# Speech 1NC Yale Rd 6 vs Stuy 9-18 3PM

## 1

#### The standard is maximizing expected well being – that means act hedonism

#### 1] Pleasure is an intrinsic good—solves regress.

Moen ’16 – (Ole Martin, PhD, Research Fellow in Philosophy @ University of Oslo, "An Argument for Hedonism." Journal of Value Inquiry 50.2 (2016): 267). Modified for glang

Let us start by observing, empirically, that a widely shared judgment about intrinsic value and disvalue is that pleasure is intrinsically valuable and pain is intrinsically disvaluable. On virtually any proposed list of intrinsic values and disvalues (we will look at some of them below), pleasure is included among the intrinsic values and pain among the intrinsic disvalues. This inclusion makes intuitive sense, moreover, for there is something undeniably good about the way pleasure feels and something undeniably bad about the way pain feels, and neither the goodness of pleasure nor the badness of pain seems to be exhausted by the further effects that these experiences might have. “Pleasure” and “pain” are here understood inclusively, as encompassing anything hedonically positive and anything hedonically negative. 2 The special value statuses of pleasure and pain are manifested in how we treat these experiences in our everyday reasoning about values. If you tell me that you are heading for the convenience store, I might ask: “What for?” This is a reasonable question, for when you go to the convenience store you usually do so, not merely for the sake of going to the convenience store, but for the sake of achieving something further that you deem to be valuable. You might answer, for example: “To buy soda.” This answer makes sense, for soda is a nice thing and you can get it at the convenience store. I might further inquire, however: “What is buying the soda good for?” This further question can also be a reasonable one, for it need not be obvious why you want the soda. You might answer: “Well, I want it for the pleasure of drinking it.” If I then proceed by asking “But what is the pleasure of drinking the soda good for?” the discussion is likely to reach an awkward end. The reason is that the pleasure is not good for anything further; it is simply that for which going to the convenience store and buying the soda is good. 3 As Aristotle observes: “We never ask what her~~is~~ end is in being pleased, because we assume that pleasure is choice worthy in itself.”4 Presumably, a similar story can be told in the case of pains, for if someone says “This is painful!” we never respond by asking: “And why is that a problem?” We take for granted that if something is painful, we have a sufficient explanation of why it is bad. If we are onto something in our everyday reasoning about values, it seems that pleasure and pain are both places where we reach the end of the line in matters of value. Although pleasure and pain thus seem to be good candidates for intrinsic value and disvalue, several objections have been raised against this suggestion: (1) that pleasure and pain have instrumental but not intrinsic value/disvalue; (2) that pleasure and pain gain their value/disvalue derivatively, in virtue of satisfying/frustrating our desires; (3) that there is a subset of pleasures that are not intrinsically valuable (so-called “evil pleasures”) and a subset of pains that are not intrinsically disvaluable (so-called “noble pains”), and (4) that pain asymbolia, masochism, and practices such as wiggling a loose tooth render it implausible that pain is intrinsically disvaluable. I shall argue that these objections fail.

#### 2] States must use util – they seek practical benefits for constituents and aren’t unified agents so they don’t have intentions. No calc indicts since states use util successfully all the time and they just prove util’s hard to use not impossible.

#### 3] Death outweighs – agents can’t act ethically if they fear bodily harm – turns NCs

#### 4] Extinction comes first under any framing – future value, magnitude, risk parity

Pummer 15 Theron, Junior Research Fellow in Philosophy at St. Anne's College, University of Oxford. “Moral Agreement on Saving the World” Practical Ethics, University of Oxford. May 18, 2015 AT, recut BWSEK

There appears to be lot of disagreement in moral philosophy. Whether these many apparent disagreements are deep and irresolvable, I believe there is at least one thing it is reasonable to agree on right now, whatever general moral view we adopt: that it is very important to reduce the risk that all intelligent beings on this planet are eliminated by an enormous catastrophe, such as a nuclear war. How we might in fact try to reduce such existential risks is discussed elsewhere. My claim here is only that we – whether we’re consequentialists, deontologists, or virtue ethicists – should all agree that we should try to save the world. According to consequentialism, we should maximize the good, where this is taken to be the goodness, from an impartial perspective, of outcomes. Clearly one thing that makes an outcome good is that the people in it are doing well. There is little disagreement here. If the happiness or well-being of possible future people is just as important as that of people who already exist, and if they would have good lives, it is not hard to see how reducing existential risk is easily the most important thing in the whole world. This is for the familiar reason that there are so many people who could exist in the future – there are trillions upon trillions… upon trillions. There are so many possible future people that reducing existential risk is arguably the most important thing in the world, even if the well-being of these possible people were given only 0.001% as much weight as that of existing people. Even on a wholly person-affecting view – according to which there’s nothing (apart from effects on existing people) to be said in favor of creating happy people – the case for reducing existential risk is very strong. As noted in this seminal paper, this case is strengthened by the fact that there’s a good chance that many existing people will, with the aid of life-extension technology, live very long and very high quality lives. You might think what I have just argued applies to consequentialists tendency only. There is a to assume that, if an argument appeals to consequentialist considerations (the goodness of outcomes), it is irrelevant to non-consequentialists. But that is a huge mistake. Non-consequentialism is the view that there’s more that determines rightness than the goodness of consequences or outcomes; it is not the view that the latter don’t matter. Even John Rawls wrote, “All ethical doctrines worth our attention take consequences into account in judging rightness. One which did not would simply be irrational, crazy.” Minimally plausible versions of deontology and virtue ethics must be concerned in part with promoting the good, from an impartial point of view. They’d thus imply very strong reasons to reduce existential risk, at least when this doesn’t significantly involve doing harm to others or damaging one’s character. What’s even more surprising, perhaps, is that even if our own good (or that of those near and dear to us) has much greater weight than goodness from the impartial “point of view of the universe,” indeed even if the latter is entirely morally irrelevant, we may nonetheless have very strong reasons to reduce existential risk. Even egoism, the view that each agent should maximize her own good, might imply strong reasons to reduce existential risk. It will depend, among other things, on what one’s own good consists in. If well-being consisted in pleasure only, it is somewhat harder to argue that egoism would imply strong reasons to reduce existential risk – perhaps we could argue that one would maximize her expected hedonic well-being by funding life extension technology or by having herself cryogenically frozen at the time of her bodily death as well as giving money to reduce existential risk (so that there is a world for her to live in!). I am not sure, however, how strong the reasons to do this would be. But views which imply that, if I don’t care about other people, I have no or very little reason to help them are not even minimally plausible views (in addition to hedonistic egoism, I here have in mind views that imply that one has no reason to perform an act unless one actually desires to do that act). To be minimally plausible, egoism will need to be paired with a more sophisticated account of well-being. To see this, it is enough to consider, as Plato did, the possibility of a ring of invisibility – suppose that, while wearing it, Ayn could derive some pleasure by helping the poor, but instead could derive just a bit more by severely harming them. Hedonistic egoism would absurdly imply she should do the latter. To avoid this implication, egoists would need to build something like the meaningfulness of a life into well-being, in some robust way, where this would to a significant extent be a function of other-regarding concerns (see chapter 12 of this classic intro to ethics). But once these elements are included, we can (roughly, as above) argue that this sort of egoism will imply strong reasons to reduce existential risk. Add to all of this Samuel Scheffler’s recent intriguing arguments (quick podcast version available here) that most of what makes our lives go well would be undermined if there were no future generations of intelligent persons. On his view, my life would contain vastly less well-being if (say) a year after my death the world came to an end. So obviously if Scheffler were right I’d have very strong reason to reduce existential risk. We should also take into account moral uncertainty. What is it reasonable for one to do, when one is uncertain not (only) about the empirical facts, but also about the moral facts? I’ve just argued that there’s agreement among minimally plausible ethical views that we have strong reason to reduce existential risk – not only consequentialists, but also deontologists, virtue ethicists, and sophisticated egoists should agree. But even those (hedonistic egoists) who disagree should have a significant level of confidence that they are mistaken, and that one of the above views is correct. Even if they were 90% sure that their view is the correct one (and 10% sure that one of these other ones is correct), they would have pretty strong reason, from the standpoint of moral uncertainty, to reduce existential risk. Perhaps most disturbingly still, even if we are only 1% sure that the well-being of possible future people matters, it is at least arguable that, from the standpoint of moral uncertainty, reducing existential risk is the most important thing in the world. Again, this is largely for the reason that there are so many people who could exist in the future – there are trillions upon trillions… upon trillions. (For more on this and other related issues, see this excellent dissertation). Of course, it is uncertain whether these untold trillions would, in general, have good lives. It’s possible they’ll be miserable.

#### 5] Consequentialism true –

#### A] No intent-foresight distinction – when I foresee something it enters into my intention

#### B] No act-omission distinction – omitting is just choosing not to take any other action

## 2

#### Coercive power relations have shifted from the local to the global creating biodiplomacy which facilitates liberal expansion and development.

Constantinou and Opondo 15, Constantinou, Costas M., and Sam Okoth Opondo. "Engaging the ‘ungoverned’: The merging of diplomacy, defence and development." Cooperation and Conflict 51.3 (2016): 307-324. (Professor of International Relations @ University of Cyprus, Sam Okoth Opondo, Professor of Political Science and Africana Studies)//Elmer

Ultimately, this military-diplomatic apparatus presents something more than a state’s or empire’s attempt to ‘enhance its value’ at the periphery of the international system. By **managing** poverty and scarcity and supporting ‘good’ **living conditions around the globe**, the apparatus **maintains** old and extends new ‘**relations of subjection’** and governance while creating new sites of diplomatic engagement that exceed the governmental domain (Mbembe, 2001: 24). Connecting domains of administration and negotiation, but also violence and multiple attempts to curtail it, the apparatus is part of a milieu in which governmental and diplomatic practices are synergized and instituted. Beyond its strategic concern with the optimization of lives and livelihoods, the **entanglement of governmental** **and diplomatic** conduct **registers**, we believe, **an ontological shift from biopolitics to biodiplomacy**. Emerging from the liberal will to self-regulation and governance and specifically addressing the politics of life, biopolitics, Michel Foucault tells us, involves ‘control over relations between the human race, or human beings insofar as they are a species, insofar as they are living beings, and their environment, the milieu in which they live’ (Foucault, 2003: 245). Going beyond the juridical conception of sovereignty and law enforcement, **biopolitics concentrates on** the **management of populations through** the **production of knowledge** about life and ways of living, as well as the enhancement of methods of supporting and controlling them. Unlike juridical sovereignty, which was predominantly defined by the right of rulers to ‘take life and let live’, biopolitics follows a governmental logic of ‘**making live and letting die’** (Foucault, 2003: 247). Whereas biopolitics has expanded its reach and deepened its governmental methods to multiple domains around the globe – not only enhancing conditions of living but also determining who is made to live and who is let to die – biodiplomacy underscores the continuous **negotiation of life** that **accompanies** this **global expansion** and that has brought **shifts in** **strategies of control**, discourses of legitimation and forms of co-optation and cohabitation beyond governance. We have examined the theoretical and ethical ramifications of biodiplomacy in more detail in a separate paper (Constantinou and Opondo, 2014). The focus on biodiplomacy provokes us to ask if there is something more going on beyond ‘liberal governance’, the ‘liberal way of war’ or the ‘**merging of security with development’**. Specifically it allows us to inquire how groups, like the Jeldessa villagers or other groups who are acted upon by the powerful, play out their agency and the forms of diplomacy that enable them to do so. Do they create new diplomacies as they enact their lives in the spaces and times where biopolitical regimes operate? Or is the biopolitical formation creating new forms of diplomatic subjects? Posing the question not only of biopolitics but of biodiplomacy makes it possible for us to seriously think how lives and worlds are not just ‘governed’ but ‘negotiated’, how certain lives and worlds become plausible, and others implausible, and this not through centralized command, control and exercise of power. To be sure, biodiplomacy does not ensure symmetrical negotiation, particularly where the USA is involved. Over the last 10 years, the cultivation of outreach and the exploitation of new civilian partnerships have been keenly pursued through the US Transformational Diplomacy initiative, extending operations beyond the traditional centres of power and intergovernmental relationships. For instance, a plethora of projects have been promoted under the auspices of US Africa Command (AFRICOM) in a manner that exemplifies both the biopolitical and biodiplomatic dimensions of the military-diplomatic apparatus. Such projects are sometimes frank and cynical about their goal. VETCAP, for example, currently operates in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya, Morocco, Tanzania and Uganda and aims to ‘deliver veterinary programs in support of strategic military objectives’.3 Although there is no public explanation as to what the specific strategic military objectives are in each country and how they are linked to the vaccination of livestock, the engagements are indicative of the new civilian partnerships that the US Defense and State Departments are developing worldwide as well as of what has been termed as the merging of diplomacy, defence and development (3D) – the ‘three pillars’ of US foreign policy in the post-9/11 era. In short, there is a clear policy reorientation towards supporting ‘foreign’ life that is openly admitted and promoted, but whose global implications and replications are yet to be fully understood.

#### Waiving IP is a form of American Imperialism.

Patanè 21 Andrea Patanè 5-15-2021 "COVID-19 pandemic: patents and profits" <https://www.marxist.com/covid-19-pandemic-patents-and-profits.htm> (Northern California Functional Medicine | Modern Natural Health.)//Elmer

A “calculated risk” Far from an act of ‘international solidarity', this latest **move from the US** government **is a calculated political risk,** and will be **implemented** **in the interests of US imperialism**. A section of the more serious wing of the **bourgeoisie understands** that a proper **economic recovery** can **happen** **only if** the **pandemic is suppressed** worldwide. As we have explained elsewhere, wealthy countries risk losing billions of dollars if the pandemic is brought under control only within their own borders, because new variants (like those in India and Brazil) can always mutate elsewhere and reinfect their populations, causing further economic disruption. Therefore, even on a capitalist basis, it is expedient in the long-term for the rich countries to facilitate a global vaccination campaign. Even Pope Francis anointed the demand from his seat in Rome! Biden’s announcement is also an **act of vaccine diplomacy.** America’s main rivals, China and Russia, have been shoring up their spheres of influence by distributing their Sinopharm and Sputnik V vaccines to poor countries left out by the vaccine nationalism of the US and Europe. Chinese and Russian vaccines have been exported into countries traditionally under western spheres of influence, including Brazil and Hungary. **Pushing to waive IP protections on** **COVID**-19 vaccines **is** therefore partly an effort to push back against the encroachment of rival imperialist powers, which have so far outcompeted Washington in the global vaccination drive. Biden’s announcement is also an **attempt to restore** the **standing and authority of US imperialism** on the world stage, which has been bruised by the ‘America First’ vaccine nationalist policy started by Donald Trump, and continued by Biden. According to the FT, Katherine Tai (top US trade envoy) and Jake Sullivan (national security adviser) made the case to Biden that pushing for the waiver “was a low-risk way to secure a diplomatic victory”, after coming under fire for not “respond[ing] quickly enough to the unfolding COVID-19 crisis in India”. Here you have it, straight from the horse’s mouth. Under capitalism, **vaccines** – rather than providing a way out of the pandemic – **are tools for ‘low-risk diplomatic victories’**. As if this was some sort of football match between world leaders! In short, Biden is stepping in to prioritise the interests of US imperialism as a whole over the immediate interests of the Big Pharma capitalists. But we should say clearly: this cynical attempt to claim the moral high ground came only after the US used its massive economic clout to secure enough vaccines to inoculate its own population several times over. And in fact, the wartime Defense Production Act is still in effect, which forces US manufacturers to fulfil domestic demands for medical equipment before exports are permitted. This de facto export ban has created bottlenecks in the supply chain that have already undermined the WHO-led COVAX programme to vaccinate poor countries. Rest assured, Biden’s policy remains ‘America First’, just by somewhat more calculated means than his predecessor.

#### Medicine increases liberal governance by attempting to save everything under the transparent gaze of western biomedicine which paradoxically results in the elimination of the very lives they seek to preserve.

Yau 7, Wing-kit. "Representing illness: patients, monsters, andmicrobes." HKU Theses Online (HKUTO) (2007). (Medical Graduate Student at Hong Kong University)//Elmer

History shows that political and economic colonialism that took over geographical area can be justified with a utopian vision, and the modernisation that follows eventually improve the standard of the colonised up to that of the coloniser. **Medical colonisation**, in the same vein, can also be considered as **a humanitarian endeavour**. Western medicine ‘**colonises’** the **field of medicine**, **taking over traditional** and other indigenous medical **practices** **and render them** as ‘**unscientific’** and ‘superstitious’ while celebrating the achievement of scientific method that is the basis for our bio-medical culture as the real life savour. 91 Fortunately or unfortunately, Frank believes this period of medical colonisation has probably ended. He regards this new era medical post-colonisation when political issues and national security are now closely allied and fusing with the medical curriculum, further **alienating** the **patients** and turning the city space into a space of thoroughly-sanitised, isolating environs. It also means that in medical post-colonisation, the meaning of public health is now synonymous with global health. Under this new name, its area of administration reaches beyond the microscopic world of biological border-crossing virus and germs to the border-crossing people and other political agenda as well. Different from other diseases, infectious disease does not confine itself to a particular stigmatisable population. Take SARS for example, it is quite different from other re-emerging diseases that are, to this date, still a regional plague limited to third-world countries (where medical facilities are inadequate and people are living under deprived conditions). The primary risk group during the outbreak in Hong Kong, however, is not the stigmatised ‘other’ – typically the poor or the under-privileged class, but the medical workers in hospitals – who are usually esteemed as professionals and from a prestigious group in our society even today. Christine Loh sums up the impact of SARS and the fusing of medicine with politics in the following way: Events happened quickly. Healthcare professionals had to face enormous personal risks in fighting the disease on the frontline […] Need has been the mother of a number of useful inventions, such as the contact tracing system developed in Hong Kong. SARS also touched almost every other aspect of personal and community life in affected areas [including Toronto, Singapore and Taiwan]. Ministers and officials lost their jobs. Many businesses suffered. Ordinary people were forced to reassess their priorities. Communities had to find useful ways of coping with panic while continuing to fight the disease.92 Paul Virilio has already warned us that the fear of contamination by a viral agent is not, and should not be the sole object of horror in this day and age, but the fear of extinguishments engendered by the hyperfragility of the technological process of our society.93 Although infectious disease is only a viral contamination, and it is by no means comparable to the kind of weapon that is designed to function as another network to cause a wide-spread breakdown of our existing life-dependent networks (such as power supplies), Peter Chan’s Memory has shown how this fear of risk has undergone a series of re-configuration, from being contaminated by the foreign invasion of a virus, to the fear of isolation and incommunicability. Perhaps it is helpful to compare this change of our subject of anxiety in terms of the colonial-era ideologies of medicine and post-colonial ideologies of global health, as there is increasing emphasis on information and commodity exchange networks intertwining with space and territoriality, as Nicholas B King puts it: While colonial anxiety revolved around fears of contamination as certain (white, European, male) bodies moved into vulnerable places and faced novel contaminating environments and (non-white, non-European, female) peoples, postcolonial anxiety revolves around the contamination of space itself by mobile bodies and motile environments. This is not the horror of matter (or bodies) out of place, which presupposed the identification of a place for matter; instead, it is the horror of places no longer mattering, of a ‘third-worlding’ at home.94 The horror in Memory is not the ghostly figure played by Tony Leung. It is true that while he is wandering and happens to see the masked Eugenia Yuan sitting by herself staring out of a café’s window, there is a brief moment of tacit recognition, or as another film critic remarks, it is a moment when Leung and the Yuan (who plays a ghostly figure in another Peter Chan’s film Going Home) meets and it dawns on the audience that Leung, too, is a ghost.95 Nonetheless, the ‘ghosts’ here are just as powerless as the imprisoned people in the building in the sick, infected city. They no more understand the snow in Hong Kong, nor the hearses that are passing by than we do. That is to say, they are not from another world different to ours. The real horror comes from the uniqueness of SARS and the new realisation that it came with – not only does it mean that **biomedicine is no longer the guarantee for health**, but it also paints a grimmer picture of reality that says this new epidemic cannot be reduced to just another ‘difficult time’ for the local people to overcome, and that it, like so many adversities in the past decades, can be overcome. That explains why critics of the 1:99 Short Film Series have been negative, mostly toward the films’ focus on the disease as an ‘adversary’ that Hong Kong people are facing collectively rather than treating SARS as a unique, (un)timely disease.96 In Hong Kong is the Best (Dir. Alan Mak Siu-Fai, Andrew Lau Wai-Keung), for example, SARS is even treated as an equivalent to other pandemics/disasters in the past, as if the disease were just another difficult time that the locals can, and will go through collectively, that what it causes (the other) will not destroy us (the self) because, as the title suggests, Hong Kong is the best. Memory addresses the post-SARS trauma by showing how the disease has caught Hong Kong people getting weary of human-to-human contact – everyone is imprisoned in the round windows in solitude, expressionless and masked. These people have been through mass anxiety and paranoia about the disease, and panic over being infected with the virus, which, like the rest of the influenza viral strain, is still not preventable. In Hystories, Elaine Showalter remarks that mass hysteria usually takes place within a community, especially a tight-knit one like that of Hong Kong, where rumours can develop with the social network to sustain it.97 In the example of SARS, there was once a time when rumour first hit the locals that a mysterious flu has killed people in Guangzhou. And the locals were seen as reacting with irrational fear by stocking up white vinegar98 and the market also reacted by increasing the prices of all kinds of disinfectants, such as Clorox, Dettol and even masks. Interestingly, such mass hysteria did not last long. As masks are being discarded, fear is also being forgotten. Our memories do not seem to hold on for long to our previous experience and soon drifts into oblivion before it disappears completely. As a result, the epidemic itself never plays a major role in shaping the Hong Kong society, and there leaves very little room for artistic production in response to its devastating period of outbreak.99 [cont.] It has become increasingly clear that health and the proper management of illness (especially of infectious diseases) are now individual moral responsibilities in real life. Individuals (lay people) are expected to have improved assess to (medical) knowledge through popular science and mass media that would enable them to better self-surveillance, risk assessment, and ultimately, prevention. In the meantime, we have what Adele E. Clarke et al. calls the ‘biomedicalisation’ process that, ‘through the complex, multisided, multidirectional process of medicalisation and application of technoscience,’ has given us both new individual and collective identities according to our ‘risk status’, DNA profiles, or whether we are ‘Syndrome X sufferers,’ etc.106 Interestingly, if medicalisation is a process in which ‘unwanted’ social phenomenon or behaviours are passed from the jurisdiction of law to that of medicine, (e.g. branding/classifying someone as sick just because (s)he does not fit the social norm, and thereby treating it as an illness and disease), then biomedicalisation can be understood as a process that medicalises health (e.g. classifying somebody as belonging to a ‘high-risk’ group based on lifestyle and genetic make-up or even social class, and treating it as a cause of illness and disease). Disease used to be conceptualised at the level of organs and cells, so that when there is a disease in the heart or the liver, we are simply known as the heart disease patient, or liver disease patient, etc. However, today’s risks and **diseases are** conceptualised at the level of genes and molecules, which are the **codes from which our biological identity is constituted**. As noted by Clarke et al., **health policy is no longer about problem-solving** (i.e., patients visits the physicians with a physical symptoms, with clear test results and unambiguous diagnosis, followed by treatment that cures the disease by removing the symptoms) **but** more about **problem finding** (i.e. patients are tested and classified by risks, for instance, high cholesterol, too skinny, too fat, etc).107 In other words, physical condition becomes a disease to be treated. Thus, it is not difficult to see that selling disease and commodifying health are basically two sides of the same coin. Therefore, the notion of ‘safe space’ in terms of our understanding of Carol’s environmental illness becomes an encapsulation of what biomedicine (and even environmentalists and alternative medicine) are preoccupied with today – that of bodies and space. Peter Donning, the Wrenwood guru, in his welcoming speech to the new ‘long-timers’, made the following statements: ‘what you’re seeing outside is a reflection of what you feel from within,’ and, ‘I’ve stopped reading the papers. I’ve stopped watching the news on TV…I’ve seen their fatalistic, negative attitude and I’ve finally realised once and for all, I don’t need it. So I transform that negative stimulus into something that will not do harm to me.’ The sole reason why Donning calls Wrenwood an ‘environmentally safe place’ is due to his belief that how he feels in his head can directly or indirectly influence his organs (especially his immune system) to behave in a certain way. In other words, within this space, safety is ensured – it is only you and your thinking that is hazardous to your health. Once again, it shows that the spaces and the bodies that inhabit or travel within these spaces have become the primary concern for health maintenance. Film critics like Roddy Reid remarks that Safe is about the experience of our bodies understood as sites of struggle between medical discourses, health-care practices, pathogens, and visual inscriptions108. It is a struggle because we are most disturbed by the opacity of the environment and the ‘unfathomable mystery’ of the body. With the body and the surrounding disappearing into the internal psychological space, one’s past and history have become an alternative form of toxin where repressed dark memories are dug up and turned into an enemy. With new enemy, de-toxification can then begin in yet another form of speech to cleanse the body ‘system’ in the name of ‘self-love.’ However, such promise of speech and self-knowledge is just as groundless as the belief that a fruit diet Carol is on can cleanse the body of the toxins one cannot avoid taking in everyday. The more transparent our body and space is, the easier for surveillance, so that barriers can be set; risks can be assessed. **We are**, in effect, **living as the Boy in the Bubble**, or in Jean Baudrillard’s own words, it is ‘a transparent envelope in which we have taken refuge and where we remain, bereft of everything yet overprotected, **doomed to artificial immunity**, continual transfusions and, at the slightest contact with the world outside, instant death.’109 As a result, the proliferating health product and alternative treatment, in cooperation with the transnational pharmaceutical industry, has now made even high-cholesterol and osteoporosis a disease. Consequently, we are self-conscious of the level of cholesterol in what we eat; the level of pollutants in the air we breathe and the water we drink. But how much transparency is transparent enough? In order to see and know what is doing harm to our bodies, we are **obsessed with information**, and one of the examples would be labels on food packages. Borrowing again from Baudrillard’s idea of ‘absolute communication’ in which the ultra-rapid circulation of signs is operating so fast for the sole reason that it never passes via the mediation of meaning, we may also understand body and health as contaminated by the same sign-circulation process: meat is bad, vegetables are good; city air is polluted, country air is more healthy. The **transparency** of food products **makes us feel safe**, at the same time such transparency corresponds to the pervasiveness of our body which made us believe that we are vulnerable to the invisible killers such as germs, chemical compounds and smoke, and that makes us ‘un-safe’. This conflict illustrates nicely the paradox of the Freudian pleasure principle, which Slavoj Zizek sarcastically remarks: You have a society which is ostensibly oriented toward pure pleasure, but you pay for it through a whole series of "you can't." The hidden prohibitions: eat whatever you want, but beware of fat and cholesterol; smoke, but beware of nicotine; sex, but safe sex. Yet the ultimate consequence of this pleasure principle is that **everything is prohibited** in a way; you can't smoke: there's nicotine; you can't eat: there's fat; you can't have sex: you'll get sick. So this is a kind of everyday confirmation of the Lacanian paradox.111 These are all telling us that nothing is safe. At first glance, it is no wonder why the Wrenwood Centre is a ‘perfect safe space’ – it is toxin-free: no exhaust, no aerosol, no fumes – our desire for transparency has landed us into a vacuum that is also known as a sanatorium. There is finally no prohibition – because it is ubiquitous, it seems like safety is found in this nostalgia afforded by this pre-modern space. However, after all external aggressions are eliminated by a place like Wrenwood; the body has become the Other and become its own internal virulence: Carol’s reaction appears to have been alleviated at Wrenwood but she is becoming more visibly sick as evidenced by her lesions and swollen eyes. In the final scene, Carol succumbs to Wrenwood’s preaching about self-love, and starts to practise saying ‘I love you’ in front of the mirror. However, there is no reconciliation between the utterance and the mirrored image,112 instead, it is more like one more letting down by speech and knowledge, uncovering the same emptiness within the inner psychic realm in which she attempts to create protection. Her facial expression remains bland and vacuous, and all we can see is the Carol that is metamorphosing into ‘the other.’ The sentence ‘I love you’ carries no weight in it because what is there to refer to in a vacuum that is now within and around her? She has not yet become the ‘other’ but we do not have the chance to see this metamorphoses completed as the film ends with a black-out, leaving us in this permanent stage of disease with Carol and with her image in the mirror. Medical sociologist Deborah Lupton argues that due to our dependence on rationality and individualism which is the legacy of Western societies ever since the Enlightenment, together with “**the turn to biomedicine** and science **as** the ultimate **weapons** **against** illness, **disease** and premature death have **generated** **discourses** and practices **which** tend to **deny the fragility** and mortality **of the human body**.”113 But are we really as innately fragile as we think we are? In our attempt to create a safe environment, we are setting up more and more barriers against risks such as toxins and pollutants that are the natural basis of the industrial, modernised society. Yet at the same time, we are **letting our bodies** become **increasingly vulnerable** because bodies are, too, a transparent, porous entity. In such transparent space where everything is made visible, and our visual world has required us to by-pass the mediation of consciousness and meaning, disease soon becomes the only escape(ade) for us to let our natural defence system, i.e. our antibodies, fight against virulence, the same way Carol runs away from her well-protected middle class home in a Californian suburban valley to find salvation in a sanatorium in a New Mexican desert – an excursion on Carol’s part that she is actively doing something about her unknown, undetermined illness . However, there is no escape; just as there is no outside to our environment, nor is there an alternative outside to the existing system into which we can adventure. Outside the Bubble means instant death, thus, there can only be Bubble after Bubble. The same goes for the audience, if watching Safe is a process of immersing ourselves into a world of unknown, unforeseeable environmental risks, a threatened sense of safety and partial knowledge, we are also destined to reach a vacuum with Carol where every last bit of materiality in our environmental space is made to disappear (through speech and discourse on risk and surveillance) into a vacuum where there is no more ‘other’. Disease becomes dis-ease when there are no longer any barriers to put up against anything except the vacuous self that can only be pacified by a self-resistance against an imagined ‘other’114. However, we should also take into consideration the fact that the (female, suffering) body is not just an abstracted object belonging always to someone else, which means also the clinical gaze. The body is also what phenomenologist Vivian Sobchack so forcefully argues, in her collection of essays on the body and illness entitled Carnal Thoughts, that it is also a lived body as ‘objective subject’ and the ‘subjective object,’ with materialised capacities and the agency to make sense of, to feel, both ourselves and the others. She also points out that embodiment is never ‘a priori to historical and cultural existence.’115 Sobchack’s perspective on the lived body shows that suffering is part of our capacities to make sense of, and to feel the body, and therefore, should be taken as a part of life, but it is also something that high technological intervention and our expanding scientific knowledge base would like to deny. What we subsequently have is what Arthur Kleinman calls ‘the facile expectations that psychotherapy and psychopharmacology can relieve residual pain and suffering. In this respect, the culture of biomedicine, which does not value the core illness experience at the same level as the diagnosis and treatment of disease pathology, conspires with the popular culture to treat death as the enemy’ especially for the chronically ill and people suffering from cancer. In Medicine as Culture, Lupton draws from the way medicine is experienced, perceived and socially constructed to provide different theoretical perspectives on the socio-cultural dimension of medicine, illness, and the body. She comments that scientific medicine is merely disillusionment. According to her, ‘the construction of the medical practitioner as omnipotent inevitably leads to disappointment and disillusionment when things go wrong […] there are few explanations that can provide meaning to the [unexpected happenings].’117 Part of the disillusionment also comes from our increasing dependence upon biomedicine (the use of biotechnologies, geneticization, nanoscience, genetic engineering, etc), and we respond by idealizing the physicians as the final saviour.118 While diseases like cancer and chronic illness are today’s worst fear among the ageing population, Jean Baudrillard finds **medicine the real culprit for** the cause of their **incurability**, as he tells us: ‘[**medicine**] **treats cancer or AIDS** **as** if they were **conventional** illnesses, **when** in fact **they are** illnesses **generated by** the **very success of** prophylaxis and **medicine**, illnesses bred of the disappearance of illnesses, of elimination of pathogenic forms.’119 By conventional illness, it means the kind of illness that is believed to be caused by pathogens-bacteria or biochemical imbalance; its symptoms are common enough to be dealt with by conventional treatments – ones that are done by scientific tests for diagnosis and medications and surgery are the key methods of treatment. The problem with treating ‘unconventional’ illnesses the ‘conventional’ way is that when you have somebody like Safe’s Carol in the Safe Room, it is simply denying her physical experience and regarding her as an object – by placing it somewhere safe in the hope that it can become well again through regular monitoring and examination, and elimination of all other invading pathogenic forms. However, environmental illness is not like tuberculosis or liver disease, where the patient can travel to a mountainous area to breathe cleaner air to relieve his/her symptoms, or to have a liver transplant to replace the ailing one. Patients with a disease of an organ can seek help externally, for example, by changing one’s living environment or eating habits, or even taking medicine in order to heal; or in some cases, have the organ replaced or removed surgically, as in the case of cancer. Environmental illness, on the other hand, is not a disease of the organ. It affects the organs but it is not organ-specific. One cannot say that it is the organ that has failed so that there are symptoms, rather, it is something that has gone wrong with the body’s system and it is manifested through the body symptomatically. Environmental illness cannot look to the external for help, for it is not a conventional, scientifically defined disease by traditional Western medicine. This makes way for an easy shift of focus from the body to the soul, especially when the disease is believed to be caused by the mind, or ‘psychological weaknesses’ – the way we tend to explain and understand Carol’s sickness. The idea of the shift from the suffering of the body to the suffering of the mind resonates with the classical study of punishment and the prisoner’s body in Foucault’s Discipline and Punish. During the 18th century when La Mettrie first published Man the Machine, the human body was understood as the materialist reduction of the soul and there was an emphasis of the body as ‘docile’, as Foucault himself writes after La Metrrie: ‘The classical age discovered the body as object and target of power. It is easy enough to find signs of the attention then paid to the body – to the body that is manipulated, shaped, trained, which obeys, responds, becomes skilful and increases its forces.’120 Because of the need to exert control and power over the people that are being governed ‘without the slightest detail escaping [Napoleon’s] attention’, rigorous discipline had to be imposed under his reign, and from here on, Foucault believes that discipline has to proceed from the ‘distribution of individuals in space’, as he explains: ‘Discipline sometimes requires enclosure, the specification of a place heterogeneous to all others and closed in upon itself. It is the protected place of disciplinary monotony.’ 121 Let us now perceive the environment as such a ‘disciplinary space.’

#### The WTO is a tool of liberal governance – the idea of “global solidarity” or that “each nation’s interests are entwined with the interests of every other” is the cruel optimism of liberalism.

Negri 4, Antonio. "Multitude: war and democracy in the age of Empire." Multitudes 4 (2004): 107-117. (Prof. Romance Studies at Duke, and Antonio)//Elmer

At a second level we find that nation-states provide a more substantial notion of global governance, which introduces stronger elements of au­thority. Bilateral and **multilateral trade agreements** between and among nation-states **are** one **way in which** relations of **authority** and force are **codified** and institutionalized on a higher, more general level. Interna­tional trade agreements have long existed, but now they are tending to create truly global forms of authority. The World Trade Organization (**WTO**) **is** perhaps the most visible example of such a global institution. The WTO is a real **forum for** the **global aristocracy**, in which we see ex­pressed clearly all the antagonisms and contradictions among nation-­states, including their conflicting interests, their unequal powers, and their tendency to **align** along **north-south divisions**. This second level is the realm in which we can recognize most clearly the interregnum halfway on the path from national and international law to global or **imperial** law, where a new **global governance** is **supported by** a vast array of **legal au­thorities**, **normative systems**, **and procedures**. In the contradictory new global economic order that is emerging through international agreements, there are woven together both globalizing tendencies and resurgent na­tionalist elements, both liberal proposals and self-interested perversions of liberal ideals, both regional political solidarities and neocolonial operations of commercial and financial domination. We can recognize the resurgent economic nationalism, for example, in the way the most powerful countries impose protectionist measures as soon as an important sector of their own national economy, such as steel production or agriculture, is affected ad­versely by global markets. The self-interested perversions of liberal ideals can be seen in the way that antitrust laws, adopted by the most dominant countries, aimed at defending competition in the national economy are weakened and subverted in order to allow monopoly practices and destroy competition on the international level. With regard to financial domina­tion, one need only look at the restrictive monetary policies imposed on various regions, such as those dictated by the euro in Eastern Europe and by the Latin American currency boards that link national currencies to the dollar. Despite the coexistence of these contradictory elements, the tendency toward the formation of a global economic order is irreversible. Precisely in this regard, some scholars have recognized that the transformations of sov­ereignty imposed by globalization have given rise not to a simple subtrac­tion of power from the nation-states but rather a global sovereignty that is more "complex. "86

#### Liberal Governance produces Endless War through a biopolitics of security that culminates in extinction.

Evans 16, Brad. "Liberal Violence: From the Benjaminian Divine to the Angels of History." Theory & Event 19.1 (2016). (a senior lecturer in international relations at the School of Sociology, Politics & International Studies)//Elmer

Liberal War as Divine Violence Despite universal claims to peaceful co-habitation, **liberal regimes** have been compelled to **make war on whatever threatens it** 40 . This is why the liberal account of freedom has depended upon a lethal principle, which discursively **wrapped in** the **language of** rights, **security** and justice, inaugurated planetary state of warfare and siege. It has promoted an account of freedom that, in the process of taking hold of the problem of the planetary life of political subjects, linked human potentiality to the possibility of its ruination. If liberal violence has then produced a necessary lethal corollary in its mission to foster the peace and prosperity of the species in order to alleviate unnecessary suffering; so it has also needed to foster a belief in the necessity of violence in the name of that suffering and vulnerability to which it continually stakes a claim. The Liberal wars of the past two decades in particular have revealed a number of defining principles41 . Aside from relying upon technological supremacy and universal claims to truth, they have been overwhelmingly **driven by** a **bio-political imperative**, which has displaced concerns with Sovereign integrities with forms of violence carried out **in the name of an endangered humanity**. In this regard, they have destroyed the Westphalia pretence, seeing the catastrophes of our global age in fact as a condition of possibility to further the liberal will to rule. Since incorporation in this setting has proceed on the basis that all life should necessarily be included within its strategic orbit, the veritable evisceration of any sense of “the outside” (as conceived in terms of its political imaginary) has led to the **blurring of all** conventional **demarcations** between friends/enemies, citizens/soldiers, times of war/times of peace. What is more, as life itself became increasingly central to questions of security, issues of development as broadly conceived would no longer be regarded as peripheral to the war effort. It would in fact become a central motif as most notably articulated in the strategic mantras “War by Other means” and “War for Hearts and Minds”. Not only would this point to new forms of de-politicisation which, less about Schmittean exceptionalism, were more explicable in terms of the fundamental political and social transformation of societies. It would also lead to the production of violent subjects, as the recourse to violence became sure testament to a conception of humanity realised through the wars fought in its name. **Liberal violence**, in other words, proved to be **unbounded**, **unlimited** and without conventional Sovereign warrant – namely revealing of the fundamental principles of what Benjamin once elected to term “the divine”. Diagnosing the liberal wars of the past two decades as a form of divine violence offers a more disturbing reading of the violence of the liberal encounter. If the violence of political realism, at least in theory, appreciated the value of limits and boundaries, what seems to define the lethality of liberal freedom has been a commitment to war without boundaries, hence limitless. As Dillon and Julian Reid acutely observed: [L]iberal peacemaking is lethal. Its violence a necessary corollary of the aporetic character of its mission to foster the peace and prosperity of the species ... There is, then, a martial face to liberal peace. The liberal way of rule is contoured by the liberal way of war ... Liberalism is therefore **obliged to** **exercise** **a** **strategic calculus of necessary killing**, in the course of which calculus ought to be able to say how much killing is enough... [However] it has no better way of saying how much killing is enough, once it starts killing to make life live, than does the geopolitical strategic calculus of necessary killing’42 . This brings us to Steven Pinker’s Better Angels of Our Nature43 . Reworking the well-rehearsed liberal peace thesis, for Pinker, the reason we have become less warlike today can be account for in terms of our liberal maturity. Leaving aside the evident theological undertones to Pinker’s work, along with the numerous empirical flaws in his thesis, his not so original thesis at least accredits its all too Euro-centric sources of inspiration on matters of civility: ‘The reason so many violent institutions succumbed within so short a span of time was that the arguments that slew them belong to a coherent philosophy that emerged during the Age of Reason and the Enlightenment. The ideas of thinkers like Hobbes, Spinoza, Descartes, Locke, David Hume, Mary Astell, Kant, Beccaria, Smith, Mary Wollstonecraft, Madison, Jefferson, Hamilton and John Stuart Mill coalesced into a worldview that we can call Enlightenment humanism’. John Gray has been rightly suspicious of the entire project and claims being made here: The idea that a new world can be constructed through the rational application of force is peculiarly modern, animating ideas of revolutionary war and pedagogic terror that feature in an influential tradition of radical Enlightenment thinking. Downplaying this tradition is extremely important for Pinker. Along with liberal humanists everywhere, he regards the core of the Enlightenment as a commitment to rationality. The fact that prominent Enlightenment figures have favoured violence as an instrument of social transformation is—to put it mildly—inconvenient... No doubt we have become less violent in some ways. But it is easy for liberal humanists to pass over the respects in which civilisation has retreated. Pinker is no exception. Just as he writes off mass killing in developing countries as evidence of backwardness without enquiring whether it might be linked in some way to peace in the developed world, he celebrates “re-civilisation”... without much concern for those who pay the price of the re-civilising process44 . Gray showed his evident concerns here with the promissory nature of liberal violence. Indeed, what he elsewhere terms the violence of the liberal missionary, reposes Nietzsche’s further instance that ‘god is dead and man has killed him’ with a devastating humanistic critique45 . Such violence, in the end, however has proved to be politically, ethically and economically narcissistic. Just as liberal advocates in the zones of crises now increasingly find themselves operating within fortified protectorates as part of a great separation from the world46 , this has been matched, albeit it ways that initially appear disconnected, by new forms of violence which also takes place almost exclusively at a distance. Indeed, as liberal actors increasingly give up on the idea that the world may be transformed for the better, new modalities of violence are emerging which seem to be more logically in fitting with the new politics of catastrophe that increasingly defines our terrifyingly normal times. As the promise of violence and catastrophe now appears inescapable, **insecurity** is becoming **normalised**, dystopian realism becoming the prevailing imaginaries for political rule, and once cited claims to emancipation, unending progress and lasting security for peoples all but abandoned47 . The politics of catastrophe and its relationship to “end of times” narratives adds another layer to our theological enquiry. As Jacob Taubes once noted48 , there is perhaps something theologically different at work here between the pre-modern apocalyptic movements and the catastrophic reasoning now defining the contemporary moment. For all their nihilism and monotheistic servitude, at least the apocalyptic movements of yesteryear could imagine a better world than already existed. There is therefore a vast difference between the subjects which names its disaster ‘apocalypse’ to that which reads disaster in terms of ‘catastrophe.’49 Unlike apocalypse, there is no beyond the catastrophic. Its mediation on the “end of times” is already fated. Catastrophe denies political transformation. It demands instead a forced partaking in a world that is deemed to be insecure unto the end. The upshot being, as all things become the source of endangerment, the human becomes the source of our veritable undoing. Angels of History Every war produces its casualties. Some of these stand out in terms of the sheer body count. The horror of mass warfare reduced to the most banal forms of inhuman quantification. Others, no less important, are its political and philosophical losses. What is increasingly clear is that the past two decades of liberal warfare, punctured but not initially determined by the tragedy of the events of September 11th 2001, ultimately put the very concept of war into question. The reluctance to officially declare war, even when our involvement in the politically motivated violence appears to be all too evident, now demands a move beyond the dominant frames which have shaped discussions for the past two decades. There is an important caveat to address here. What happened during last decade of the Global Wars on Terror cannot simply be inserted into a post 9/11 frames for analysis. Much of what passed for post 9/11 justice or military excessiveness was slowly maturing in the global borderlands for some considerable time. If there is a departure it needs to be accounted for against this broader post-Cold War humanitarian sensibility through which liberalism absorbed local crises into its political fabric to further condition its violent interventions. It has been all too easy for political and social theorists to put the blame for the violence and atrocities of the Global Wars on Terror onto the shoulders of George Bush and Dick Cheney. This has allowed liberals to appropriate Schmitt as one of their own, hence reducing the entire war effort to the reductionist measures of “US hegemony/exceptionalism”. Such retreats back into state centric models have not only proved unhelpful in terms of questioning the normalization of violence, they have failed to grasp the complexity of war – especially how questions of universality, economy, power and the formation of political subjectivities can be rethought through violent encounters. What is more, the limits of these analyses have been further evidenced by the complete lack of engagement with political theology, failing to recognize the violence of universal ambitions, along with the need to put the contemporary legacy of Kant on trial. Let us not forget Tony Blair and Barack Obama have embodied the liberal Kantian idea of political leadership better than any others throughout the history of liberalism. Any change in liberal fortunes must be understood in this context. We have witnessed in recent times profound changes in the violent cartography of what is a post-Iraq liberal influence. Instead of actively and one-sidedly engaging the world, humanely, violently or otherwise, what we are now encountering are new political arrangements shaped by forms of distancing and technological realignment. Just as liberal agents in the dangerous borderland areas increasingly find themselves operating within fortified protectorates as part of a great separation from the world, this is matched, albeit it ways that initially appear disconnected, by new forms of violence that also take place at a distance. The political and philosophical significance of this should not be underestimated. The technological and strategic confluence between the remote management of populations (notably surveillance) and new forms of violence are indicative of the narcissism of a liberal project that reeks of the worst excesses of technological determinism. Instead of looking with confidence towards a post-liberal commitment to transforming the living conditions of the world of peoples, what has taken its place is an intellectually barren landscape offering no alternative other than to live out our catastrophically fated existence. This is instructive regarding how we might envisage “the end of liberal times” as marked out and defined by this incommensurable sense of planetary siege. It also demands new thinking about the relationship between violence, technology and theology in these uncertain times. The **liberal wars** of the past decade have been **premised on** two notable claims to superiority. The first was premised on the logic of technology where it was assumed that high-tech sophistry could replace the need to suffer casualties. The second was premised upon a more **humanitarian ethos**, which **demanded** **local** knowledge and **engagement with dangerous populations**. The narcissistic violence of the Global War on Terror has put this secondary vision into lasting crises as the violence of liberal encounter has fatefully exposed any universal commitment to rights and justice. Not only did we appear to be the principle authors of violence, thereby challenging the notion that underdevelopment was the true cause of planetary endangerment, populations within liberal societies have lost faith in worldly responsibilities. **Metaphysical hubris displaced by a catastrophic reasoning** that quite literally **places us at the point of extinction**. Violence as such has assumed non-locatable forms as liberalism is coming to terms with the limits to its territorial will to rule. Physically separated from a world it no longer understands, it is now left to the digital and technological recoupment of distance to shape worldly relations with little concern for human relations. Drone violence is particularly revealing of this shift in the liberal worldview. While the first recorded drone strike was authorised by President George Bush in Pakistan on 18th June 2004, it has been during the Presidency of Obama that the use of the technology has become the more favoured method for dealing with recalcitrant elements in the global borderlands. Indeed, it seems, whilst the Bush administration favoured extraordinary rendition, detention and torture, the Obama policy for preventing the growth of inmates in camps such as Guantanamo has been their execution. Hence inhumane torture and barbarity replaced by the more dignified and considerate method of targeted assassination! While debates on drone violence tend to centre on questions its legality, especially whether it fits within established rules of war, little attention is given to the wider political moment and how the violence points to the changing nature of liberal power and its veritable retreat from the world of people. Whereas Bush and Blair launched a one-sided territorial assault on Iraq and Afghanistan in order to promote ‘civilisation’, Obama has waged his war in the deregulated atmospheric shadows where technological supremacy allows for the continuation of uninhibited forms of violence, while addressing the fact that the previous interventions failed by any given measure. Hence, this time, out of respect for public sensibilities a ‘precise’ or ‘surgical’ form of violence is delivered remotely to its distant adversaries. We should not forget however that the technologies, infrastructures and aesthetics essential for remote warfare are essentially the same as those that support the economy and consumer society. Targeted drone-strikes and the advertising that maintains the consumer hothouse essentially rely on the same computer-based technologies and algorithmic sense-making tools. Put another way, how Amazon mechanically predicts your next book purchase is not fundamentally different from how adversarial behavioural patterns are isolated in authoring a signature-kill. Drone technologies are not simply a new tool of warfare that allow for legal or strategic reassessment. They are paradigmatic to the contemporary stages of liberal rule. As technological advance compensates for the “soldiers on the ground” militaristic retreat, they further radicalise the very idea of the territorial front line such that any Schmittean notion of inside/outside appears like some arcane remnant of an out-dated past. What takes its place is an atmospheric gaze that further eviscerates the human. From the perspective of violence, displacing the primacy of human agency from the act of killing represents more than the realisation of the military’s dream of zero casualties. It reveals more fully the dominance of dystopian realism as the defining rationality shaping the political landscape in the here and now, and beyond50 . Demanding then of a new conceptual vocabulary that allows us to critique what happens when violence is neither orderly nor progressive, but is simply tasked to mitigate the demise liberal power and ambition in an uncertain world seems more pressing than ever.

#### Liberalism O/W under prag

#### 1] otherization

#### 2] epistemic biases

#### The Alternative is affirming exilic spaces that breaks out of the Aff’s political imaginary dominated by an apparatus of control – its condo

Vodovnik and Grubacic 15, Ziga, and Andrej Grubacic. "" Yes, we camp!": Democracy in the age of Occupy." Lex Localis 13.3 (2015): 537. (Associate Professor at University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Social Sciences and Andrej, Ph.D., Associate Professor, California Institute of Integral Studies)//Elmer

When Occupy Wall Street initially burst onto the political scene in September 2011, igniting approximately 1400 occupation encampments across the globe – from New York City to Frankfurt, from Ljubljana to the docks of Oakland – it reminded us once again that we should understand social movements as something more than just “orgasms of history” (Fremion 2002). As Raul Zibechi points out, in relation to recent revolutionary movements in Latin America: in the daily life of divided societies, public time dominates the scene; the only audible voices are those of the economic, political and union elites. For this reason the Argentine insurrection was both “unexpected” and “spontaneous” to those elites, who could not hear the underground sounds, despite the fact that for more than a decade the voices had been echoing from below anticipating the approaching event (2010: 213). Social movements are always in the making for a longer time than we can see (or want to see), and we are therefore always surprised by their sudden “eruption.” In this “becoming” even the symbolism is not missing. It was definitely not missing in front of the Ljubljana Stock Exchange (borza), where the vibrations of the 15O protests caused the letter R to fall off the façade of the building, to be replaced only moments later by an improvised letter J. The message of this détournement was clear: borza (stock exchange) was transformed into boj za (struggle for). The Newest Social Movements (NSM), a term coined by Richard J.F. Day (2005) to distinguish the new incarnations of social movements which began to emerge around the turn of the millennium, are assessing political choices – both tactical and strategic – following a new logic. If in the past their actions and choices were organized toward producing effects on the powers that be, today their actions and choices consider the impact on themselves. It is not, therefore, struggle against (boj proti), but increasingly struggle for (boj za). If we are concrete, it is **a struggle for a new “democratized democracy**” which is both plural and inclusive. Although local circumstances, grievances, and idiosyncrasies varied from encampment to encampment, there was nevertheless an overarching context in which the occupations were emerging: the current economic moment, in which **polities and democracy are** being **forced to redefine their** position and **purpose**. The structure of the global economy, based on **Western hegemony** in the interstate system, **appears to be in** a serious **crisis**. However, as many commentators have already pointed out, what Occupy activists shared was more than just the rejection of a particular economic model (cf. Eisenstein in Kennedy, 2012: xiii). Specifically, the **occupations** were not inspired by the narrow economic reductionism and determinism which results in the fetishization of economic exploitation and class antagonisms. Rather, they were **putting** **emphasis on the crisis of** representative **democracy** at global, national, and local levels. Their **tactics highlighted the presence of** **hierarchy and domination** that run throughout all of these levels, and consequently addressed forms of exploitation that may not necessarily have any economic meaning at all. We build on the recent scholarly attention given to the notion of **nonstate spaces,** which we have chosen to call **exilic spaces** (Gray, 2004; Grubacic & O’Hearn, forthcoming) because they **are** populated by communities that voluntarily or involuntarily attempt escape from both state regulation (the focus of much anarchist analysis) and capitalist accumulation (the focus of Marxism). Exilic spaces can be defined as those **areas** of social and economic life **wherein people** and groups **attempt to** **extricate themselves from** **capitalist** economic **processes**, whether by territorial escape or by attempting to build structures that are **independent of** capitalist accumulation and **social control**. This is important because of the centrality of the spatial aspect of occupations – i.e. the idea of occupying public spaces, symbolically proclaiming: “This country is for everyone” (Eisenstein in Kennedy, 2012: xiii). Saskia Sassen (2012) agrees that the question of public space was central for the politics of Occupy, since “**to occupy is to remake**, even if temporarily, territory’s **embedded** and often deeply undemocratic **logics of power**, and to redefine the role of citizens, mostly weakened and fatigued after decades of growing inequality and injustice.” We will return to the exilic politics of Occupy later on, but here we can point out that, in Bookchin’s (2007) terms, the occupations raised much broader and more important questions related to understanding social change as something that should transcends the standard ways we live, work, make love, and collaborate. The exilic character of occupied spaces was not something that was immediately understood. After the occupation of Zuccotti park and the first encampments of the 15O protests, occupy soon became a buzzword, a hashtag. So much so that the American Dialect Society named it “The Word of the Year” for 2012, while in Germany the term Wutbürger (angry citizen) became the word of the year in the Gesellschaft für deutsche Sprach. But despite the vast amounts of media coverage and books and articles on the various “Occupy” movements, we argue that the movement’s most important political (exilic) aspirations have still not been properly addressed. To some degree we can understand epistemological myopia, since reflecting something so recent and dynamic as Occupy is always an optical challenge par excellence (cf. Appadurai, 2002; Tormey, 2012). As Saul Newman (2014: 94) points out, political theory has to catch up with this new terrain, since it “generally looks for visible, representative identities situated on an ontological field organized by sovereign power; it is concerned with how we are governed, or with the normative principles or constitutive logics upon which political power is founded.” Indeed, we argue that the new politics of Occupation reveals the need for a wider epistemological and methodological transformation. Too many theoretical concepts and political praxes invented by these new unruly subjects are too elusive for traditional disciplines, theories, and epistemologies. Therefore, their analysis must be founded on a new, more flexible epistemology and methodology. Paraphrasing Eduardo Restrepo and Arturo Escobar (2005), such an epistemological transformation calls for a critical awareness of both the larger epistemic and political field in which disciplines have emerged and continue to function, and of the micro-practices and relations of power within and across different locations and traditions of individual disciplines. In our reading of occupations we will follow James C. Scott’s theory of infrapolitics, but with some important modifications. In Scott’s terminology, infrapolitics is “an unobtrusive realm of political struggle” (Scott, 1990: 183) that includes a “wide variety of low-profile forms of resistance that dare not speak in their own name” (ibid., 38). **Infrapolitics** is essentially a strategic form of resistance that subjects must assume under conditions of great peril (ibid., 199). They provide a “**structural underpinning** for more visible political action, not as a substitute, but as its condition” (ibid., 58). We believe that infrapolitics should be understood as a political process articulated on two distinct levels. In it’s “micropolitical” sense, infrapolitics can assist us in highlighting how many aspects of the politics of Occupy were overlooked, or marginalized at best, since, “like infrared rays,” they were “beyond the visible end of the spectrum” (ibid., 201). Michael Greenberg (2012: 271) argues that “occupation presented **politics** not as a set issues but **as a way of being**. It offered a **release from subjectivity.”** For the political Right and Left, advocating real political action means action via political parties, protests or other conventional forms of collective action. They do not find alternative political praxes such as occupations fascinating and tend to dismiss them as: (1) unorganized, unsystematic, and individual; (2) opportunistic and self-indulgent; and (3) lacking in real potential/consequences. Furthermore, their own solutions always imply accommodation with the existing system of domination (Scott, 1985: 292). Following Scott we will try to recuperate “subaltern” aspects of occupations as providing “much of the cultural and structural underpinning of the more visible political action on which our attention has generally been focused” (Scott, 1990: 184). Our suggestion here is that we must shift our attention from the most visible - and consequently the most mediatized - aspects of Occupy to redefinitions of democracy and political membership that lie in the “immense political terrain … between quiescence and revolt” (ibid., 200). On the “macropolitical” level, infrapolitics is a process of producing forms of place-based politics **within cracks** **of the** global capitalist **system**. Infrapolitics of the capitalist world economy describes the effort of breaking from systemic processes of state and capital. It is a process of (self-)organization of relatively autonomous and only partially-incorporated spaces, and the resulting antagonistic relationship which emerges between exilic spaces and the hierarchical organizations of a capitalist world economy. It is also a predictable response to an enduring logic of exit and capture inscribed in the longue duree of historical capitalism. Instead of ruptures and breaks, we see a long-term, large-scale historical process of state making and state breaking, of state formation and state de-formation, of ongoing and uneven incorporation and exilic re-appropriation and recovery. The rise of the global mass assembly movement and the politics of occupation, should be understood in this larger historical context. The purpose of the article is twofold. First, we examine political practice and imagination of Occupation, focusing on redefinitions of democracy as practiced in encampments and squares, where various collectives and movements developed a genuinely new political alternative, and with it also a new understanding of politics that is worked out on a more manageable scale, that is to say, within local communities. We start from the supposition, that in the Occupy Movement we can find the beginning of a trans-local yet truly global network of direct democracy that, in its struggle against social exclusion and the trivialization of citizenship, recuperates an idea of prefiguration and direct democracy. We will explore further Newman’s (2014) suggestion that we should understand Occupy as a distinct form of politics and a new mode of democratic organization, involving the creation of autonomous spaces, rather than a distinct social movement. Finally, we consider the intersection between political/democratic and physical/spatial aspects of occupations. We examine the reaffirmation of spatiality and, with it, a redefinition of political membership as one of the most important aspects of the politics of Occupation.2 In a way, the movements of Occupation initiated a paradigm shift in political thought and practice, especially if we bear in mind various debates on global/cosmopolitan democracy from the mid-90s onwards. We argue that Occupy imagined new concepts of political participation constituted beyond the nation-state, sometimes in opposition to it, but always transcending the parochial forms of political membership that make global connectedness impossible. 2 Becoming political We can agree with the thesis that two main discourses can be found in contemporary discussions on democracy. The first understands democracy as a word whose roots lie in Ancient Greece and whose etymological origin poses new dilemmas, while the second examines democracy as an egalitarian decisionmaking procedure and everyday practice which in antiquity gradually became labeled “democratic” (Graeber, 2007: 340).3 The results of this dualism are “diachronous” discussions on democracy and, ultimately, a series of debates on the level of democracy of institutions and institutes which by their very essence counterpoise democratic practices. These and similar misconceptions also gave rise to a hegemonic notion of democracy which only recuperated the word while rejecting its contents. What was genuinely new about Occupy, were in fact distinct forms of politics, involving the creation of autonomous spaces. Occupy should be, according to Newman, seen **not** so much as **a movement**, **but** “as a **tactic**, a **practice**, a mode of organisation and **rhizomatic mobilization**, one that spreads spontaneously throughout the nerve centres of capitalist societies, involving the occupation and transformation of physical, symbolic and social spaces.” (Newman, 2014: 94; cf Smucker, 2012). Whether in the US, Slovenia, or elsewhere, what we have seen is a collective re-imagining of democracy. Since one of the key features of Occupy was the link between political struggle and its objectives—“the means are the goals in the making”— it is not surprising that the theory and practice of prefigurative politics developed as a new democratic spirit of encampment. Prefiguration means an attempt to use methods of political organization and action to create the future in the present, or at least, to some extent, foresee and manifest the social changes we are striving for. As explained by Tim Jordan (2002), it means acting in the present the ways we would want to act in the future, or acting as if the world in which we aspire to live has already materialized. It is a brief attempt to delegitimize the existing system and to build up its alternative from the bottom up. In this perspective, the encampments were not important only for their physical disposition, but rather as symbolic spaces for acting out new political structures and norms. For Peter Marcuse (2012: 16), an occupied square offers “a physical presence, a locational identity, a place that can be identified with the movement that visitors can come to, and where adherents can meet. It also has a second function: it is an opportunity to try out different forms of self-governance, the management of a space and, particularly if the physical occupation is overnight and continuous, of living together.”

#### alt solves case –

## 3

#### Sustained Biden influence flips Manchin and Sinema which passes infra – concentrated effort is critical.

Bolton 9/15 [Brackets Original. ALEXANDER BOLTON (AB in Philosophy from Princeton University, Staff writer at The Hill).” Democrats hope Biden can flip Manchin and Sinema”. 09/15/21. Accessed 9/16/21. <https://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/572506-democrats-hope-biden-can-flip-manchin-and-sinema?rl=1> //Xu]

President Biden met face to face with Sens. Joe Manchin (D-W.Va.) and Kyrsten Sinema (D-Ariz.) on Wednesday, stepping up his involvement in the effort to unify congressional Democrats behind a $3.5 trillion spending package. Democratic lawmakers are hailing Biden’s personal attention as a game-changing development at a critical moment. “The ones who are negotiating publicly, I think it is fair to say, they’re the toughest votes to get,” Sen. Tim Kaine (D-Va.) said of Manchin and Sinema. “This is really important for the Biden administration, and so it’s all on deck,” he added of the efforts to get the two holdouts to support the reconciliation package. Kaine noted that Biden “has a strong personal relationship with Manchin.” “Both Joe and Kyrsten really want [Biden] to be a successful president. (A) It’s good for the country. (B) It’s good for their states. (C) It’s good for their own politics,” Kaine added. While the White House has been involved in negotiations with Senate Majority Leader Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.) and Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) over the size and scope of the spending package, Biden’s recent public appearances have focused more on the U.S. withdrawal from Afghanistan, the rise in COVID-19 cases, and wildfires and floods in various parts of the country. White House press secretary Jen Psaki on Wednesday said the president knows the Manchin and Sinema meetings were only the start of negotiations with moderate Democrats. “The president certainly believes they’ll be ongoing discussions, not that there’s necessarily going to be a conclusion out of those today,” she told reporters at the White House. John LaBombard, a spokesman for Sinema, called Wednesday’s meeting “productive.” “Kyrsten is continuing to work in good faith with her colleagues and President Biden as this legislation develops,” he said. Biden, who spent decades in the Senate before becoming vice president, met separately with each senator in an apparent effort to maximize the effect of his personal involvement. He sat down with Sinema around 10 a.m. and met with Manchin several hours later. Manchin was spotted walking into the White House at 5:30 p.m. wearing a blue blazer, gray slacks and rubber-soled boat shoes. The prospects of passing the entire $3.5 trillion human infrastructure package suffered several setbacks in recent weeks, largely because of Manchin and Sinema. The two senators raised red flags about the bill’s price tag, and Manchin has criticized specific provisions such as the Clean Electricity Performance Program, which would provide $150 billion to steer electric utilities away from coal to renewable energy sources. Manchin called for a “strategic pause” on the bill in a Wall Street Journal op-ed with the headline “Why I won’t support spending another $3.5 trillion.” “Ignoring the fiscal consequences of our policy choices will create a disastrous future for the next generation of Americans,” he warned. Sinema has also threatened to vote against a $3.5 trillion spending bill, although she has pledged to “work in good faith to develop this legislation with my colleagues and the administration.” On the other side of the Capitol, Democrats suffered a blow with the drafting of their reconciliation bill Wednesday when three Democrats on the House Energy and Commerce Committee — Reps. Kurt Schrader (Ore.), Scott Peters (Calif.) and Kathleen Rice (N.Y.) — voted against legislation to lower drug prices, which Democratic leaders are counting on as a key pay-for in the larger package. Separately, Rep. Stephanie Murphy (D-Fla.) sided with Republicans in the House Ways and Means Committee vote Wednesday to advance that panel's portion of the reconciliation package, citing concerns about tax provisions. Manchin reiterated his concerns with the massive reconciliation bill at a Senate Democratic caucus lunch meeting on Tuesday. The remarks, however, fell flat with colleagues. “We’re frustrated with Manchin,” said one Democratic senator who attended the meeting. “It’s not like the president has shunned him. He’s reached out to Manchin before. Nobody’s gotten more attention from the White House.” The lawmaker said Manchin reprised some of the arguments he made in The Wall Street Journal and during appearances on CNN’s “State of the Union” and NBC’s “Meet the Press” over the weekend. “The $64,000 question is, what’s his endgame? We don’t know,” said the lawmaker. “Part of what Biden is trying to figure out is, where does Manchin want to go?” On Tuesday, Manchin questioned the need to spend $150 billion on weaning power plants away from coal when there are already plenty of private sector incentives to do so. “Why should we be paying utilities to do what they’re already doing? We’re transitioning. Fifty percent of our power came from coal in the year 2000. Twenty years later, [it’s] 19 percent,” he told reporters. Manchin also said he’s concerned about the reliability of depending entirely on renewable energy sources. Senate Democrats have grown frustrated over what they view as Manchin’s “vague” demands for what the reconciliation bill should look like. They also didn’t appreciate the double-barreled criticism in his Wall Street Journal op-ed that caught them off guard during the August recess. “I was on a [congressional delegation trip] overseas with several colleagues when we read the op-ed, and we were aghast,” said another Democratic senator, who requested anonymity to discuss the internal dynamics of the Democratic caucus. Manchin said fellow Democrats were “rushing” to spend another $3.5 trillion without fully understanding the potential ramifications of their actions. He warned that the bill could leave the federal government short of resources to respond to the pandemic if it gets worse because of viral mutations or if there’s another financial crisis like the Great Recession. While some Democratic strategists have privately complained that Biden has not made more of a public sales pitch on behalf of his human infrastructure proposal, Democratic senators say they’re happy the president has let the talks play out on Capitol Hill without much interference. Kaine said “it’s really important” that Biden is now getting personally involved in trying to persuade Manchin and Sinema get on board with the reconciliation bill. “There’s a time when you get involved, and now is that time,” he said. Kaine said Biden’s intervention in negotiations over the bipartisan $1 trillion infrastructure bill that passed the Senate last month was “very critical” to keeping it on track.

#### WTO IP negotiations divert Biden time and effort – decks effective policy action.

Lawder 5/6 [David Lawder (Trade and Global Economy Correspondent @ Reuters). “WTO vaccine waiver could take months to negotiate, faces opposition -experts”. Reuters. May 6, 2021. Accessed 9/16/21. <https://www.reuters.com/world/china/vaccine-ip-waiver-could-take-months-wto-negotiate-experts-2021-05-06/> //Xu]

World Trade Organization (WTO) negotiations on a waiver of intellectual property rights for COVID-19 vaccines could take months - provided they can overcome significant opposition from some member countries, trade experts say. The talks also are likely to focus on a waiver that is significantly narrower in scope and shorter in duration than the one initially proposed by India and South Africa last October. Prior to U.S. President Joe Biden's decision on Wednesday to back talks for a vaccine waiver, the two countries confirmed their intention to draft a new proposal after seven months of opposition. WTO Director General Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala welcomed Biden's move on Thursday and urged talks on the new plan to start as soon as possible. "The world is watching and people are dying," she added. "At a minimum, it's going to be a month or two," Clete Willems, a former Trump White House trade official who previously worked at the U.S. trade mission to the WTO in Geneva, said of any possible agreement. "Right now, there is no proposal on the table that would waive the TRIPS agreement simply for vaccines," he said, referring to the WTO's agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights that governs the transfer of property like movie rights or vaccine-manufacturing specifics. A more realistic goal may be completion of the agreement in time for the WTO's next ministerial conference, scheduled for Nov. 30 through Dec. 3, said Willems, now a trade partner at the Akin Gump law firm in Washington. That would give vaccine producers more time to boost global supplies which could help contain the virus and ease pressure for the waiver. The initial IP waiver proposal by India and South Africa last October included vaccines, treatments, diagnostic kits, ventilators, protective gear and other products needed to battle the COVID-19 pandemic. HAGGLING OVER WORDS U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) Katherine Tai said on Wednesday that she will pursue "text-based negotiations" on the WTO waiver, the standard but tedious process for trade deal talks. Negotiators trade texts with their preferred wording, then try to find common ground, sometimes leaving blank spaces for thorny differences to be settled by politicians. All 164 WTO member countries must reach consent on such decisions, with any one member able to block them. "Those negotiations will take time given the consensus-based nature of the institution and the complexity of the issues involved," Tai said in a statement that tamped down expectations for a quick deal. While Biden's backing adds political impetus to get a deal done, Germany, home to Pfizer's (PFE.N) vaccine partner BioNTech SE , on Thursday rejected the waiver proposal. A German government spokeswoman said that manufacturing capacity was the main constraint on supplies, not intellectual property. European Commission president Ursula von der Leyen said only that she was willing to discuss Biden's plans. U.S. companies, which strive to influence the USTR's trade negotiations, are already mobilizing to try to ensure the WTO talks lead to a waiver that is as narrowly targeted as possible. "This is a mitigation effort. We're aiming to make it less bad than it otherwise would be," one industry source said.

#### Infra solves existential climate change – spill-over.

USA Today 7-20 [7-20-2021 "Climate change is at 'code red' status for the planet, and inaction is no longer an option". Editorial Board @ USA Today. Accessed 8/30/21. <https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/todaysdebate/2021/07/20/climate-change-biden-infrastructure-bill-good-start/7877118002/> //Recut Xu from Elmer]

Not long ago, climate change for many Americans was like a distant bell. News of starving polar bears or melting glaciers was tragic and disturbing, but other worldly. Not any more. Top climate scientists from around the world warned of a "code red for humanity" in a report issued Monday that says severe, human-caused global warming is become unassailable. Proof of the findings by the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change is a now a factor of daily life. Due to intense heat waves and drought, 107 wildfires – including the largest ever in California – are now raging across the West, consuming 2.3 million acres. Earlier this summer, hundreds of people died in unprecedented triple-digit heat in Oregon, Washington and western Canada, when a "heat dome" of enormous proportions settled over the region for days. Some victims brought by stretcher into crowded hospital wards had body temperatures so high, their nervous systems had shut down. People collapsed trying to make their way to cooling shelters. Heat-trapping greenhouse gases Scientists say the event was almost certainly made worse and more intransigent by human-caused climate change. They attribute it to a combination of warming Arctic temperatures and a growing accumulation of heat-trapping greenhouse gases caused by the burning of fossil fuels. The consequences of what mankind has done to the atmosphere are now inescapable. Periods of extreme heat are projected to double in the lower 48 states by 2100. Heat deaths are far outpacing every other form of weather killer in a 30-year average. A persistent megadrought in America's West continues to create tinder-dry conditions that augur another devastating wildfire season. And scientists say warming oceans are fueling ever more powerful storms, evidenced by Elsa and the early arrival of hurricane season this year. Increasingly severe weather is causing an estimated $100 billion in damage to the United States every year. "It is honestly surreal to see your projections manifesting themselves in real time, with all the suffering that accompanies them. It is heartbreaking," said climate scientist Katharine Hayhoe. Rising seas from global warming Investigators are still trying to determine what led to the collapse of a Miami-area condominium that left more than 100 dead or missing. But one concerning factor is the corrosive effect on reinforced steel structures of encroaching saltwater, made worse in Florida by a foot of rising seas from global warming since the 1900s. The clock is ticking for planet Earth. While the U.N. report concludes some level of severe climate change is now unavoidable, there is still a window of time when far more catastrophic events can be mitigated. But mankind must act soon to curb the release of heat-trapping gases. Global temperature has risen nearly 2 degrees Fahrenheit since the pre-industrial era of the late 19th century. Scientists warn that in a decade, it could surpass a 2.7-degree increase. That's enough warming to cause catastrophic climate changes. After a brief decline in global greenhouse gas emissions during the pandemic, pollution is on the rise. Years that could have been devoted to addressing the crisis were wasted during a feckless period of inaction by the Trump administration. Congress must act Joe Biden won the presidency promising broad new policies to cut America's greenhouse gas emissions. But Congress needs to act on those ideas this year. Democrats cannot risk losing narrow control of one or both chambers of Congress in the 2022 elections to a Republican Party too long resistant to meaningful action on the climate. So what's at issue? A trillion dollar infrastructure bill negotiated between Biden and a group of centrist senators (including 10 Republicans) is a start. In addition to repairing bridges, roads and rails, it would improve access by the nation's power infrastructure to renewable energy sources, cap millions of abandoned oil and gas wells spewing greenhouse gases, and harden structures against climate change. It also offers tax credits for the purchase of electric vehicles and funds the construction of charging stations. (The nation's largest source of climate pollution are gas-powered vehicles.) Senate approval could come very soon. Much more is needed if the nation is going to reach Biden's necessary goal of cutting U.S. climate pollution in half from 2005 levels by 2030. His ideas worth considering include a federal clean electricity standard for utilities, federal investments and tax credits to promote renewable energy, and tens of billions of dollars in clean energy research and development, including into ways of extracting greenhouse gases from the skies. Another idea worth considering is a fully refundable carbon tax. The vehicle for these additional proposals would be a second infrastructure bill. And if Republicans balk at the cost of such vital investment, Biden is rightly proposing to pass this package through a process known as budget reconciliation, which allows bills to clear the Senate with a simple majority vote. These are drastic legislative steps. But drastic times call for them. And when Biden attends a U.N. climate conference in November, he can use American progress on climate change as a mean of persuading others to follow our lead. Further delay is not an option.

#### Infrastructure solves side constraints on pragmatism.

Germán 21 [Lourdes Germán (Senior Advisor to Kresge’s Social Investment Practice, American Cities Program and Detroit Program. She will begin serving on the faculty at Harvard University this fall. She will be a featured speaker at the Spending for Equity webinar with the Shared Prosperity Partnership). “Q&A: As infrastructure bill inches toward a vote, finance expert breaks down potential impacts”. Kresge. August 31, 2021. Accessed 8/31/21. <https://kresge.org/news-views/qa-as-infrastructure-bill-inches-toward-a-vote-finance-expert-breaks-down-potential-impacts/> //Xu]

A: Early information on the Senate-approved bill suggests several ways that the final bill, if approved, could enable historic investments in well-documented areas of need in low-income communities. One example: COVID-19 created unexpected shifts toward remote work and remote learning, which laid bare America’s digital divide. Experts report that African American families are 9% less likely to have high-speed internet than their white peers, Latino Americans are 15% less likely, and 35% of individuals living on Tribal lands lack access to broadband service. At present, the infrastructure bill would channel $65 billion of investment to expand access to reliable high-speed internet via investment in broadband infrastructure. In addition, the bill also endeavors to make significant planned investments in transformative projects to reconnect communities that have been historically divided by inequitable transportation infrastructure via targeted funding for the interstate highway systems and transportation and would enable the funding of climate-focused investment in underserved areas with vulnerable communities. These, and other investments the bill stands to enable in education and other social infrastructure, would be significant in meeting the needs of low-income communities. Q: We often partner with CDFIs in our community development work. What could be included in the bill that could impact how CDFIs can do their work? A: Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) are a critically important avenue for capital to flow to underrepresented communities, and I think that they stand to benefit from expanded federal funding. As one example, many CDFIs operate loan funds that seek to expand affordable housing by providing funding to real estate developers who approach community investment and development activities with a socially responsible lens. Those efforts can play an important role in the provision of affordable housing and essential related public infrastructure projects in cities. If the infrastructure bill expands funding and financing avenues for housing and other social sector projects, it is important for leaders at the federal level to be cognizant of the fact that states and local governments are not the only actors who can make such investments but that CDFIs can also play an important complementary role, working alongside governments, particularly in underserved communities.