up of improving institutional decision-making. Another example is that we could try to make it easier for civilisation to rebound from a catastrophe. The Global Seed Vault is a frozen vault in the Arctic, which contains the seeds of many important crop varieties, reducing the chance we lose an important species. Melting water recently entered the tunnel leading to the vault due, ironically, to climate change, so could probably use more funding. There are lots of other projects like this we could do to preserve knowledge. Similarly, we could create better disaster shelters, which would reduce the chance of extinction from pandemics, nuclear winter and asteroids (though not AI), while also increasing the chance of a recovery after a disaster. Right now, these measures don’t seem as effective as reducing the risks in the first place, but they still help. A more neglected, and perhaps much cheaper option is to create alternative food sources, such as those that be produced without light, and could be quickly scaled up in a prolonged winter. Since broad efforts help even if we’re not sure about the details of the risks, they’re more attractive the more uncertain you are. As you get closer to the risks, you should gradually reallocate resources from broad to targeted efforts (read more). We expect there are many more promising broad interventions, but it’s an area where little research has been done. For instance, another approach could involve improving international coordination. Since these risks are caused by humanity, they can be prevented by humanity, but what stops us is the difficulty of coordination. For instance, Russia doesn’t want to disarm because it would put it at a disadvantage compared to the US, and vice versa, even though both countries would be better off if there were no possibility of nuclear war. However, it might be possible to improve our ability to coordinate as a civilisation, such as by improving foreign relations or developing better international institutions. We’re keen to see more research into these kinds of proposals. Mainstream efforts to do good like improving education and international development can also help to make society more resilient and wise, and so also contribute to reducing catastrophic risks. For instance, a better educated population would probably elect more enlightened leaders (cough), and richer countries are, all else equal, better able to prevent pandemics — it’s no accident that Ebola took hold in some of the poorest parts of West Africa. But, we don’t see education and health as the best areas to focus on for two reasons. First, these areas are far less neglected than the more unconventional approaches we’ve covered. In fact, improving education is perhaps the most popular cause for people who want to do good, and in the US alone, receives 800 billion dollars of government funding, and another trillion dollars of private funding. Second, these approaches have much more diffuse effects on reducing these risks — you’d have to improve education on a very large scale to have any noticeable effect. We prefer to focus on more targeted and neglected solutions.

#### Anticipating nuclear extinction breeds empathy and entangled care. Distancing ourselves from considering extinction reifies detached elitism.

Offord, 17—Faculty of Humanities, School of Humanities Research and Graduate Studies, Bentley Campus (Baden, “BEYOND OUR NUCLEAR ENTANGLEMENT,” Angelaki, 22:3, 17-25, dml) [ableist language modifications denoted by brackets]

You are steered towards overwhelming and inexplicable pain when you consider the nuclear entanglement that the species Homo sapiens finds itself in. This is because the fact of living in the nuclear age presents an existential, aesthetic, ethical and psychological challenge that defines human consciousness. Although an immanent threat and ever-present danger to the very existence of the human species, living with the possibility of nuclear war has infiltrated the matrix of modernity so profoundly as to paralyse [shut down] our mind-set to respond adequately. We have chosen to ignore the facts at the heart of the nuclear program with its dangerous algorithm; we have chosen to live with the capacity and possibility of a collective, pervasive and even planetary-scale suicide; and the techno-industrial-national powers that claim there is “no immediate danger” ad infinitum.8

This has led to one of the key logics of modernity's insanity. As Harari writes: “Nuclear weapons have turned war between superpowers into a mad act of collective suicide, and therefore forced the most powerful nations on earth to find alternative and peaceful ways to resolve conflicts.”9 This is the nuclear algorithm at work, a methodology of madness. In revisiting Jacques Derrida in “No Apocalypse, Not Now (Full Speed Ahead, Seven Missiles, Seven Missives),”10 who described nuclear war as a “non-event,” it is clear that the pathology of the “non-event” remains as active as ever even in the time of Donald Trump and Kim Jong-un with their stichomythic nuclear posturing.

The question of our times is whether we have an equal or more compelling capacity and willingness to end this impoverished but ever-present logic of pain and uncertainty. How not simply to bring about disarmament, but to go beyond this politically charged, as well as mythological and psychological nuclear algorithm? How to find love amidst the nuclear entanglement; the antidote to this entanglement? Is it possible to end the pathology of power that exists with nuclear capacity? Sadly, the last lines of Nitin Sawhney's “Broken Skin” underscore this entanglement:

Just 5 miles from India's nuclear test site

Children play in the shade of the village water tank

Here in the Rajasthan desert people say

They're proud their country showed their nuclear capability.11

As an activist scholar working in the fields of human rights and cultural studies, responding to the nuclear algorithm is an imperative. Your politics, ethics and scholarship are indivisible in this cause. An acute sense of care for the world, informed by pacifist and non-violent, de-colonialist approaches to knowledge and practice, pervades your concern. You are aware that there are other ways of knowing than those you are familiar and credentialed with. You are aware that you are complicit in the prisons that you choose to live inside,12 and that there is no such thing as an innocent bystander. You use your scholarship to shake up the world from its paralysis, abjection and amnesia; to unsettle the epistemic and structural violence that is ubiquitous to neoliberalism and its machinery; to create dialogic and learning spaces for the work of critical human rights and critical justice to take place. All this, and to enable an ethics of intervention through understanding what is at the very heart of the critical human rights impulse, creating a “dialogue for being, because I am not without the other.”13

Furthermore, as a critical human rights advocate living in a nuclear armed world, your challenge is to reconceptualise the human community as Ashis Nandy has argued, to see how we can learn to co-exist with others in conviviality and also learn to co-survive with the non-human, even to flourish. A dialogue for being requires a leap into a human rights frame that includes a deep ecological dimension, where the planet itself is inherently involved as a participant in its future. This requires scholarship that “thinks like a mountain.”14 A critical human rights approach understands that it cannot be simply human-centric. It requires a nuanced and arresting clarity to present perspectives on co-existence and co-survival that are from human and non-human viewpoints.15

Ultimately, you realise that your struggle is not confined to declarations, treaties, legislation, and law, though they have their role. It must go further to produce “creative intellectual exchange that might release new ethical energies for mutually assured survival.”16 Taking an anti-nuclear stance and enabling a post-nuclear activism demands a revolution within the field of human rights work. Recognising the entanglement of nuclearism with the Anthropocene, for one thing, requires a profound shift in focus from the human-centric to a more-than-human co-survival. It also requires a fundamental shift in understanding our human culture, in which the very epistemic and rational acts of sundering from co-survival with the planet and environment takes place. In the end, you realise, as Raimon Panikkar has articulated, “it is not realistic to toil for peace if we do not proceed to a disarmament of the bellicose culture in which we live.”17 Or, as Geshe Lhakdor suggests, there must be “inner disarmament for external disarmament.”18 In this sense, it is within the cultural arena, our human society, where the entanglement of subjective meaning making, nature and politics occurs, that we need to disarm.

It is 1982, and you are reading Jonathan Schell's The Fate of the Earth on a Sydney bus. Sleeping has not been easy over the past few nights as you reluctantly but compulsively read about the consequences of nuclear war. For some critics, Schell's account is high polemic, but for you it is more like Rabindranath Tagore: it expresses the suffering we make for ourselves. What you find noteworthy is that although Schell's scenario of widespread destruction of the planet through nuclear weaponry, of immeasurable harm to the bio-sphere through radiation, is powerfully laid out, the horror and scale of nuclear obliteration also seems surreal and far away as the bus makes its way through the suburban streets.

A few years later, you read a statement from an interview with Paul Tibbets, the pilot of “Enola Gay,” the plane that bombed Hiroshima. He says, “The morality of dropping that bomb was not my business.”19 This abstraction from moral responsibility – the denial of the implications on human life and the consequences of engagement through the machinery of war – together with the sweeping amnesia that came afterwards from thinking about the bombing of Hiroshima, are what make you become an environmental and human rights activist. You realise that what makes the nuclear algorithm work involves a politically engineered and deeply embedded insecurity-based recipe to elide the nuclear threat from everyday life. The spectre of nuclear obliteration, like the idea of human rights, can appear abstract and distant, not our everyday business. You realise that within this recipe is the creation of a moral tyranny of distance, an abnegation of myself with the other. One of modernity's greatest and earliest achievements was the mediation of the self with the world. How this became a project assisted and shaped through the military-industrial-technological-capitalist complex is fraught and hard to untangle. But as a critical human rights scholar you have come to see through that complex, and you put energies into challenging that tyranny of distance, to activate a politics, ethics and scholarship that recognises the other as integral to yourself. Ultimately, even, to see that the other is also within.20

#### 5] Reject calc indicts and util triggers permissibility arguments:

#### A] Theory—they’re functionally NIBs that everyone knows are silly but skew the aff and move the debate away from the topic and actual philosophical debate, killing valuable education

#### B] Morally abhorrent – it would say we have no obligation to prevent genocide and that slavery was permissible which is morally abhorrent and makes debate unsafe

## Case

#### Psychoanalysis is pseudoscience – none of this is real

Paris ‘17

[Dr Paris is Professor, Department of Psychiatry, McGill University, and Research Associate, Department of Psychiatry, Jewish General Hospital. "Is Psychoanalysis Still Relevant to Psychiatry?" https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5459228/]

In an era in which psychiatry is dominated by neuroscience-based models, psychological constructs tend to be neglected and may be taken seriously only when they have neural correlates.37 Some psychoanalysts have sought to link their model with neurobiological research and to claim that newer methods of studying the brain can validate their theories.5,6

Mark Solms, a South African neuropsychologist, is the founder of “neuropsychoanalysis.” This new field, with its own society and its own journal, proposes to use neuroimaging to confirm analytic theories. Its key idea is that subjective experience and the unconscious mind can be observed through neuroimaging.5 It is known that brain processes can be seen on brain imaging even before they have entered consciousness.38 However, claims that neuroimaging validate Freud’s model of the unconscious can be based only on “cherry-picking” the literature. The observed correspondences are superficial and hardly support the complex edifice of psychoanalytic theory.

Solms39 has also suggested that Freud’s ideas about dreams are consistent with neuroscience research based on rapid eye movement (REM) activity. This attempt to rescue a century-old theory met with opposition from dream researchers who consider Freud’s clinical speculations to be incompatible with empirical data.40,41

The proposal to establish a discipline of neuropsychoanalysis also met with a mixed reception from traditional psychoanalysts, who did not want to dilute Freud’s wine with neuroscientific water.42 Neuroscientists, who are more likely to see links to psychology as lying in cognitive science,43 have ignored this idea. In summary, neuropsychoanalysis is being used a way to justify long-standing models, without attempting to find something new or to develop an integration of perspectives on psychology.

However, Eric Kandel,44 influential in the light of his Nobel Prize for the study of the neurochemistry of memory, has taken a sympathetic view of the use of biological methods to study psychoanalytic theory. Kandel had wanted to be an analyst before becoming a neuroscientist.45 But Kandel, who does not actively practice psychiatry, may be caught in a time warp, unaware that psychoanalysis has been overtaken by competitors in the field of psychotherapy.

Another attempt to reconcile psychoanalysis with science has come from the literature on neuroplasticity.46 It is now known that neurogenesis occurs in some brain regions (particularly the hippocampus) during adulthood and that neural connections undergo modification in all parts of the brain. There is also evidence that CBT can produce brain changes that are visible using imaging.47 These findings have not been confirmed in psychoanalytic therapies. However, Norman Doidge, a Canadian psychoanalyst, has argued that psychoanalysis can change the brain.48 This may be the case for all psychotherapies. However, more recently, Doidge49 has claimed that mental exercises can reverse the course of severe neurological and psychiatric problems, including chronic pain, stroke, multiple sclerosis, Parkinson’s disease, and autism. While these books have been best-sellers, most of their ideas in the second volume,49 based on anecdotes rather than on clinical trials, have had little impact in medicine. This story underscores the difficulty of reconciling the perspectives and methods of psychoanalysis with scientific methods based on empirical testing.

Psychoanalysis and the Humanities

Psychoanalysis claimed to be a science but did not function like one. It failed to operationalize its hypotheses, to test them with empirical methods, or to remove constructs that failed to gain scientific support.1 In this way, the intellectual world of psychoanalysis more closely resembles the humanities. Today, with few psychiatrists or clinical psychologists entering psychoanalytic training, the door has been opened to practitioners with backgrounds in other disciplines, including the humanities.

#### There is no single symbolic order. Lacanian theory of language is hopelessly ahistorical, psychologistic, biologically deterministic, and recreates the violence they describe

Nancy **FRASER** Louise Loeb Professor of Political and Social Science and professor of philosophy at The New School **’13** *Fortunes of Feminism* p. 140-149

W H A T DOFEMIN ISTS W AN T IN A D ISCO U R SE TH EO RY? Let me begin by posing two questions: What might a theory of discourse contribute to feminism? And what, therefore, should feminists look for in a theory of discourse? I suggest that a conception of discourse can help us understand at least four things, all of which are interrelated. First, it can help us understand how people’s social identities are fashioned and altered over time. Second, it can help us understand how, under conditions of inequality, social groups in the sense of collective agents are formed and unformed. Third, a conception of discourse can illuminate how the cultural hegemony of dominant groups in society is secured and contested. Fourth and finally, it can shed light on the prospects for emancipatory social change and political practice. Let me elaborate. First, consider the uses of a conception of discourse for understanding social identities. The basic idea here is that people s social identities are complexes of meanings, networks of interpretation. To have a social identity, to be a woman or a man, for example, just is to live and to act under a set of descriptions. These descriptions, of course, are not simply secreted by peoples’s bodies; nor are they simply exuded by people s psyches. Rather, they are drawn from the fund of interpretive possibilities available to agents in specific societies. It follows that, in order to understand the gender dimension of social identity, it does not suffice to study biology or psychology. Instead, one must study the historically specific social practices through which cultural descriptions of gender are produced and circulated.3 Moreover, social identities are exceedingly complex. They are knitted together from a plurality of different descriptions arising from a plurality of different signifying practices. Thus, no one is simply a woman; one is rather, for example, a white, Jewish, middle-class woman, a philosopher, a lesbian, a socialist, and a mother.4 Because everyone acts in a plurality of social contexts, moreover, the different descriptions comprising any individuals social identity fade in and out of focus. Thus, one is not always a woman in the same degree; in some contexts, ones womanhood figures centrally in the set of descriptions under which one acts; in others, it is peripheral or latent.5 Finally, it is not the case that peoples social identities are constructed once and for all and definitively fixed. Rather, they alter over time, shifting with shifts in agents’ practices and affiliations. Even the way in which one is a woman will shift— as it does, to take a dramatic example-, when one becomes a feminist. In short, social identities are discursively constructed in historically specific social contexts; they are complex and plural; and they shift over time. One use of a conception of discourse for feminist theorizing, then, is in understanding social identities in their full socio-cultural complexity, thus in demystifying static, single variable, essentialist views of gender identity. A second use of a conception of discourse for feminist theorizing is in understanding the formation of social groups. How does it happen, under conditions of domination, that people come together, arrange themselves under the banner of collective identities, and constitute themselves as collective social agents? How do class formation and, by analogy, gender formation occur? Clearly, group formation involves shifts in people s social identities and therefore also in their relation to social discourse. One thing that happens here is that pre-existing strands of identities acquire a new sort of salience and centrality. These strands, previously submerged among many others, are reinscribed as the nub of new self-definitions and affiliations.6 For example, in the current wave of feminist ferment, many of us who had previously been “ women” in some taken-for-granted way have now become “ women” in the very different sense of a discursively self-constituted political collectivity. In the process, we have remade entire regions of social discourse. We have invented new terms for describing social reality— for example, “ sexism,” “ sexual harassment,” “ marital, date, and acquaintance rape,” “ labor force sex-segregation,” “ the double shift,” and “ wife-battery.” We have also invented new language games such as consciousness raising and new, institutionalized public spheres such as the Society for Women in Philosophy.7 The point is that the formation of social groups proceeds by struggles over social discourse. Thus, a conception of discourse is useful here, both for understanding group formation and for coming to grips with the closely related issue of socio-cultural hegemony. “ Hegemony” is the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci s term for the discursive face of power. It is the power to establish the “ common sense” or “ doxa” of a society, the fund of self-evident descriptions of social reality that normally go without saying.8 This includes the power to establish authoritative definitions of social situations and social needs, the power to define the universe of legitimate disagreement, and the power to shape the political agenda. Hegemony, then, expresses the advantaged position of dominant social groups with respect to discourse. It is a concept that allows us to recast the issues of social identity and social groups in the light of societal inequality. How do pervasive axes of dominance and subordination affect the production and circulation of social meanings? How does stratification along lines of gender, “ race,” and class affect the discursive construction of social identities and the formation of social groups? T h e notion of hegemony points to the intersection of power, inequality, and discourse. However, it does not entail that the ensemble of descriptions that circulate in society comprise a monolithic and seamless web, nor that dominant groups exercise an absolute, topdown control of meaning. On the contrary, “ hegemony” designates a process wherein cultural authority is negotiated and contested. It presupposes that societies contain a plurality of discourses and discursive sites, a plurality of positions and perspectives from which to speak. Of course, not all of these have equal authority. Yet conflict and contestation are part of the story. Thus, one use of a conception of discourse for feminist theorizing is to shed light on the processes by which the socio-cultural hegemony of dominant groups is achieved and contested. What are the processes by which definitions and interpretations inimical to w om en s interests acquire cultural authority? What are the prospects for mobilizing counter-hegemonic feminist definitions and interpretations to create broad oppositional groups and alliances? The link between these questions and emancipatory political practice is, I believe, fairly obvious. A conception of discourse that lets us examine identities, groups, and hegemony in the ways I have been describing would be of considerable use to feminist practice. It would valorize the empowering dimensions of discursive struggles without leading to “culturalist” retreats from political engagement.9 In addition, the right kind of conception would counter the disabling assumption that women are just passive victims of male dominance. That assumption over-totalizes male dominance, treating men as the only social agents- and rendering inconceivable our own existence as feminist theorists and activists. In contrast, the sort of conception I have been proposing would help us understand how, even under conditions of subordination, women participate in the making of culture. 2. LACANIANISM AND THE LIMITS OF STRU CTU RA LISM In light of the foregoing, what sort of conception of discourse will be useful for feminist theorizing? What sort of conception best illuminates social identities, group formation, hegemony, and emancipatory practice? In the postwar period, two approaches to theorizing language became influential among political theorists. The first is the structuralist model, which studies language as a symbolic system or code. Derived from Saussure, this model is presupposed in the version of Lacanian theory I shall be concerned with here; in addition, it is abstractly negated but not entirely superseded in deconstruction and in related forms of French “ womens writing.” The second influential approach to theorizing language may be called the pragmatics model, which studies language at the level of discourses, as historically specific social practices of communication. Espoused by such thinkers as Mikhail Bakhtin, Michel Foucault, and Pierre Bourdieu, this model is operative in some but not all dimensions of the work of Julia Kristeva and Luce Irigaray. In the present section of this chapter, I shall argue that the first, structuralist model is of only limited usefulness for feminist theorizing. Let me begin by noting that there are good prima facie reasons for feminists to be suspicious of the structuralist model. This model constructs its object of study by abstracting from exactly what we need to focus on, namely, the social practice and social context of communication. Indeed, the abstraction from practice and context are among the founding gestures of Saussurean linguistics. Saussure began by splitting signification into langue, the symbolic system or code, and parole, speakers’ uses of language in communicative practice or speech. He then made the first of these, langue, the proper object of the new science of linguistics, and relegated the second, parole, to the status of a devalued remainder.10 At the same time, Saussure insisted that the study of langue be synchronic rather than diachronic; he thereby posited his object of study as static and atemporal, abstracting it from historical change. Finally, the founder of structuralist linguistics posited that langue was indeed a single system; he made its unity and systematicity consist in the putative fact that every signifier, every material, signifying element of the code, derives its meaning positionally through its difference from all of the others. Together, these founding operations render the structuralist approach of limited utility for feminist purposes." Because it abstracts from parole, the structuralist model brackets questions of practice, agency, and the speaking subject. Thus, it cannot shed light on the discursive practices through which social identities and social groups are formed. Because this approach brackets the diachronic, moreover, it will not tell us anything about shifts in identities and affiliations over time. Similarly, because it abstracts from the social context of communication, the model brackets issues of power and inequality. Thus, it cannot illuminate the processes by which cultural hegemony is secured and contested. Finally, because the model theorizes the fund of available linguistic meanings as a single symbolic system, it lends itself to a monolithic view of signification that denies tensions and contradictions among social meanings. In short, by reducing discourse to a “ symbolic system," the structuralist model evacuates social agency, social conflict, and social practice.12 Let me now try to illustrate these problems by means of a brief discussion of Lacanianism. B y “ Lacanianism," I do not mean the actual thought of Jacques Lacan, which is far too complex to tackle here. I mean, rather, an ideal-typical neo-structuralist reading of Lacan that is widely credited among English-speaking feminists.'5 In discussing “ Lacanianism,” I shall bracket the question of the fidelity of this reading, which could be faulted for overemphasizing the influence of Saussure at the expense of other, countervailing influences, such as Hegel.'4 For my purposes, however, this ideal-typical, Saussurean reading of Lacan is useful precisely because it evinces with unusual clarity the difficulties that beset many conceptions of discourse that are widely considered “ poststructuralist” but that remain wedded in important respects to structuralism. Because their attempts to break free of structuralism remain abstract, such conceptions tend finally to recycle it. Lacanianism, as discussed here, is a paradigm case of “ neostructuralism.” '5 At first sight, neo-structuralist Lacanianism seems to promise some advantages for feminist theorizing. B y conjoining the Freudian problematic of the construction of gendered subjectivity to the Saussurean model of structural linguistics, it seems to provide each with its needed corrective. The introduction of the Freudian problematic promises to supply the speaking subject that is missing in Saussure and thereby to reopen the excluded questions about identity, speech, and social practice. Conversely, the use of the Saussurean model promises to remedy some of Freuds deficiencies. By insisting that gender identity is discursively constructed, Lacanianism appears to eliminate lingering vestiges of biologism in Freud, to treat gender as sociocultural all the way down, and to render it in principle more open to change. Upon closer inspection, however, the promised advantages fail to materialize. Instead, Lacanianism begins to look viciously circular. On the one hand, it purports to describe the process by which individuals acquire gendered subjectivity through their painful conscription as young children into a pre-existing phallocentric symbolic order. Here the structure of the symbolic order is presumed to determine the character of individual subjectivity. But, on the other hand, the theory also purports to show that the symbolic order must necessarily be phallocentric since the attainment of subjectivity requires submission to “ the Father s Law.” Here, conversely, the nature of individual subjectivity, as dictated by an autonomous psychology, is presumed to determine the character of the symbolic order. One result of this circularity is an apparently ironclad determinism. As Dorothy Leland has noted, the theory casts the developments it describes as necessary, invariant, and unalterable.16 Phallocentrism, womans disadvantaged place in the symbolic order, the encoding of cultural authority as masculine, the impossibility of describing a nonphallic sexuality— in short, any number of historically contingent trappings of male dominance— now appear as invariable features of the human condition. Womens subordination, then, is inscribed as the inevitable destiny of civilization. I can spot several spurious steps in this reasoning, some of which have their roots in the presupposition of the structuralist model. First, to the degree Lacanianism has succeeded in eliminating biologism— and that is dubious for reasons I shall not go into here17 — it has replaced it with psychologism, the untenable view that autonomous psychological imperatives given independently of culture and history can dictate the way they are interpreted and acted on within culture and history. FOOTNOTE 17 INSERTED 17 Here I believe one can properly speak of Lacan. Lacans claim to have overcome biologism rests on his insistence that the phallus is not the penis. However, many feminist critics have shown that he fails to prevent the collapse of the symbolic signifier into the organ. The clearest indication of this failure is his claim, in The Meaning of the Phallus,” that the phallus becomes the master signifier because of its “ turgidity” which suggests “ the transmission of vital flow” in copulation. See Jacques Lacan, “ T h e Meaning of the Phallus,” in Feminine Sexuality: Jacques Lacan and the ecole freudienne, eds. Juliet Mitchell and Jacqueline Rose, N ew York: W.W. N orton & Company, 1982. END FOOTNOTE 17 Lacanianism falls prey to psychologism to the extent that it claims that the phallocentricity of the symbolic order is required by the demands of an enculturation process that is itself independent of culture.18 I f one h a lf of Lacanianism s circular argument is vitiated by psychologism, then the other half is vitiated by what I shall call symbolicism. B y symbolicism I mean, first, the homogenizing reification of diverse signifying practices into a monolithic and all-pervasive “ symbolic order,” and second, the endowing of that order with an exclusive and unlimited causal power tofix people s subjectivities once and for all. Symbolicism, then, is an operation whereby the structuralist abstraction langue is troped into a quasi-divinity, a normative “ symbolic order” whose power to shape identities dwarfs to the point of extinction that of mere historical institutions and practices. Actually, as Deborah Cameron has noted, Lacan himself equivocates on the expression “ the symbolic order.” '9 Sometimes he uses this expression relatively narrowly to refer to Saussurean langue, the structure of language as a system of signs. In this narrow usage, Lacanianism would be committed to the implausible view that the sign system itself determines individuals’ subjectivities independently of the social context and social practice of its uses. At other times, Lacan uses the expression “ the symbolic order” far more broadly to refer to an amalgam that includes not only linguistic structures, but also cultural traditions and kinship structures, the latter mistakenly equated with social structure in general.20 In this broad usage, Lacanianism would conflate the ahistorical structural abstraction langue with variable historical phenomena like family forms and childrearing practices; cultural representations of love and authority in art, literature, and philosophy; the gender division of labor; forms of political organization and of other institutional sources of power and status. The result would be a conception of “ the symbolic order” that essentializes and homogenizes contingent historical practices and traditions, erasing tensions, contradictions, and possibilities for change. This would be a conception, moreover, that is so broad that the claim that it determines the structure of subjectivity risks collapsing into an empty tautology.21 The combination of psychologism and symbolicism in Lacanianism results in a conception of discourse that is of limited usefulness for feminist theorizing. To be sure, this conception offers an account of the discursive construction of social identity. However, it is not an account that can make sense of the complexity and multiplicity of social identities, the ways they are woven from a plurality of discursive strands. Granted, Lacanianism stresses that the apparent unity and simplicity of ego identity is imaginary, that the subject is irreparably split both by language and drives. B ut this insistence on fracture does not lead to an appreciation of the diversity of the socio-cultural discursive practices from which identities are woven. It leads, rather, to a unitary v iew of the human condition as inherently tragic. In fact, Lacanianism differentiates identities only in binary terms, along the single axis of having or lacking the phallus. As Luce Irigaray has shown, this phallic conception of sexual difference is not an adequate basis for understanding femininity22— nor, I would add, masculinity. Still less, then, is it able to shed light on other dimensions of social identities, including ethnicity, color, and social class. Nor could the theory be emended to incorporate these manifestly historical phenomena, given its postulation of an ahistorical, tension-free “ symbolic order” equated with kinship.23 Moreover, Lacanianism’s account of identity construction cannot account for identity shifts over time. It is committed to the general psychoanalytic proposition that gender identity (the only kind of identity it considers) is basically fixed once and for all with the resolution of the Oedipus complex. Lacanianism equates this resolution with the child’s entry into a fixed, monolithic, and all-powerful symbolic order. Thus, it actually increases the degree of identity fixity found in classical Freudian theory. It is true, as Jacqueline R o se points out, that the theory stresses that gender identity is always precarious, that its apparent unity and stability are always threatened by repressed libidinal drives.24 B ut this emphasis on precariousness is not an opening onto genuine historical thinking about shifts in peoples social identities. On the contrary, it is an insistence on a permanent, ahistorical condition, since for Lacanianism the only alternative to fixed gender identity is psychosis. I f Lacanianism cannot provide an account of social identity that is useful for feminist theorizing, then it is unlikely to help us understand the formation of social groups. For Lacanianism, affiliation falls under the rubric of the imaginary. To affiliate with others, to align oneself with others in a social movement, would be tofall prey to the illusions of the imaginary ego. It would be to deny loss and lack, to seek an impossible unification and fulfillment. Thus, from the perspective of Lacanianism, collective movements would by definition be vehicles of delusion; they could not even in principle be emancipatory.25 Moreover, insofar as group formation depends on linguistic innovation, it is untheorizable from the perspective of Lacanianism. Because Lacanianism posits a fixed, monolithic symbolic system and a speaker who is wholly subjected to it, it is inconceivable that there could ever be any linguistic innovation. Speaking subjects could only ever reproduce the existing symbolic order; they could not possibly alter it. From this perspective, the question of cultural hegemony is blocked from view. There can be no question as to how the cultural authority of dominant groups in society is established and contested, no question of unequal negotiations between different social groups occupying different discursive positions. For Lacanianism, on the contrary, there is simply “ f/ie symbolic order,” a single universe of discourse that is so systematic, so all-pervasive, so monolithic that one cannot even conceive of such things as alternative perspectives, multiple discursive sites, struggles over social meanings, contests between hegemonic and counterhegemonic definitions of social situations, conflicts of interpretation of social needs. One cannot even conceive, really, of a plurality of different speakers. With the way blocked to a political understanding of identities, groups, and cultural hegemony, the way is also blocked to an understanding of political practice. For one thing, there is no conceivable agent of such practice. Lacanianism posits a view of the person as a non-sutured congeries of three moments, none of which can qualify as a political agent. The speaking subject is simply the grammatical “ I,” a shifter wholly subjected to the symbolic order; it can only and forever reproduce that order. The ego is an imaginary projection, deluded about its own stability and self-possession, hooked on an impossible narcissistic desire for unity and self-completion; it therefore can only and forever tilt at windmills. Finally, there is the ambiguous unconscious, sometimes an ensemble of repressed libidinal drives, sometimes the face of language as Other, but never anything that could count as a social agent.