# Speech 1NC UT Octas vs San Mateo 12-5 8AM

## 1

#### Interp – The affirmative may not specify the government enforcing the resolution.

#### 1] “A” is an indefinite article that modifies “just government” in the res – means that you have to prove the resolution true in a vacuum, not a particular instance

CCC (“Articles, Determiners, and Quantifiers”, http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/determiners/determiners.htm#articles, Capital Community College Foundation, a nonprofit 501 c-3 organization that supports scholarships, faculty development, and curriculum innovation) LHSLA JC/SJ

The three articles — a, an, the — are a kind of adjective. The is called the definite article because it usually precedes a specific or previously mentioned noun; a and an are called indefinite articles because they are used to refer to something in a less specific manner (an unspecified count noun). These words are also listed among the noun markers or determiners because they are almost invariably followed by a noun (or something else acting as a noun). caution CAUTION! Even after you learn all the principles behind the use of these articles, you will find an abundance of situations where choosing the correct article or choosing whether to use one or not will prove chancy. Icy highways are dangerous. The icy highways are dangerous. And both are correct. The is used with specific nouns. The is required when the noun it refers to represents something that is one of a kind: The moon circles the earth. The is required when the noun it refers to represents something in the abstract: The United States has encouraged the use of the private automobile as opposed to the use of public transit. The is required when the noun it refers to represents something named earlier in the text. (See below..) If you would like help with the distinction between count and non-count nouns, please refer to Count and Non-Count Nouns. We use a before singular count-nouns that begin with consonants (a cow, a barn, a sheep); we use an before singular count-nouns that begin with vowels or vowel-like sounds (an apple, an urban blight, an open door). Words that begin with an h sound often require an a (as in a horse, a history book, a hotel), but if an h-word begins with an actual vowel sound, use an an (as in an hour, an honor). We would say a useful device and a union matter because the u of those words actually sounds like yoo (as opposed, say, to the u of an ugly incident). The same is true of a European and a Euro (because of that consonantal "Yoo" sound). We would say a once-in-a-lifetime experience or a one-time hero because the words once and one begin with a w sound (as if they were spelled wuntz and won). Merriam-Webster's Dictionary says that we can use an before an h- word that begins with an unstressed syllable. Thus, we might say an hisTORical moment, but we would say a HIStory book. Many writers would call that an affectation and prefer that we say a historical, but apparently, this choice is a matter of personal taste. For help on using articles with abbreviations and acronyms (a or an FBI agent?), see the section on Abbreviations. First and subsequent reference: When we first refer to something in written text, we often use an indefinite article to modify it. A newspaper has an obligation to seek out and tell the truth. In a subsequent reference to this newspaper, however, we will use the definite article: There are situations, however, when the newspaper must determine whether the public's safety is jeopardized by knowing the truth. Another example: "I'd like a glass of orange juice, please," John said. "I put the glass of juice on the counter already," Sheila replied. Exception: When a modifier appears between the article and the noun, the subsequent article will continue to be indefinite: "I'd like a big glass of orange juice, please," John said. "I put a big glass of juice on the counter already," Sheila replied. Generic reference: We can refer to something in a generic way by using any of the three articles. We can do the same thing by omitting the article altogether. A beagle makes a great hunting dog and family companion. An airedale is sometimes a rather skittish animal. The golden retriever is a marvelous pet for children. Irish setters are not the highly intelligent animals they used to be. The difference between the generic indefinite pronoun and the normal indefinite pronoun is that the latter refers to any of that class ("I want to buy a beagle, and any old beagle will do.") whereas the former (see beagle sentence) refers to all members of that class.

#### 2] Rules readings are always generalized – specific instances are not consistent and allow for moral uncertainty and ambiguity.

Cohen 01 [Ariel Cohen (Ben-Gurion University of the Negev), “On the Generic Use of Indefinite Singulars,” Journal of Semantics 18:3, 2001 https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/188590876.pdf

In general, as, again, already noted by Aristotle, rules and definitions are not relativized to particular individuals; it is rarely the case that a specific individual¶ forms part of the description of a general rule.¶ Even DPs of the form a certain X or a particular X, which usually receive¶ a wide scope interpretation, cannot, in general, receive such an interpretation in the context of a rule or a definition. This holds of definitions in general, not¶ only of definitions with an IS subject. The following examples from the Cobuild¶ dictionary illustrate this point:¶ (74) a. A fanatic is a person who is very enthusiastic about a particular¶ activity, sport, or way of life.¶ b. Something that is record-breaking is better than the previous¶ record for a particular performance or achievement.¶ c. When a computer outputs something it sorts and produces information as the result of a particular program or operation.¶ d. If something sheers in a particular direction, it suddenly changes¶ direction, for example to avoid hitting something.

#### 3] Put away “a is singular” definitions – its unspecified.

Merriam Webster [“a”. Merriam Webster. No date. Accessed 11/9/21. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/a> //Xu]

used as a function word before singular nouns when the referent is unspecified

#### Outweighs

#### 1] Controls internal link – people base prep off the rez – no stasis point for arguments and there’s no non-arbitrary way from evaluating how much deviation can occur.

#### 2] Jurisdiction – judge is contracted to vote inside the rez and they don’t have the authority to vote on the aff

#### Violation –

#### Prefer –

#### 1] Limits – infinite combination of affs from China to Nigeria to India. Explodes aff ground – you cherry-pick affs with no neg ground and I must prep all affs while they prep one which pigeonholes me to generics.

#### 2] TVA – read phil affs or the aff as an advantage

#### Fairness – it’s a prereq to judge evaluation

#### Education – it’s the only portable impact

#### Accessibility – psychic violence is a prereq to being in debate

#### CI – a) brightlines are arbitrary and self-serving which doesn’t set good norms b) it collapses since weighing between brightlines rely on offense defense

#### Neg theory is drop the debater – a) Prep skew – infinite prep means they frontline every shell enough to be efficient at DA and skew substance enough b) 1AR Flex –you moot 6 min of my offense and restart on unpredictable layers while kicking the args.

#### No rvi

#### [a] Baiting—they’ll bait the theory debate and prep it out—justifies infinite abuse since they’ll get away with unacceptable practices

#### [b] 1AR all-outs—they’ll collapse entirely to theory which crowds out substance and kills education.

#### [c] Chilling effect—people will be scared to read theory since they can lose off of it, so no one will check abuse.

#### [d] Norm-setting—I shouldn’t be forced to keep advocating for a bad norm if I realize it’s bad in the middle of the round.

#### [e] Flex—RVIs make theory uncondo so I always have to go for that route to the ballot, but both debaters should get multiple relevant layers and collapse options.

#### [f] Illogical—doesn’t make sense to win just for being fair.

#### Neg abuse outweighs Aff abuse – 1] Infinite prep time before round to frontline 2] 2AR judge psychology and 1st and last speech 3] Infinite perms and uplayering in the 1AR.

#### 1NC theory first - 1] Abuse was self-inflicted- They started the chain of abuse and forced me down this strategy 2] Norming- We have more speeches to norm over whether it’s a good idea since the shell was read earlier.

## 2

#### Interp – The affirmative must specify “workers” within a delimited text in the 1AC.

#### “Workers” is flexible and has too many interps– normal means shows no consensus and makes the round irresolvable since the judge doesn’t know how to compare between types of offense and OW since it’s a side constraint on decision making.

Work Smart No Date [Work Smart (job advice app; new service backed by the Trades Union Congress (TUC) and Britain's trade unions. With over 5 million members working in all sectors of our economy, their support gives us the experience and the connections to help everyone get a better working life). “Am I a worker, an employee or self-employed?”. No Date. Accessed 11/7/21. <https://worksmart.org.uk/work-rights/pay-and-contracts/contract-terminology/am-i-worker-employee-or-self-employed> //Xu]

This depends on the contractual relationship you have with your employer. The distinction is important because many important rights – such as the right to claim unfair dismissal or maternity leave – depend on being an employee. For other rights, such as the right to be paid the National Minimum Wage, you must be a worker. All employees are workers, but not all workers are employees. The third category – the genuinely self-employed – have very few employment rights. Every year court cases hang on the distinction between the three categories and unfortunately there is no clear definition. However, there is a rough rule of thumb: If your employer has to provide work for you personally, which you can't turn down, on a regular basis, says when and where the work is to be done, supplies the tools or other equipment, pays tax and National Insurance on your behalf, and can subject you to a disciplinary procedure if you don’t follow the rules or if your performance is ‘unsatisfactory’, then you are probably an employee, and have what is known as a 'contract of employment'. If you are contracted to do work personally but you are not an employee, then unless you are genuinely running your own business, freely supplying goods or services to your own customers, then you are likely to be a 'worker'. You are therefore entitled, for example, to the National Minimum Wage, holiday pay and other working time rights. If you are genuinely running your own business, meaning that you are free to decide when you work, can choose to substitute someone else to do your work instead of you, can carry out work in the manner you best see fit, make your own sickness and holiday arrangements, and pay your own tax and National Insurance, you could be a self-employed person, contracted to provide a service to the employer. Hence your contract is known as a 'contract for services'. Many people are happy to be self-employed and some occupations, such as journalism, are likely to have a high proportion of self-employed workers. However, some unscrupulous employers deliberately miscategorise individuals as self-employed to avoid tax, National Insurance Contributions and employment obligations, such as the National Minimum Wage or holiday pay. Important case law, especially the landmark Supreme Court judgement of Autoclenz Limited v Belcher [2011] UKSC 41, makes it clear that just because signed contract documentation makes it look as if someone is self-employed, that is by no means the end of the story. Employment tribunals must take into account the inequality of bargaining power between employer and employee, and must look at the whole context, not just the contract documents, to make sure the written contract document genuinely reflects what the parties intended the employment relationship to be. Working out who is an employee and who is self-employed is contentious and often unclear. If you are unsure, you should seek advice from Citizens Advice. Contact your union if you are a member, or use one of the resources on workSMART's free help page.

#### Independently turns case.

Sandefur 10 [Timothy Sandefur (principal attorney at the Pacific Legal Foundation. He wrote a friend of the Court brief in Skilling v. United States on behalf of the Pacific Legal Foundation and the Cato Institute. His book The Right to Earn A Living will be published in September by the Cato Institute). “Get Rid Of Vague Laws”. Mar 30, 2010. Accessed 11/7/21. <https://www.forbes.com/2010/03/30/vague-laws-economy-government-opinions-contributors-timothy-sandefur.html?sh=2f4ac139d6ce> //Xu]

There's probably nothing more dangerous to individual rights than vaguely written laws. They give prosecutors and judges undue power to decide whether or not to punish conduct that people did not know was illegal at the time. Vagueness turns the law into a sword dangling over citizens' heads--and because government officials can choose when and how to enforce their own interpretations of the law, vagueness gives them power to make their decisions from unfair or discriminatory motives.

Definitionally required – a worker[[1]](#footnote-1) “a person who produces or achieves a specified thing” – o/w cuz the judge can’t jurisdictionally vote on something that isn’t topical.

#### Violation – you don’t – that was cx

#### Prefer –

#### 1] Stable Advocacy – they can redefine in the 1AR to wriggle out of DA’s which kills high-quality engagement and becomes two ships passing in the night – triggers presumption since the aff wasn’t subject to well researched scrutiny. We lose access to Big Tech DA’s, Unions DA’s, basic case turns, and core process counter plans that have different definitions and 1NC pre-round prep.

#### 2] Ground – not defining hurts my strategy since they can shift out as I ask DA questions, so I err on the side of caution and read generics which get destroyed by AC frontlines.

#### 3] Real World – Policy makers will always define the entity that they are recognizing. It also means zero solvency, absent spec, governments can circumvent since there is no delineated way to enforce the aff and means their solvency can’t actualize.

#### WSpec isn’t regressive or arbitrary – its core topic lit for what happens when the aff is implemented and cannot be discounted from recognition policies that require enforcement to function.

## 3

#### The role of the ballot is to *evaluate the desirability of resolutional action under the best normative framework*. Prefer: (a) AC / NC is structurally reciprocal since both sides have access to two routes to the ballot – reciprocity is a litmus test for fairness, (b) it’s key to framework clash and phil ed is the only reason LD debate exists.

#### Presumption and permissibility negates – a) more often false than true since I can prove something false in infinite ways b) real world policies require positive justification before being adopted – there’s alwahys an institutional DA to going through Congress c) ought[[2]](#footnote-2) means “moral obligation” so the lack of that obligation means the aff hasn’t fulfilled their burden d) resolved[[3]](#footnote-3) indicates “firmly determined” which means they proactively did something, to negate that means that they aren’t resolved

#### The standard is *intending to maximize expected well-being*. Morality must be binding else it can’t be enforced so there’s no reason to follow moral codes and it can’t be called an obligation nor guide action.

#### Next, util relies on intentions to be coherent –

#### 1] Util relies on choosing between predictions, which presupposes the intention to make the world a better place. Proves its inescapable – ignoring it justifies rolling dices to decide actions by flattening the value of predictions.

#### 2] Consequentialist frameworks are contingent on events that are ever-changing, so they can’t be the basis of consistent duty. Outweighs – (a) butterfly effect means unforeseen consequences are inevitable (b) utility monster – you wouldn’t be culpable for making the world a better place if a satanic creature derived infinite pleasure from human suffering (c) Endpoints – Consequences cause infinite other consequences – the decision to stop calculating at some point is an intention.

#### 3] Solipsism paradox – pleasure can only be binding for the person experiencing it – aggregation requires that we care for others which is an intention. Else states only care about themselves so the aff will get rolled back since otherwise self-interested states would’ve already passed the aff, so negate on presumption.

#### Negate – they say states don’t have intentions which triggers permissibility as it makes util incoherent.

# AC

#### The best estimate is there are 210 million current alien civilizations

Lichfield 16 – Gideon Lichfield, Editor-in-Chief of MIT Technology Review, Senior Editor at Quartz, Fellow at the Data & Society Research Institute, MSc in the Philosophy of Science from the London School of Economics and Political Science, BSc in Physics and Philosophy from the University of Bristol, Former Adjunct Professor in the Global Journalism Program at New York University, “There Have Probably Been Trillions Of Alien Civilizations, And Yet We May Still Never See One”, Quartz, 6-11, <https://qz.com/704687/there-have-probably-been-trillions-of-alien-civilizations-and-yet-we-may-still-never-see-one/>

[Paper internally quoted is by Adam Frank, Professor of Physics and Astronomy at the University of Rochester and Woodruff Sullivan, Professor of Astronomy and Astrobiology at the University of Washington]

Sorry, everybody. We’re just not that special.

In more than five decades of scanning the heavens, the search for extraterrestrial intelligence (SETI) has found no sign of alien life. Yet now two American astronomers, in the scientific equivalent of a back-of-the-envelope calculation, are estimating that over the course of its history the universe has seen at least half a trillion technologically advanced species.

The paper in Astrobiology by Adam Frank and Woodruff Sullivan notes that, in just the last few years, we’ve gained a much clearer sense of how hospitable the universe is to life. NASA’s Kepler space telescope has identified thousands of planets in our neighborhood of the galaxy, along with their sizes and distances from their stars. From there it’s fairly easy to guess how many may hold liquid water, which is probably essential for complex life. In our Milky Way galaxy alone there are, by this estimate, some 60 billion such “habitable” planets, write Frank and Sullivan.

The big remaining unknown is how many of these planets give rise to the kinds of lifeforms that build advanced technology (if nuclear weapons and Oculus Rifts can be called “advanced”). Since Earth is the only one we know of, the guesses vary wildly, but one such civilization per 10 billion habitable planets is generally considered “highly pessimistic,” wrote Frank in the New York Times yesterday (paywall). In astronomy-speak, this means the figure could be 10, 100 or even 1,000 times too low.

Using that “pessimistic” proportion, and other numbers from Frank and Sullivan’s paper, I calculated how many alien civilizations should have emerged within various subregions of the universe during its history:

Table

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

Remember, 420 billion intelligent civilizations is the “pessimistic” estimate. But sadly—or happily, depending on your view of aliens—it doesn’t make us any less alone.

Though Frank and Sullivan wisely avoid putting a number on how many alien species are knocking around right now, we can do our own back-of-the-envelope reckoning. A crucial unknown factor is how long a technologically advanced civilization lasts before either going extinct or blasting itself back to the stone age. Judging by the past century of human history, even a thousand years might be optimistic. But let’s be really optimistic and call it a million years. That’s the average lifespan of a mammalian species that doesn’t invent the means of its own destruction.

I’m also going to assume that, though the universe is 13.8 billion years old, advanced species didn’t begin to appear until a couple of billion years ago. It took most of the universe’s history to form the kinds of planets, rich in heavier elements, on which creatures like us could evolve.

So if there have been 420 billion civilizations in the past 2 billion years, each one lasting a million years, then on average, about 210 million of them have existed simultaneously at any given moment.

Update: Seth Shostak, senior astronomer at the SETI Institute, has responded to this article saying that “many have guessed” that one in a million habitable worlds would produce advanced intelligence, rather than one in 10 billion. If so, and sticking to the other assumptions, there’d a good chance of at least one other civilization in our own galaxy existing at the same time as ours, meaning it would much closer, and thus more plausibly detectable.

#### Universe destruction outweighs human extinction---earth is insignificant.

Hughes 18 [Dr. Nick Hughes, Postdoctoral Research Fellow at University College Dublin, PhD in Philosophy from University of St Andrews & University of Olso, and Dr. Guy Kahane, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Oxford, D. Phil. in Philosophy from Oxford University, “Our Cosmic Insignificance”, 7-6, http://www.unariunwisdom.com/our-cosmic-insignificance/]

Humanity occupies a very small place in an unfathomably vast Universe. Travelling at the speed of light – 671 million miles per you are herehour – it would take us 100,000 years to cross the Milky Way. But we still wouldn’t have gone very far. Our modest Milky Way galaxy contains 100–400 billion stars. This isn’t very much: according to the latest calculations, the observable universe contains around 300 sextillion stars. By recent estimates, our Milky Way galaxy is just one of 2 trillion galaxies in the observable Universe, and the region of space that they occupy spans at least 90 billion light-years. If you imagine Earth shrunk down to the size of a single grain of sand, and you imagine the size of that grain of sand relative to the entirety of the Sahara Desert, you are still nowhere near to comprehending how infinitesimally small a position we occupy in space. The American astronomer Carl Sagan put the point vividly in 1994 when discussing the famous ‘Pale Blue Dot’ photograph taken by Voyager 1. Our planet, he said, is nothing more than ‘a mote of dust suspended in a sunbeam’. Stephen Hawking delivers the news more bluntly. We are, he says, “just a chemical scum on a moderate-sized planet, orbiting round a very average star in the outer suburb of one among a hundred billion galaxies.”

And that’s just the spatial dimension. The observable Universe has existed for around 13.8 billion years. If we shrink that span of time down to a single year, with the Big Bang occurring at midnight on 1 January, the first Homo sapiens made an appearance at 22:24 on 31 December. It’s now 23:59:59, as it has been for the past 438 years, and at the rate we’re going it’s entirely possible that we’ll be gone before midnight strikes again. The Universe, on the other hand, might well continue existing forever, for all we know. Sagan could have added, then, that our time on this mote of dust will amount to nothing more than a blip. In the grand scheme of things we are very, very small.

For Sagan, the Pale Blue Dot underscores our responsibility to treat one another with kindness and compassion. But reflection on the vastness of the Universe and our physical and temporal smallness within it often takes on an altogether darker hue. If the Universe is so large, and we are so small and so fleeting, doesn’t it follow that we are utterly insignificant and inconsequential? This thought can be a spur to nihilism. If we are so insignificant, if our existence is so trivial, how could anything we do or are – our successes and failures, our anxiety and sadness and joy, all our busy ambition and toil and endeavour, all that makes up the material of our lives – how could any of that possibly matter? To think of one’s place in the cosmos, as the American philosopher Susan Wolf puts it in ‘The Meanings of Lives’ (2007), is ‘to recognise the possibility of a perspective … from which one’s life is merely gratuitous’.

The sense that we are somehow insignificant seems to be widely felt. The American author John Updike expressed it in 1985 when he wrote of modern science that:

We shrink from what it has to tell us of our perilous and insignificant place in the cosmos … our century’s revelations of unthinkable largeness and unimaginable smallness, of abysmal stretches of geological time when we were nothing, of supernumerary galaxies … of a kind of mad mathematical violence at the heart of the matter have scorched us deeper than we know.

In a similar vein, the French philosopher Blaise Pascal wrote in Pensées (1669):

When I consider the short duration of my life, swallowed up in an eternity before and after, the little space I fill engulfed in the infinite immensity of spaces whereof I know nothing, and which know nothing of me, I am terrified. The eternal silence of these infinite spaces frightens me.

Commenting on this passage in Between Man and Man (1947), the Austrian-Israeli philosopher Martin Buber said that Pascal had experienced the ‘uncanniness of the heavens’, and thereby came to know ‘man’s limitation, his inadequacy, the casualness of his existence’. In the film Monty Python’s The Meaning of Life (1983), John Cleese and Eric Idle conspire to persuade a character, played by Terry Gilliam, to give up her liver for donation. Understandably reluctant, she is eventually won over by a song that sharply details just how comically inconsequential she is in the cosmic frame.

Even the relatively upbeat Sagan wasn’t, in fact, immune to the pessimistic point of view. As well as viewing it as a lesson in the need for collective goodwill, he also argued that the Pale Blue Dot challenges ‘our posturings, our imagined self-importance, and the delusion that we have some privileged position in the Universe’.

When we reflect on the vastness of the universe, our humdrum cosmic location, and the inevitable future demise of humanity, our lives can seem utterly insignificant. As we complacently go about our little Earthly affairs, we barely notice the black backdrop of the night sky. Even when we do, we usually see the starry skies as no more than a pleasant twinkling decoration.

This sense of cosmic insignificance is not uncommon; one of Joseph Conrad’s characters describes

one of those dewy, clear, starry nights, oppressing our spirit, crushing our pride, by the brilliant evidence of the awful loneliness, of the hopeless obscure insignificance of our globe lost in the splendid revelation of a glittering, soulless universe. I hate such skies.

The young Bertrand Russell, a close friend of Conrad, bitterly referred to the Earth as “the petty planet on which our bodies impotently craw.” Russell wrote that:

Brief and powerless is Man’s life; on him and all his race the slow, sure doom falls pitiless and dark. Blind to good and evil, reckless of destruction, omnipotent matter rolls on its relentless way…

This is why Russell thought that, in the absence of God, we must build our lives on “a foundation of unyielding despair.”

When we consider ourselves as a mere dot in a vast universe, when we consider ourselves in light of everything there is, nothing human seems to matter. Even the worst human tragedy may seem to deserve no cosmic concern. After all, we are fighting for attention with an incredibly vast totality. How could this tiny speck of dust deserve even a fraction of attention, from that universal point of view?

This is the image that is evoked when, for example, Simon Blackburn writes that “to a witness with the whole of space and time in its view, nothing on the human scale will have meaning”.

Such quotations could be easily multiplied—we find similar remarks, for example, in John Donne, Voltaire, Schopenhauer, Byron, Tolstoy, Chesterton, Camus, and, in recent philosophy, in Thomas Nagel, Harry Frankfurt, and Ronald Dworkin.

The bigger the picture we survey, the smaller the part of any point within it, and the less attention it can get… When we try to imagine a viewpoint encompassing the entire universe, humanity and its concerns seem to get completely swallowed up in the void.

Over the centuries, many have thought it absurd to think that we are the only ones. For example, Anaxagoras, Epicurus, Lucretius, and, later, Giordano Bruno, Huygens and Kepler were all confident that the universe is teeming with life. Kant was willing to bet everything he had on the existence of intelligent life on other planets. And we now know that there is a vast multitude of Earth-like planets even in our own little galaxy.

#### Alien lives should be valued as equal to humans---anything else is arbitrary and a logic of devaluation that is at the root of violence

Packer 7 – Joe Packer, then MA in Communication from Wake Forest University, now PhD in Communication from the University of Pittsburgh and Professor of Communication at Central Michigan University, Alien Life in Search of Acknowledgment, p. 62-63

Once we hold alien interests as equal to our own we can begin to revaluate areas previously believed to hold no relevance to life beyond this planet. A diverse group of scholars including Richard Posner, Senior Lecturer in Law at the University of Chicago, Nick Bostrom, philosophy professor at Oxford University, John Leslie philosophy professor at Guelph University and Martin Rees, Britain’s Astronomer Royal, have written on the emerging technologies that threaten life beyond the planet Earth. Particle accelerators labs are colliding matter together, reaching energies that have not been seen since the Big Bang. These experiments threaten a phase transition that would create a bubble of altered space that would expand at the speed of light killing all life in its path. Nanotechnology and other machines may soon reach the ability to self replicate. A mistake in design or programming could unleash an endless quantity of machines converting all matter in the universe into copies of themselves. Despite detailing the potential of these technologies to destroy the entire universe, Posner, Bostrom, Leslie, and Ree’s only mention of alien life in their works is in reference to the threat aliens post to humanity. The rhetorical construction of otherness only in terms of the threats it poses, but never in terms of the threat one poses to it, has been at the center of humanity’s history of genocide, colonization, and environmental destruction. Although humanity certainly has its own interests in reducing the threat of these technologies evaluating them without taking into account the danger they pose to alien life is neither appropriate nor just. It is not appropriate because framing the issue only in terms of human interests will result in priorities designed to minimize the risks and maximize the benefits to humanity, not all life. Even if humanity dealt with the threats effectively without referencing their obligation to aliens, Posner, Bostrom, Leslie, and Ree’s rhetoric would not be “just,” because it arbitrarily declares other life forms unworthy of consideration. A framework of acknowledgement would allow humanity to address the risks of these new technologies, while being cognizant of humanity’s obligations to other life within the universe. Applying the lens of acknowledgment to the issue of existential threats moves the problem from one of self destruction to universal genocide. This may be the most dramatic example of how refusing to extend acknowledgment to potential alien life can mask humanity’s obligations to life beyond this planet.

#### Extinction ends human-caused suffering and death of non-human animals---this outweighs any value to humanity---AND we access it even if the process is slow, because societal breakdown ends this suffering in the short term

May 18 – Dr. Todd May, Professor of Philosophy at Clemson University, PhD in Philosophy from Penn State University, MA in Psychology from Duquesne University, “Would Human Extinction Be a Tragedy?”, The New York Times, 12-17, https://www.nytimes.com/2018/12/17/opinion/human-extinction-climate-change.html

There are stirrings of discussion these days in philosophical circles about the prospect of human extinction. This should not be surprising, given the increasingly threatening predations of climate change. In reflecting on this question, I want to suggest an answer to a single question, one that hardly covers the whole philosophical territory but is an important aspect of it. Would human extinction be a tragedy?

To get a bead on this question, let me distinguish it from a couple of other related questions. I’m not asking whether the experience of humans coming to an end would be a bad thing. (In these pages, Samuel Scheffler has given us an important reason to think that it would be.) I am also not asking whether human beings as a species deserve to die out. That is an important question, but would involve different considerations. Those questions, and others like them, need to be addressed if we are to come to a full moral assessment of the prospect of our demise. Yet what I am asking here is simply whether it would be a tragedy if the planet no longer contained human beings. And the answer I am going to give might seem puzzling at first. I want to suggest, at least tentatively, both that it would be a tragedy and that it might just be a good thing.

To make that claim less puzzling, let me say a word about tragedy. In theater, the tragic character is often someone who commits a wrong, usually a significant one, but with whom we feel sympathy in their descent. Here Sophocles’s Oedipus, Shakespeare’s Lear, and Arthur Miller’s Willy Loman might stand as examples. In this case, the tragic character is humanity. It is humanity that is committing a wrong, a wrong whose elimination would likely require the elimination of the species, but with whom we might be sympathetic nonetheless for reasons I discuss in a moment.

To make that case, let me start with a claim that I think will be at once depressing and, upon reflection, uncontroversial. Human beings are destroying large parts of the inhabitable earth and causing unimaginable suffering to many of the animals that inhabit it. This is happening through at least three means. First, human contribution to climate change is devastating ecosystems, as the recent article on Yellowstone Park in The Times exemplifies. Second, increasing human population is encroaching on ecosystems that would otherwise be intact. Third, factory farming fosters the creation of millions upon millions of animals for whom it offers nothing but suffering and misery before slaughtering them in often barbaric ways. There is no reason to think that those practices are going to diminish any time soon. Quite the opposite.

Humanity, then, is the source of devastation of the lives of conscious animals on a scale that is difficult to comprehend.

To be sure, nature itself is hardly a Valhalla of peace and harmony. Animals kill other animals regularly, often in ways that we (although not they) would consider cruel. But there is no other creature in nature whose predatory behavior is remotely as deep or as widespread as the behavior we display toward what the philosopher Christine Korsgaard aptly calls “our fellow creatures” in a sensitive book of the same name.

If this were all to the story there would be no tragedy. The elimination of the human species would be a good thing, full stop. But there is more to the story. Human beings bring things to the planet that other animals cannot. For example, we bring an advanced level of reason that can experience wonder at the world in a way that is foreign to most if not all other animals. We create art of various kinds: literature, music and painting among them. We engage in sciences that seek to understand the universe and our place in it. Were our species to go extinct, all of that would be lost.

Now there might be those on the more jaded side who would argue that if we went extinct there would be no loss, because there would be no one for whom it would be a loss not to have access to those things. I think this objection misunderstands our relation to these practices. We appreciate and often participate in such practices because we believe they are good to be involved in, because we find them to be worthwhile. It is the goodness of the practices and the experiences that draw us. Therefore, it would be a loss to the world if those practices and experiences ceased to exist.

One could press the objection here by saying that it would only be a loss from a human viewpoint, and that that viewpoint would no longer exist if we went extinct. This is true. But this entire set of reflections is taking place from a human viewpoint. We cannot ask the questions we are asking here without situating them within the human practice of philosophy. Even to ask the question of whether it would be a tragedy if humans were to disappear from the face of the planet requires a normative framework that is restricted to human beings.

Let’s turn, then, and take the question from the other side, the side of those who think that human extinction would be both a tragedy and overall a bad thing. Doesn’t the existence of those practices outweigh the harm we bring to the environment and the animals within it? Don’t they justify the continued existence of our species, even granting the suffering we bring to so many nonhuman lives?

To address that question, let us ask another one. How many human lives would it be worth sacrificing to preserve the existence of Shakespeare’s works? If we were required to engage in human sacrifice in order to save his works from eradication, how many humans would be too many? For my own part, I think the answer is one. One human life would be too many (or, to prevent quibbling, one innocent human life), at least to my mind. Whatever the number, though, it is going to be quite low.

Or suppose a terrorist planted a bomb in the Louvre and the first responders had to choose between saving several people in the museum and saving the art. How many of us would seriously consider saving the art?

So, then, how much suffering and death of nonhuman life would we be willing to countenance to save Shakespeare, our sciences and so forth? Unless we believe there is such a profound moral gap between the status of human and nonhuman animals, whatever reasonable answer we come up with will be well surpassed by the harm and suffering we inflict upon animals. There is just too much torment wreaked upon too many animals and too certain a prospect that this is going to continue and probably increase; it would overwhelm anything we might place on the other side of the ledger. Moreover, those among us who believe that there is such a gap should perhaps become more familiar with the richness of lives of many of our conscious fellow creatures. Our own science is revealing that richness to us, ironically giving us a reason to eliminate it along with our own continued existence.

One might ask here whether, given this view, it would also be a good thing for those of us who are currently here to end our lives in order to prevent further animal suffering. Although I do not have a final answer to this question, we should recognize that the case of future humans is very different from the case of currently existing humans. To demand of currently existing humans that they should end their lives would introduce significant suffering among those who have much to lose by dying. In contrast, preventing future humans from existing does not introduce such suffering, since those human beings will not exist and therefore not have lives to sacrifice. The two situations, then, are not analogous.

It may well be, then, that the extinction of humanity would make the world better off and yet would be a tragedy. I don’t want to say this for sure, since the issue is quite complex. But it certainly seems a live possibility, and that by itself disturbs me.

#### Cosmogenesis is inevitable

Merali 17 – Dr. Zeeya Merali, PhD in Cosmology from Brown University, Master’s in Natural Sciences from the University of Cambridge, Freelance Journalist and Author Whose Work Has Appeared in Scientific American, Nature, New Scientist, and Discover, and on the BBC, “Scientists Want to Create a Universe in a Lab, And They Actually Could”, Futurism, 10-20, https://futurism.com/scientists-may-create-universe-actually-could

Physicists aren’t often reprimanded for using risqué humour in their academic writings, but in 1991 that is exactly what happened to the cosmologist Andrei Linde at Stanford University. He had submitted a draft article entitled ‘Hard Art of the Universe Creation’ to the journal Nuclear Physics B. In it, he outlined the possibility of creating a universe in a laboratory: a whole new cosmos that might one day evolve its own stars, planets and intelligent life. Near the end, Linde made a seemingly flippant suggestion that our Universe itself might have been knocked together by an alien ‘physicist hacker’. The paper’s referees objected to this ‘dirty joke’; religious people might be offended that scientists were aiming to steal the feat of universe-making out of the hands of God, they worried. Linde changed the paper’s title and abstract but held firm over the line that our Universe could have been made by an alien scientist. ‘I am not so sure that this is just a joke,’ he told me.

Fast-forward a quarter of a century, and the notion of universe-making – or ‘cosmogenesis’ as I dub it – seems less comical than ever. I’ve travelled the world talking to physicists who take the concept seriously, and who have even sketched out rough blueprints for how humanity might one day achieve it. Linde’s referees might have been right to be concerned, but they were asking the wrong questions. The issue is not who might be offended by cosmogenesis, but what would happen if it were truly possible. How would we handle the theological implications? What moral responsibilities would come with fallible humans taking on the role of cosmic creators?

1. <https://www.google.com/search?q=worker+definition&rlz=1C1CHBF_enUS877US877&oq=worker+definition&aqs=chrome..69i57.3726j0j7&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8> //Xu [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/ought [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. https://www.google.com/search?q=resolved+definition&rlz=1C1CHBF\_enUS877US877&oq=resolved+definition&aqs=chrome..69i57.2078j0j7&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8 [↑](#footnote-ref-3)