### 1AC - Democracy

#### US Democracy is declining, reform is urgent

House 3/22’ [Freedom House, 3-22-2021, "NEW REPORT: US Democracy Has Declined Significantly in the Past Decade, Reforms Urgently Needed," <https://freedomhouse.org/article/new-report-us-democracy-has-declined-significantly-past-decade-reforms-urgently-needed>]

Today, Freedom House released a special report, From Crisis to Reform: A Call to Strengthen America’s Battered Democracy, which identifies three enduring problems that have undermined the health of the US political system: unequal treatment for people of color, the outsized influence of special interests in politics, and partisan polarization. This report comes in response to a decade-long decline in US democracy and is based in Freedom House’s global comparative research. The report concludes that these three major problems compound one another, creating a vicious circle of distrust and dysfunction, and that addressing them with urgency and conviction is crucial to restoring Americans’ faith not just in their government, but also in democracy itself. “Our democracy is in trouble,” said Michael J. Abramowitz, president of Freedom House, “and the strength of American democracy is important for people everywhere, not just here at home. Congress and the Biden administration must make it a priority to strengthen our institutions, restore civic norms, and uphold the promise of universal liberty on which our nation was founded.” “The state of US democracy has implications for freedom and democracy around the world,” said Sarah Repucci, vice president of research and analysis at Freedom House. “Democracy movements in other countries look to the United States for inspiration and support, and authoritarian leaders falsely point to America’s problems as proof of democracy’s inherent inferiority and as a sort of license for their own abuses of power.”

#### Teacher union legitimacy is key to strengthen democracy – multiple internal links.

Khalenberg 16 Kahlenberg, — Richard D. “How Defunding Public Sector Unions Will Diminish Our Democracy.” The Century Foundation, 5 Oct. 2016, tcf.org/content/report/how-defunding-public-sector-unions-will-diminish-our-democracy/?session=1. [Richard D. Kahlenberg is director of K–12 equity and senior fellow at The Century Foundation. The author or editor of seventeen books, he has expertise in education, civil rights, and equal opportunity. Kahlenberg has been called “the intellectual father of the economic integration movement” in K–12 schooling and “arguably the nation’s chief proponent of class-based affirmative action in higher education admissions.” He is also an authority on teachers’ unions, private school vouchers, charter schools, community colleges, housing segregation, and labor organizing.]//dhsNJ

* Check government power
* Unions increase middle class which prevents wealthy from controlling politicians
* Create working culture that teaches people to be active in democracy. Statically proven since denser union member ship correlates to more voter turnout
* Teachers Unions lead to more educated students increasing informed voting

On January 11, the U.S. Supreme Court will hear oral arguments in Friedrichs v. California Teachers Association. The case pits the right of public employees to band together and form effective unions to pursue the common interests of workers against the free speech rights of dissenting public employees to abstain from funding collective bargaining efforts with which they disagree.1 A decision by the Court against the teachers association could not only significantly weaken public sector unions, but also endanger the nation’s core democratic values. In the suit, a public school teacher, Rebecca Friedrichs, argues that a state law requiring her to pay fees to the California Teachers Association (CTA) violates her First Amendment rights not to subsidize speech to which she objects. The CTA counters that in order to promote peaceful and orderly labor relations, and as a matter of basic fairness, the state may require Friedrichs to cover the costs of collective bargaining agreements, from which she benefits, preventing her from being a “free rider.” Union supporters worry that a decision in Friedrichs’ favor could devastate public sector unions across the nation. These unions, whose numbers were once small compared to the vibrant private sector union movement, now represent nearly a majority of unionized workers.2 The one bright spot in an otherwise deteriorating American labor movement, public sector unions are now under extraordinary legal and political assault. More broadly, many progressives see the Friedrichs case as an effort to defund the American left, given the financial support public sector unions provide a variety of liberal causes, from civil rights to raising the minimum wage.3 This report highlights an additional problem that should concern people across the political spectrum: defunding public sector unions could deal a substantial blow to a critical driver of American democracy. Public sector unions promote democratic values and practices in a variety of ways. They serve as a check on arbitrary government power and help sustain middle-class wages and benefits; serve as schools of democracy for workers; and, in the case of teacher unions, help support a public school system that promotes democratic values. These larger interests should enter into the calculus the Supreme Court uses to weigh free speech rights against state interests. Indeed, the whole idea of unionism is based on basic democratic values. The fundamental idea that duly-elected union leadership has the right to collect dues and advocate as the majority of workers wants is analogous to a democracy’s right to impose taxation in order to promote the common good. The 1935 National Labor Relations Act embodied this democratic vision. Section 1 provides: “It is declared to be the policy of the United States to eliminate the causes of certain substantial obstructions to the free flow of commerce and to mitigate and eliminate these obstructions when they have occurred by encouraging the practice and procedure of collective bargaining and by protecting the exercise by workers of full freedom of association, self-organization, and designation of representatives of their own choosing, for the purpose of negotiating the terms and conditions of their employment or other mutual aid or protection”4 (emphasis supplied). Subsequent state laws governing collective bargaining for public sector employees were modeled on the NLRA’s vision. The report proceeds in four parts. Part I analyzes the claims in Friedrichs under the current framework of balancing envisioned by the Supreme Court, and concludes that fair share fees are justified. Part II broadens the discussion to consider the state’s powerful interest in promoting institutions that strengthen American democracy. Part III considers an objection raised by supporters of Friedrichs: that public sector unions will do just fine if they lose the Friedrichs case. Part IV concludes. Balancing First Amendment Rights against the State’s Interests The current legal framework in which courts weigh cases such as Friedrichs is narrowly constrained, balancing the free speech rights of dissenting union members against the state’s interests in promoting stable labor relations with its public employees. In the 1977 case of Abood v. Detroit Board of Education, the U.S. Supreme Court reached a sensible compromise that properly balanced these two sets of interests by splitting union dues into two categories: those that support political speech, and those that support bread–and-butter collective bargaining. Because the First Amendment’s free speech clause provides a right to not be compelled by the state to subsidize speech with which one disagrees, dissenting public employees cannot be required by the state to join a union, or to subsidize the union’s political and lobbying efforts to promote certain positions of public concern.5 On the other hand, the Court recognized that the state, as an employer, has an interest in promoting harmonious labor relations. To discourage the formation of multiple unions with competing claims, the state has an interest in facilitating a single union negotiating on the behalf of all workers, whether or not individual employees choose to be a member of the union. Under an exclusive bargaining arrangement, the union has a duty to represent members and nonmembers alike. Accordingly, the Court held, the state may prevent employees from being “free riders” by compelling contribution to that portion of union membership dues that underwrite the cost of collective bargaining over issues such as wages and benefits. More recently, in Harris v. Quinn (2014), the Supreme Court was asked to apply the Abood principle to unionized home care workers. The Supreme Court rejected that extension, finding that home care workers, although paid with public funds, were only “partial public employees.” They work for individual patients in private homes and answer mostly to the patients for their work. The Supreme Court created a new test, as scholar Catherine Fisk notes, which suggests that fair share fees can only be justified when “the cited benefits” require imposition of such fees. “No such showing” was made in Harris, the justices held, noting that under Illinois law, the union negotiated a limited number of issues and had no role in enforcing contracts for nonmembers.6 Although Harris sustained the 1977 Abood holding, a majority hinted that it might be willing to overturn Abood in a future case.7 In Friedrichs, the petitioner explicitly seeks to have the Supreme Court overrule the longstanding Abood compromise.8 That would be a serious mistake, for reasons outlined below. Current Rules Balance Free Speech Rights The U.S. Supreme Court has long recognized that First Amendment rights extend beyond the right to speak to include the right not to be compelled to subsidize speech to which an individual objects. The lawyers for Friedrichs invoke Thomas Jefferson’s statement “to compel a man to furnish contributions of money for the propagation of opinions which he disbelieves is sinful and tyrannical.”9 The state cannot require that, as a condition of employment, public employees must contribute to an ideological cause they may oppose. Friedrichs tries to argue that the distinction between political speech and collective bargaining for public sector unions outlined in Abood is illusory; that because collective bargaining over wages and benefits impacts state budgets, it is inherently political speech. But respondents point out that if this were true—that collective bargaining is a form of political speech—how could it be legal for states to ban it among public employees, as several states currently do? Moreover, the Abood Court noted that dissenting public employees are still free to express their disagreements with the union publicly and vocally. A “public employee who believes that a union representing him is urging a course that is unwise as a matter of public policy is not barred from expressing his viewpoint.”10 And, of course, if teachers such as Friedrichs are upset with union leadership, they can seek to have leaders ousted through periodic democratic elections of officers, or even run for office themselves. Countervailing State Interests Recognized in Abood Free speech rights are never absolute. Jefferson’s statement about compelled contributions, for example, cannot be taken literally. For instance, the government may, in fact, compel taxation from an individual who is opposed to the war in Afghanistan, and then use those funds to engage in speech to recruit soldiers for the war effort. Free speech rights must always be balanced against other considerations. In the case of public sector unions, the Abood Court noted the state has two major interests. The opinion, written by Potter Stewart, an Eisenhower appointee, identified one as labor peace and workplace stability, and the other as reducing the risk of “free ridership” and unfairness.11 In the United States, a single union normally represents all employees in order to promote “labor peace.” “The principle of exclusive union representation,” the Court noted, “is a central element in the congressional structure of industrial relations.” The National Labor Relations Act—and many state collective bargaining laws—provide for a single representative to avoid “the confusion that would result from attempting to enforce two or more agreements specifying different terms and conditions of employment.” The Court noted that the arrangement also “prevents inter-union rivalries from creating dissension within the workforce and eliminating the advantages to the employer of collectivization.” Finally, the Court observed, exclusive union representation “also frees the employer from the possibility of facing conflicting demands from different unions, and permits the employer and a single union to reach agreements and settlements that are not subject to attack from rival labor organizations.”12 In the context of public employee unions, the Court noted, “confusion and conflict” could reign, for example, if rival teachers unions held different positions on issues such as “class hours, class sizes, holidays, tenure provisions,” and the like.13 A second, related, state interest is to prevent what is known as the “free rider” problem in cases of collective action. Because of exclusive representation, unions have a duty “fairly and equitably to represent all employees . . . union and non-union.” Given this arrangement, in which employees benefit from collective bargaining whether they are union members or not, a classic “free rider” issue arises, the Court noted, whereby employees could “refuse to contribute to the union while obtaining the benefits of union representation that necessarily accrue to all employees.”14 Free rider problems exist in many organizations. Why donate to a religious institution if you can still attend and enjoy services whether or not you pay? To counter this, some groups can provide “special advantages” to backers—a leadership position in the church, for example. Unions cannot take this approach, however. As Justice Kagan noted in Harris v. Quinn, because “the law compels unions to represent—and represent fairly—every worker in the bargaining union, regardless whether they join or contribute to the union,” the collective action problem is “of far greater magnitude than in the typical interest group.”15 She referenced Justice Antonin Scalia’s opinion in an earlier decision, making this point: “where the state creates in the nonmembers a legal entitlement from the union, it may compel them to pay the cost.”16 This principle, “there is no free lunch,” is something conservatives usually understand well. According to the counsel for Friedrichs, annual dues to the CTA amount to approximately $1,000 per teacher, of which nonmembers receive a refund of roughly $350 to $400 for expenses unrelated to collective bargaining.17 In other words, Friedrichs is happy to accept increases in wages and benefits the union negotiates hard to win, but does not want to pay the $600 to $650 per year that other members contribute in order to make those wage gains possible. Will she give back her raises, forgo health care benefits, give up the right to pursue grievances, and agree to teach larger classes that the union negotiated? The amicus brief of the American Federation of Teachers and the American Association of University Professors put it well: there is no “constitutional right to a free ride.”18 Promoting Democracy Should Be Considered in Balancing Free Speech and State Interests In balancing the rights of free speech and state interests, Abood came to the correct conclusion—free speech rights can sometimes be curtailed to serve state interests in labor peace and avoiding free ridership. But these are only a subset of state interests. Indeed, the Abood court substantially understated the interests of states in preserving fair share fees. For example, amici in the case, such as the National Women’s Law Center and seventy other civil rights groups, note that there are myriad ways in which labor unions generally—and public sector unions specifically—improve the conditions of minorities and women, a vitally important state interest.19 All unions—including, and perhaps especially, public sector unions—also contribute to one of the most important foundational interests of the state: democracy. And they do this in many different ways. Unions are critical civic organizations that serve as a check on government power. They are important players in promoting a strong middle class, upon which democracy depends. They serve as schools of democracy for workers. And teacher unions, in particular, help ensure that our educational system is sufficiently funded to teach children to become thoughtful and enlightened citizens in our self-governing democracy. Democracies Need Unions to Serve as a Check on Government Power Alexis de Tocqueville famously marveled at the thriving civic associations that keep American democracy vitalized; and for the past century, unions have been a critical part of that framework. Recognizing the important role of unions in liberal democracies, the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights provides in Article 23 that “Everyone has the right to form and join trade unions for the protection of his interests.” In 1980, President Ronald Reagan championed the role of Polish unions in challenging dictatorial rule by the Communist Party. Reagan declared in a Labor Day speech that year, “where free unions and collective bargaining are forbidden, freedom is lost.” Albert Shanker, the legendary president of the American Federation of Teachers from 1974 to 1997, saw a pattern in authoritarian regimes. “There is no freedom or democracy without trade unions,” he noted. “The first thing a dictator does is to get rid of the trade unions.”20 Public sector unions, in particular, have played an important role in bringing down dictators in countries such as Chile.21 In free societies across the globe, from Finland to Japan, the rights of teachers and other public sector employees to unionize are well established. Indeed, when the United States attempts to plant the seeds of democracy in other countries, free trade unions—for private and public sector workers alike—are critical elements of what we advocate. If such unions are to have the capacity to wield influence, they cannot be starved of the fees from workers necessary to play that role. Democracies Need a Strong Middle Class to Avoid Plutocracy Going back to Aristotle, it has been recognized that democracies are more likely to thrive when a vibrant middle class can support them.22 Large inequalities of wealth can undermine democracy. As philosopher Sidney Hook observed, “It is possible for people to be politically equal as voters, yet so unequal in educational, economic, and social opportunities, that ultimately, even the nature of the political equality is affected.”23 In highly unequal societies, large income gaps can give wealthy interests an outsized role in electing officials. Theodore Roosevelt warned of the dangers of having “a small class of enormously wealthy and economically powerful men, whose chief object is to hold and increase their power.”24 More recently, Nobel Prize–winning economist Michael Spence told the New York Times that we have seen “an evolution from one propertied man, one vote; to one man, one vote; to one person, one vote; trending to one dollar, one vote.”25 Strong unions helped build the middle class in America after the Great Depression, and continue to have a positive effect on ameliorating extreme inequalities of wealth. By bargaining for fair wages and benefits, unions in the public and private sector help foster broadly shared prosperity. Research finds, for example, that unions compress wage differences between management and labor. According to one study, “controlling for variation in human resource practices, unionized establishments have an average of 23.2 percentage point lower management-to-worker pay ratio relative to non-union workplaces.”26 By the same token, as the Center for American Progress’s David Madland has vividly illustrated, the decline in union density in the United States between 1969 and 2009 has been accompanied by a strikingly similar decline in the share of income going to the middle class (the middle three-fifths of the income distribution; see Figure 1). &nbsp;The middle class is hollowing out: in 1971, 61 percent of Americans were middle class, but a December 2015 Pew Research Center report found that a slight majority of Americans now live in low- or upper-income households.27 Although there are many reasons for middle-class wage stagnation—including globalization and the rise in technology—Lawrence Mishel of the Economic Policy Institute finds that the decline in union bargaining power is “the single largest factor suppressing wage growth for middle-wage workers over the last few decades.” The International Monetary Fund, likewise, has linked decline in unions worldwide with rises in income inequality.28 Figure 1. chartDOWNLOAD International studies also connect the relatively low levels of U.S. union density (when compared with other nations) and the higher level of economic inequality found in the United States. According to a 2011 analysis by the Center for Economic and Policy Research looking at twenty-one wealthy nations, nine countries had more than 80 percent of their workers covered by collective bargaining agreements; nine had between 30 and 80 percent covered; and just three—the United States, Japan, and New Zealand—had coverage rates below 20 percent. Using data from the Central Intelligence Agency’s World Factbook on levels of income inequality, my colleague Moshe Marvit and I demonstrate in Why Labor Organizing Should Be a Civil Right that the three nations with the lowest collective bargaining coverage also were among the four countries with the highest degrees of income inequality, as measured by the Gini coefficient.29 Defunding public sector unions will only accelerate the extreme economic inequality that threatens our political democracy. Unions Are Needed to Serve as Schools for Democracy Civic organizations that are run democratically can be an important mechanism for acculturating citizens to the inner workings of democracy. Unions are among the most important of these organizations, bringing together rank and file workers from a variety of ethnic, racial, and religious backgrounds, and serving as what Harvard sociologist Robert Putnam calls “schools for democracy.” Union members learn skills that are essential to a well-functioning democracy: how to run meetings, debate one another, and organize for political action.30 Labor unions can also help create a culture of participation among workers. Being involved in workplace decisions and the give and take of collective bargaining, voting on union contracts, and voting for union leadership have all been called important drivers of “democratic acculturation.”31 In addition, union members routinely engage in civic activities, such as staffing phone banks and canvassing voters door to door. This involvement can boost civic participation among union members and nonmembers alike. One study found that for every one-percentage-point increase in a state’s union density, voter turnout increased between 0.2 and 2.5 percentage points. In a presidential election, a ten-percentage-point increase in union density could translate into 3 million more voters.32 Democracies Need Well-Educated Citizens, Which Teachers Unions Help Produce Democracies need well-educated citizens, and one important subset of public sector unions—those representing teachers—play a vital role in promoting that goal. Of the 17 million state and local government employees in 2010, 6.9 million were teachers.33 Most contemporary political rhetoric emphasizes the importance of education in creating a skilled workforce. But the original purpose of public education was to provide an educated citizenry that could make our ongoing experiment in self-governance work. Democracy requires a thinking people who are not easily swayed by demagoguery. Thomas Jefferson argued that public schooling was necessary “to ensure that citizens would know how to protect their liberty.” Nineteenth century educator Horace Mann, widely seen as the father of public education, put it more colorfully: “A republican form of government, without intelligence in the people, must be, on a vast scale, what a mad-house, without superintendent or keepers, would be on a small one.” At root, the idea of self-governance requires an educated citizenry because the people themselves rule. All nations, as historian Paul Gagnon noted, provide an excellent education to “those who are expected to run the country,” and that quality of education “cannot be far from what everyone in a democracy needs to know.”34 In the Friedrichs case, the lawyers for the petitioner try to make the case that teachers unions have a “detrimental” effect on education. Citing the Hoover Institution’s Terry Moe, the attorneys for Friedrichs argue, “there is strong evidence that, as union-negotiated agreements become denser with rules and procedural protections, student achievement falls, especially among minority students.”35 Critics such as Jay Greene of the University of Arkansas compare teacher unions to special interests like the Tobacco Institute. But the difference, of course, is that the latter is dedicated to getting more children addicted to deadly cigarettes, while the former represent rank and file teachers who are trying to help teach children to read and understand math and science.36 As the amicus brief of the American Federation of Teachers and the American Association of University Professors points out, states with “fair share” collective bargaining provisions have higher academic performance on average than those who do not. Fourth grade math proficiency is 9 percent higher, while reading proficiency is 13 percent higher; and in eighth grade, by which time students have spent more time in school, the difference is more pronounced: 16 percent higher in both math and reading proficiency.37 (See Figure 2.) Figure 2. chartDOWNLOAD Of course, there are lots of other factors, such as poverty, that influence a state’s student achievement levels. But careful studies that seek to control for those additional factors tend to find higher achievement in states with strong teacher unions. A review by sociologist Robert Carini concluded that “there is an emerging consensus in the literature that teacher unionism favorably influences achievement for most students, as measured by a variety of standardized tests.”38 Carini’s 2002 review of seventeen widely cited studies observed that twelve found positive effects, and five found negative effects (see Figure 3). Moreover, the twelve concluding positive results were more methodologically rigorous than the five that found negative effects, because they were more likely to look at student level data (rather than using state or district averages) and to control for more variables.39 Figure 3. chartDOWNLOAD Union representation is plausibly connected to higher achievement, as Leo Casey of the Albert Shanker Institute has noted, because “the working conditions of teachers are, in significant measure, the learning conditions of students, and so, improvements in the working lives of teachers generally translate into improvements in the education of students.”40 Before Albert Shanker and his colleagues in New York City began bargaining collectively for teachers in the early 1960s, teachers were paid less than people who washed cars for a living.41 Subsequently, unions began bargaining for higher teacher salaries, which are likely to attract better candidates, and smaller class sizes, which can improve student learning. Unions also seek greater voice for teachers in school decision making, which can reduce teacher turnover.42 Indeed, one could argue that teachers unions provide a healthy enhancement to democratic decision-making on education policy because teachers, as much as any other group in society, serve as powerful advocates for those Americans who cannot vote—school children. As journalist Jonathan Chait has noted, politicians—who have short-term horizons—are prone to under-investing in education, and teachers unions “provide a natural bulwark” against that tendency. Since most voters do not have children in the public school system, those parents who do need political allies have their concerns heard. The interests of teachers and their unions do not always coincide with those of students, but on the really big issues, such as overall investment in education, the convergence of interests is strong. And evidence suggests that the alliance is working. In general, American society consistently under-invests in children outside of schools, compared with other leading democratic societies. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the child poverty rate in the United States is 21.6 percent, the fifth highest among the forty member-nations. Only Turkey, Romania, Mexico, and Israel have higher child poverty rates. Put differently, the United States is in the bottom eighth in preventing child poverty. By contrast, when the interests of children are represented by and connected to the interests of teachers—as they are on the question of public education spending—the United States ranks close to the top third. Among thirty-nine OECD nations, the United States ranks fourteenth in spending on primary and secondary education as a percentage of gross domestic product.43 There is little doubt that, without the voice of teachers, the United States would under-spend on public education as well. In her dissent in Harris v. Quinn, Justice Elena Kagan made a parallel argument about home care workers. Patients suffer when low wages induce workforce shortages and high turnover. “The individual customers are powerless to address those systemic issues,” Kagan wrote, but the unionization of home-care assistants helped doubled wages over ten years.44 There is a final, important way in which teacher unions can promote democratic citizenship: by modeling workplace democracy for children. In schools where educators have a voice, as my colleague Halley Potter and I noted in A Smarter Charter: Finding What Works for Charter Schools and Public Education, “teachers are not simply workers who implement the directives of principles but are active participants in decision making. Students see workplace democracy in action, underlining the lessons found in the civics books.”45

#### Democracy solves a laundry list of impacts---economic growth, public goods, alliances, and war---the US is key.

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However, reducing the United States’ emphasis on a values-driven foreign policy is wrong, and contrary to the strategic interests of the United States. Democracy promotion in particular serves a key role in safeguarding U.S. interests and promoting global, long-term growth in ways fundamentally compatible with U.S. strategic interests. After all, democracies protect private property in important ways, invest in public goods, are more politically stable, make for more dependable allies, and empirically do not go to war with one another. Ultimately, a world full of democratic governments is safer, more prosperous, and more stable — all states of being that the United States has an interest in promoting. Democracy guarantees that the public has a stake in its own institutions and government, which leads to investor confidence and growth. Since elected politicians are accountable to property owners and are held in check by an independent judiciary, democracies tend to have better mechanisms for protecting private property than their autocratic counterparts. This makes democracies a particularly attractive type of country for investors — both public and private — because checks and balances make it difficult for the state to nationalize industries. Further, private property rights protected by the legal system encourage entrepreneurship and small business development, both of which are key to a growing and modernizing economy. As a result, democracies tend to be wealthier and more economically stable than their autocratic counterparts. This is fundamentally in the interest of the United States in that both private and public investors have an interest in seeing returns on their investments, thereby potentially making countries less willing to go to war if that would require severing economic ties. Democratic institutions ensure that citizens with both economic and political power are heard. Democracies also invest in public goods at much higher rates than autocratic governments. Because politicians must cater to the median voter, they approve policies that invest in public education and healthcare, both of which promote long-term growth and development. Public education invests in a country’s human capital, setting the stage for long-term innovation, adaptability, and advancement. Public healthcare, meanwhile, has been shown to increase overall societal productivity and well-being as people take fewer sick days, citizens are able to afford their healthcare without going bankrupt, and ultimately, the overall costs of healthcare are driven down as citizens become healthier. Productive, innovative societies are also better for the United States — innovation around the world improves global quality of life, results in more educational and vocational opportunities for Americans (both because other universities and jobs become more attractive to Americans who want to go abroad and because potential immigrants are more likely to want to stay in their own country, opening up opportunities for U.S. citizens at home), and may reduce friction between countries over resources and labor. Democracies are also generally more politically stable because regular election cycles ensure an established process for the habitual and peaceful removal of leaders from power. Elections ensure the non-violent transition of power and reduce the need for mass protest, rioting, and revolution — which makes countries more politically stable. Further, when citizens are granted rights and protections from government abuse, enforced by an independent judiciary, they have fewer grievances against the government and are thus less able to mobilize large numbers of people to violently overthrow the regime. Revolution, while not always violent, often leads to political instability, challenges to growth, increased incentives for diversionary war and conflict, and oftentimes civil war. The externalities of civil war and international conflict then put pressure on the United States to intervene, protect human rights, and otherwise expend resources on other countries’ issues. Further, civil wars are highly destructive to institutions, human capital, and resources, and can have significant security spillover effects, increasing global risk of political instability and violent extremism. This political stability, in addition to institutional checks and balances, makes democracies better international partners and allies in the long-term. Treaties ratified by multiple branches of government are more durable than executive agreements signed by a single leader who may be replaced within a short period of time. While democracies may be more reluctant to commit to alliances and formal security pacts, once a party to them, they are more dependable than other states with concentrated power at the executive level. These kind of durable commitments are of interest to the United States as it seeks to preserve the liberal world order; it is far more effective to ally with partners whose institutions make withdrawal from the alliance costly. Finally, it has been empirically observed that democracies do not go to war with one another. While there is a robust debate around the exact nature of the so-called “democratic peace,” it appears that there are qualities particular to democracies that make war between them particularly unlikely: a dovish public constrains leaders’ ability to wage war, competitive elections and a free press make it easier to credibly communicate resolve to potential adversaries, consolidated democracies tend to be more wealthy and economically interdependent, like-minded people are more hesitant to wage war against one another, and so on. Regardless of the precise mechanisms, however, a world of democracies is inherently safer, more prosperous, and less likely to initiate a war against the United States — a key factor in protecting American security and interests.

#### US democracy is the greatest international stabilizer---the alternative is global conflict

Yulis 17 (Max Yulis, Penn Political Review. In Defense of Liberal Internationalism. April 8, 2017. pennpoliticalreview.org/2017/04/in-defense-of-liberal-internationalism/)

Over the past decade, international headlines have been bombarded with stories about the unraveling of the post-Cold War world order, the creation of revolutionary smart devices and military technologies, the rise of militant jihadist organizations, and nuclear proliferation. Indeed, times are paradoxically promising and alarming. In relation to treating the world’s ills, fortunately, there is a capable hegemon– one that has the ability to revive the world order and traditionally hallmarked human rights, peace, and democracy. The United States, with all of its shortcomings, had crafted an international agenda that significantly impacted the post-WWII landscape. **Countries invested their ambitions into security communities, international institutions, and international law** in an effort **to mitigate** the **chances of** a **nuclear** catastrophe or another World **War**. The horrors and atrocities of the two Great Wars had traumatized the global community, which spurred calls for peace and the creation of a universalist agenda. **Today**, the world’s fickle and declining hegemon still has the **ability, but not the will**, to uphold the world order that it had so carefully and eagerly helped construct. Now, **the stakes are too high**, and **there must be a mighty and willing global leader to lead the effort of diffusing democratic ideals** and reinforcing stability through both military and diplomatic means. To do this, the United States must abandon its insurgent wave of isolationism and protectionism, and come to grips with the newly transnational nature of problems ranging from climate change to international terrorism. First, the increase in intra-state conflict should warrant concern as many countries, namely in Africa and the Middle East, are seeing the total **collapse of civil society and government.** **These power vacuums are being filled with** increasingly **ideological and dangerous tribal and non-state actors**, such as **Boko Haram, ISIS, and Al-Shabaab**. Other bloody civil wars in Rwanda, Sudan, and the Congo have contributed to the deaths of millions in the past two decades. As the West has seen, however, military intervention has not been all that successful in building and empowering democratic institutions in the Far East. **A civil crusade**, along with the **strengthening of international institutions**,may in fact be the answer to undoing tribal, religious, and sectarian divisions, thereby mitigating the prospects of civil conflict. During the Wilsonian era, missionaries did their part to internationalize the concept of higher education, which has contributed to the growth of universities in formerly underdeveloped countries such as China and South Korea.[1] In addition, the teachings of missionaries emphasized the universality of humanity and the oneness of man, which was antithetical to the justifications for imperialism and the rampant sectarianism that plagued much of the Middle East and Africa.[2] Seeing that an increase in the magnitude of human casualty is becoming more of a reality due to advancements in military technology and the increasing outbreaks of civil war, **international cooperation and the diffusion of norms that highlight the importance of stable governance, democracy, and human rights is the only recourse to address the rise in sectarian divides and civil conflicts**. So long as the trend of the West’s desire to **look inward** continues, it is likely that nation states mired in conflict will devolve into ethnic or tribal enclaves bent on **relying on war to maintain their legitimacy** and power. Aside from growing sectarianism and the increasing prevalence of failed states, an even more daunting threat come from **weapons that transcend the costs of conventional warfare.** The problem of nuclear proliferation has been around for decades, and on the eve of President Trump’s inauguration, it appeared that Obama’s lofty goal of advocating for nonproliferation would no longer be a priority of American foreign policy.[3] In addition, now that the American president is threatening to undo much of the United States’ extensive network of alliances, formerly non-nuclear states may be forced to rearm themselves. **Disarmament is central to liberal internationalism**, as was apparent by the Washington Naval Treaty advocated by Wilson, and by the modern CTBT treaty. The reverse is, however, being seen in the modern era, with cries coming from Japan and South Korea to remobilize and begin their own nuclear weapon programs.[4] A world with more nuclear actors is a formula for chaos, especially if nuclear weapons become mass-produced. Non-state actors will increasingly eye these nuclear sites as was the case near a Belgian nuclear power plant just over a year ago.[5] If any government commits a serious misstep, **access to nuclear weapons on the behalf of terrorist and insurgent groups will become a reality,** especially if a civil war occurs. States with nuclear weapons require domestic stability and strong security, which is why states such as Israel, North Korea, and Pakistan could be in serious trouble in the event of a domestic uprising or military coup. The disarmament of all states is essential for human survival, and if it is not achieved, then **a world full of nuclear weapons and an international system guided by realpolitik could give rise to nuclear warfare**. In today’s world, nuclear weapons leave all states virtually defenseless. But, **for nuclear deproliferation to become a cornerstone of the global agenda, a pacifying and democratic power must rise to the limelight to advocate the virtues of peace, stability, and human rights**. **Those who equivocate democratic interventionism as an idealistic crusade cannot be further from the truth**. Some, however, see it as an effective foreign policy that has a grand scheme for peace in mind.[6] The latter contention, despite being widely disputed, **holds the premise for the democratic peace theory**. Throughout the history of all democracies, **not one modern-day democracy has fought against another democracy**.[7] Whether that’s because of ideational symmetry, similar objectives and morals, or generally pacific foreign policies, **such a phenomenon must be given attention by policymakers.** According to liberal internationalists, **democracies make better partners,** tend to **move towards increased political and moral agreement**, **oppose illiberal regimes**, and **support disarmament policies.** This supposition is heavily supported by the smooth post-WWII transitions that the German, Japanese, and Italian governments underwent. All of the governments were formerly fascistic and authoritarian, but with intensive military and economic support from the West, they became some of the most **shining exemplars of democratic societies**. Even today, Germany is the backbone of the European Union and repeatedly champions democratic norms, such as human rights, economic freedom, and individual liberty.[8] Equipping other countries with the necessary foundations for democracy is no easy feat, but **the fight for peace far outweighs the costs of inhabiting a world rife with nuclear-armed authoritarian and belligerent states**. In conclusion, liberal internationalism can have a lasting legacy on the prospects for peace if it is executed properly. **Putting democracy, humanism, and liberty on a pedestal is what states ought to do if they seek to save humanity from itself**. Although **the rise of transnational issues pertaining to climate change, nuclear weapons, and civil wars should make international cooperation an increasingly desired aim**, states seem to be thinking just the opposite. Only time will tell whether this is a short-lived trend, or a more ominous warning for the world at large.

#### The alternative to democracy is violent civil wars, ethnic cleansing, and genocide--- best research confirms

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The classic statement of **Kantian peace** theory applies to interstate conflict and focuses on dyadic relations between states. This **leaves out the most common form of armed violence in the world today, civil conflicts and one-sided violence within states. In recent years, researchers** have **found evidence** that the **democratic peace** phenomenon **applies within states as well as between them**. Regime type matters not only externally but internally. **Mature democratic governments** are not only less likely to wage war on each other, they also **experience fewer armed uprisings and major civil wars and are more reluctant to use armed violence against** their own **citizens. As the studies** below **indicate**, the **evidence of a democratic peace phenomenon within states is strong and compelling**. Walter observes a direct relationship between levels of democracy and the likelihood of internal armed conflict. In her examination of the problem of war recurrence, she finds that **countries characterized by open political systems and economic well-being—i.e., developed democracies— have a much lower probability of renewed civil war than autocratic countries with low levels of economic development**.91 Walter measures the degree of political openness and democratic ‘voice’ by using Polity and Freedom House indicators. High scores on these indices correlate directly with a reduced risk of civil war. She notes**, as other scholars have observed**, that **major civil wars do not occur in mature democratic states.** She concludes: It may be that **liberal democracies are really the only types of regimes that can truly insulate themselves from violent internal challenges**. This suggests that **citizens who are able to express their preferences about alternative policies and leaders, who are guaranteed civil liberties in their daily lives and in acts of political participation, are less likely to become soldiers. Offering citizens a real outlet for** their **concerns and having** a **government** that is **open to democratic change considerably reduces the likelihood of** a **civil war**.92 **Civil conflicts within mature democracies are not only less frequent but also less lethal.** Bethany **Lacina assesses the severity of civil conflicts by measuring casualty levels according to several variables: regime type, state capacity, ethnic and religious diversity, and the impact of foreign military intervention. She finds** that the **political characteristics of a regime correlate significantly with differing casualty levels and are the strongest predictor of conflict severity. Democratic governments experience much lower casualty levels during civil conflict than autocratic states**. Lacina’s analysis finds that civil wars occurring within democratic states have less than half the battle deaths of conflicts in non-democracies.93 **State-sponsored violence against civilians is also less likely to occur in democracies than in autocracies**. In his important book, Death by Government, Rudolph **Rummel assembles mind numbing data and numerous examples demonstrating the myriad ways governments kill** their **citizens**—directly **through genocide and mass terror and indirectly through starvation and repression. He finds a stark contrast between the behavior of autocracies and democracies. Autocratic governments readily “slaughter their people by the tens of millions; in contrast**, many **democracies can barely bring themselves to execute even serial murderers**.”94 **Through statistical analysis, Rummel shows** that **genocidal killing is directly associated with the absence of democracy**, holding constant other variables such as regime type, ethnic diversity, economic development level, population density, and culture.95 The **lack of democracy is the most significant indicator of the likelihood of mass repression again the civilian population**. As Rummel documents the appalling litany of governments murdering their own people, he is unequivocal about what he considers the necessary remedy—“The solution is democracy. The course of action is to foster freedom.”95 Barbara **Harff’s** **research** on genocidal violence **comes to similar conclusions. She examines 126 cases of internal war and regime collapse between** 1955 and 1997 **to identify** the **factors that led to genocidal violence in 35 of these cases. Her results match the findings of other studies. Autocratic regimes facing state failure are three and a half times more likely to experience genocidal violence than democratic regimes facing such failure**.97 She finds that **genocidal violence is more likely in regimes that advocate exclusionary ideologies, an approach that is rare in mature democratic states**. Harff observes that the **lowest levels of mass killing occur in states with a high degree of economic interdependence, which is characteristic of mature democratic regimes**.98 Her conclusion is that states are less likely to employ genocidal violence when they have inclusive democratic systems and trade extensively with other countries. As Steven Pinker notes, these findings fit well with the Kantian triad of democracy, cosmopolitanism and trade— “another trifecta” for liberal peace theory.99

#### Thus, the plan Resolved: The United States ought to recognize teachers’ unconditional right to strike.

Shanker 73’ [SHANKER, ALBERT L. “Why Teachers Need the Right to Strike.” Monthly Labor Review, vol. 96, no. 9, 1973, pp. 48–51. JSTOR, [www.jstor.org/stable/41839103. Accessed 21 June 2021](http://www.jstor.org/stable/41839103.%20Accessed%2021%20June%202021).]

INSTEAD of talking about alternatives to strikes, we ought to be talking about trying to strike in the pub-lic sector. It has not been tried. In the private sec-tor, we have paid a price for strikes. We have paid a price for the process of collective bargaining, be-cause the only alternative is an unfree society—and the price that we pay for strikes is one that we generally are willing to pay. Collective bargaining has never been sold as an ideal answer to anything, but it is the lesser of a number of evils that exist in the private sector and, in a somewhat modified form, in the public sector. Management and labor have to go through some sort of messy process to find a way of agreeing with each other for a period of time, and the only alter-natives are unilateral determination by management —which leads to exploitation—or arbitration—which leads to the imposition by a third party of his views. There are some differences in the public sector, but these are not adequate justification to abolish or modify the bargaining process. The notion, con-stantly stated, that in the public sector there is no profit motive is in a sense true. But in a sense it is irrelevant, because there is no question that the public employee bargains just as hard, if not harder, than the private employee. The question of being reelected, the fear of being accused of throwing away public money—"giving it away" to public employees —and also the very fact that he is involved in a public activity in many ways makes it more difficult for public management to bargain than for private management. No one fought a tougher battle against labor unions than philanthropists who were involved in donating their own time as managers in hospitals in the City of New York. They spent many hours in getting many billions of dollars to see to it that these hospitals could be made viable. But when it came to providing an effective union for employees earning $24 or $25 a week, they felt that those employees should donate their time, too, since the philanthro-pists were. This happens frequently in public sector management. Another issue in the public sector, somewhat more difficult to resolve, is that top public manage-ment is elected by the people, put there in order to effectuate public purposes. We do run into a con-flict in the question of bargaining and it is just that—who is making these public decisions? Can public management make the decision on the basis of their platform, on the basis of their promises? Or will elections become-relatively meaningless, be-cause whatever the politician says he's going to do, eventually he's going to the bargaining table and be forced to do, not what the people or the general public want him to do, but what he is compelled to do. Who's really running the city, the Board of Education? the Department of Sanitation? Is it the people in a democracy, or is it the unions—here viewed as a greedy and private interest, compelling government to do for its purposes rather than those of the people. These are some of the issues in this sector. As we look at alternatives, it is important to acknowledge that strikes originally were widespread in obtaining recognition for unions. No one has mentioned that the majority of States still do not recognize any form of collective bargaining for pub-lic employees. Here in California there is an ineffec-tive "meet and confer" law, which does not result in binding written agreements or anything resem-bling collective bargaining. Instead of talking about alternatives to the strike in the public sector, I would say that the teachers and other public employees in the State of Cali-fornia, and the majority of other States in the United States, would be wise to follow the trends of teachers and other public workers in New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, and elsewhere—because if they do not in fact exercise the right to strike, the government may never create the machinery that employees have in other States. It is not accidental that in States in which public employees have engaged in strikes the legislatures have found it possible to create mecha-nisms for collective bargaining.

#### Definition of unconditional right to strike:

NLRB 85 [National Labor Relations Board; “Legislative History of the Labor Management Relations Act, 1947: Volume 1,” Jan 1985; <https://play.google.com/store/books/details?id=7o1tA__v4xwC&rdid=book-7o1tA__v4xwC&rdot=1>]

\*\*Edited for gendered language

As for the so-called absolute or unconditional right to strike—there are no absolute rights that do not have their corresponding responsibilities. Under our American Anglo-Saxon system, each individual is entitled to the maximum of freedom, provided however (and this provision is of first importance), his [their] freedom has due regard for the rights and freedoms of others. The very safeguard of our freedoms is the recognition of this fundamental principle. I take issue very definitely with the suggestion that there is an absolute and unconditional right to concerted action (which after all is what the strike is) which endangers the health and welfare of our people in order to attain a selfish end.

#### Empirics confirm right to strike improves teacher union legitimacy

DiSalvo, Daniel, and Michael Hartney. “Teachers Unions in the Post-Janus World.” Education Next, 2 Sept. 2020, www.educationnext.org/teachers-unions-post-janus-world-defying-predictions-still-hold-major-clout/[ Daniel Disalvo

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* Increases solidarity proven by survey
* Provides incentive to join union which increases member count
* Positive press coverage that empirically increases public support

It is probably not a coincidence that public-school teachers began engaging in strikes and work stoppages soon after the Janus decision was handed down. In 2018, teacher walkouts occurred in the Republican-leaning, weak-union states of Oklahoma, Kentucky, Arizona, West Virginia, North Carolina, and Colorado. Of these, the largest work stoppage was by the Arizona Education Association and involved 81,000 teachers. The second-largest strike, by the Oklahoma Education Association, included 45,000 teachers. Overall, the 20 major teacher strikes of 2018 involved the highest number of workers—485,000—since 1986. Aside from forcing local workplace issues to the bargaining table, strikes can also serve as a union recruitment and retention strategy. Calling a strike enlists the rank-and-file in a collective enterprise and thereby enhances union solidarity. Because only union members can vote to authorize a strike, union leaders can use such occasions to recruit nonmembers to join. Strikes also gain teachers unions sympathetic national press coverage. In 2019, a smaller wave of strikes occurred in Democrat-dominated, strong-union cities, including Los Angeles, Oakland, Denver, and Chicago, as well as in a number of smaller school districts in Oregon, California, and New Jersey. Prior to 2018–2019, only two notable teacher strikes had occurred in big cities in the past 20 years: a 7-day walkout in Chicago in 2012 and a 16-day walkout in Detroit in 2006. Besides pay, a major point of contention in these strikes was the demand that school districts hire more teachers to reduce class sizes and employ more support staff. Regardless of whether such measures make wise policy, they clearly serve to increase the pool of potential union members. Consider that, in Los Angeles, the district and the union settled on a deal that added 300 nurses, 82 librarians, 77 counselors, and some new teachers to reduce class sizes. In Chicago, the district and the union settled a five-day strike with a contract that included caps on class sizes, which necessitated adding more teachers, and promises to hire 250 nurses and 209 social workers. All of these new employees are potential union members. There is evidence that teachers-union activity post-Janus did increase solidarity. A survey by Educators for Excellence found that 54 percent of teachers in 2020 felt that union membership provided them with “feelings of pride and solidarity,” up from 46 percent in 2018. In addition, a little more than half of teachers who do not belong to the union say they are likely to join their union next year. The strikes have also increased public support for the teaching profession. Although a vigorous debate persists among analysts, it is now the popular wisdom that teachers are underpaid. West Virginia and Arizona both ended teacher walkouts by passing across-the-board pay increases. Early in the current presidential campaign, some Democratic candidates proposed using federal funds to top up teacher salaries. Public opinion has notably shifted in favor of increasing teacher salaries. The 2019 Education Next survey found that, among respondents who were not told the average salary of teachers in their home state, 72 percent said teacher pay should increase, while just 3 percent favored cutting it. Even among respondents who were told how much teachers currently make, 56 percent favored hiking these salaries—a 20 percent increase since 2017—and only 5 percent wanted to decrease them. Beyond pay, one study found that the recent strike wave increased support for teachers unions. The survey found that parents of school-age children with firsthand experience with the recent strikes supported greater legal rights for teachers unions and favored a stronger labor movement. This is a notable finding, given that teacher work stoppages make life difficult for parents, who must scramble to find childcare and things for kids to do. In short, the teachers unions have gained public sympathy, while education reformers have lost some. Consider the cover of Time magazine at the dawn of the education-reform movement in 1980: “Help! Teacher Can’t Teach.” Forty years later, in the aftermath of the Great Recession and red-state teacher strikes, Time once again put the image of a schoolteacher on its cover, but the headline told a different story: “I have a master’s degree, 16 years of experience, work two extra jobs, and donate blood plasma to pay the bills. I’m a teacher in America!”

#### Status Quo policies make the opportunity cost for teacher strikes too high in the squo

**Casey 20** Leo Casey, 12-2-2020, "The Teacher Strike: Conditions for Success," Dissent Magazine, <https://www.dissentmagazine.org/online_articles/the-teacher-strike-conditions-for-success>

The most essential organizational task is winning and keeping the allegiance of teachers to the strike. Teachers are knowledgeable and discerning political actors. They understand full well that strikes are a high-intensity and high-risk tactic, with the potential both to deliver advances and victories that could not be otherwise obtained and to end in major setbacks and defeats. The risk side of this equation is particularly acute in the three-quarters of all states where teacher strikes are illegal; in these states, striking becomes an act of civil disobedience and can result in severe penalties to teachers and their unions. To be willing to go on strike and stay out until a settlement is won, therefore, teachers need to be convinced on a number of different counts: first, that they are fighting for important, worthwhile objectives; second, that those objectives cannot be achieved through other means that are not as high-intensity and high-risk as a strike; third, that the strike has reasonable prospects of success; fourth, that the strike objectives have strong support in the community; and fifth, that the solidarity among teachers, which is essential to a strike’s success, is strong and will hold. In significant measure, the last of these points is dependent not simply on the organization and mobilization of the strike, but also on the four antecedent conditions. If teachers become doubtful on any of these points, it will become difficult to mount or sustain a successful strike.

**The standard is act hedonistic util. Prefer** –

#### 1 – Pleasure and pain *are* intrinsic value and disvalue – everything else *regresses* – robust neuroscience.

Blum et al. 18 Kenneth Blum, 1Department of Psychiatry, Boonshoft School of Medicine, Dayton VA Medical Center, Wright State University, Dayton, OH, USA 2Department of Psychiatry, McKnight Brain Institute, University of Florida College of Medicine, Gainesville, FL, USA 3Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, Keck Medicine University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA, USA 4Division of Applied Clinical Research & Education, Dominion Diagnostics, LLC, North Kingstown, RI, USA 5Department of Precision Medicine, Geneus Health LLC, San Antonio, TX, USA 6Department of Addiction Research & Therapy, Nupathways Inc., Innsbrook, MO, USA 7Department of Clinical Neurology, Path Foundation, New York, NY, USA 8Division of Neuroscience-Based Addiction Therapy, The Shores Treatment & Recovery Center, Port Saint Lucie, FL, USA 9Institute of Psychology, Eötvös Loránd University, Budapest, Hungary 10Division of Addiction Research, Dominion Diagnostics, LLC. North Kingston, RI, USA 11Victory Nutrition International, Lederach, PA., USA 12National Human Genome Center at Howard University, Washington, DC., USA, Marjorie Gondré-Lewis, 12National Human Genome Center at Howard University, Washington, DC., USA 13Departments of Anatomy and Psychiatry, Howard University College of Medicine, Washington, DC US, Bruce Steinberg, 4Division of Applied Clinical Research & Education, Dominion Diagnostics, LLC, North Kingstown, RI, USA, Igor Elman, 15Department Psychiatry, Cooper University School of Medicine, Camden, NJ, USA, David Baron, 3Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, Keck Medicine University of Southern California, Los Angeles, CA, USA, Edward J Modestino, 14Department of Psychology, Curry College, Milton, MA, USA, Rajendra D Badgaiyan, 15Department Psychiatry, Cooper University School of Medicine, Camden, NJ, USA, Mark S Gold 16Department of Psychiatry, Washington University, St. Louis, MO, USA, “Our evolved unique pleasure circuit makes humans different from apes: Reconsideration of data derived from animal studies”, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, 28 February 2018, accessed: 19 August 2020, <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6446569/>, R.S.

**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** the **neocortices**, 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.