# ND21 – AC – Larp :D

## 1AC

### Framing

#### Pain and pleasure are intrinsically valuable – to justify beyond that runs into moral incoherence. Moen 16,

**Moen 16** [Ole Martin Moen, Research Fellow in Philosophy at University of Oslo “An Argument for Hedonism” Journal of Value Inquiry (Springer), 50 (2) 2016: 267–281] SJDI // RCT by JPark

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.

#### Thus, the standard is maximizing expected well-being. Its act-util Independently prefer:

#### [1] Actor specificity A] government policies benefit some and harm others so the only non-arbitrary way to prioritize is by helping the most amount of people B] No act-omission distinction – governments have to yes/no policies which means that choosing to omit is an act itself so side constraints freeze action C] Actor specificity comes first because different agents have different obligations. Takes out calc indicts because they’re empirically denied.

#### [2] It’s a lexical pre-requisite. Threats to bodily security and life preclude the ability for moral actors to act upon other moral theories since they are in a constant state of crisis that inhibit the ideal moral conditions which other theories presuppose.

#### [3] Extinction hijacks and side constrains the framework – it always and comes first

**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

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 only. There is a tendency 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. It is enough for my claim that there is moral agreement in the relevant sense if, at least given certain empirical claims about what future lives would most likely be like, **all minimally plausible moral views would converge on the conclusion that we should try to save the world**. While there are some non-crazy views that place significantly greater moral weight on avoiding suffering than on promoting happiness, for reasons others have offered (and for independent reasons I won’t get into here unless requested to), they nonetheless seem to be fairly implausible views. And even if things did not go well for our ancestors, I am optimistic that they will overall go fantastically well for our descendants, if we allow them to. I suspect that most of us alive today – at least those of us not suffering from extreme illness or poverty – have lives that are well worth living, and that things will continue to improve. Derek Parfit, whose work has emphasized future generations as well as agreement in ethics, described our situation clearly and accurately: “We live during the hinge of history. Given the scientific and technological discoveries of the last two centuries, the world has never changed as fast. We shall soon have even greater powers to transform, not only our surroundings, but ourselves and our successors. If we act wisely in the next few centuries, humanity will survive its most dangerous and decisive period. Our descendants could, if necessary, go elsewhere, spreading through this galaxy…. Our descendants might, I believe, make the further future very good. But that good future may also depend in part on us. If our selfish recklessness ends human history, we would be acting very wrongly.” (From chapter 36 of On What Matters)

**We need to act now – warming is here and action now is key - Wells 19:**

(David Wallace-Wells is a National Fellow with the New America Foundation and is a deputy editor of New York Magazine, 2-4-2019, “The Cautious Case for Climate Optimism Believing in a comfortable future for our planet probably means some giant carbon-sucking machines,” New York Magazine, http://nymag.com/intelligencer/2019/02/book-excerpt-the-uninhabitable-earth-david-wallace-wells.html)

**It’s not too late**. In fact, **it never will be**. Whatever you may have read over the past year — as extreme weather brought a global heat wave and unprecedented wildfires burned through 1.6 million California acres and newspaper headlines declared, “Climate Change Is Here” — **global warming is not binary**. It is not a matter of “yes” or “no,” not a question of “fucked” or “not.” Instead, **it is a problem that gets worse** over time **the longer we produce greenhouse gas, and** can be made **better if we choose to stop**. Which means that no matter how hot it gets, no matter how fully climate change transforms the planet and the way we live on it, it will always be the case that **the next decade could contain more warming, and** more **suffering, or less warming and** less **suffering**. Just **how much is up to us**, and always will be.

A century and a half after the greenhouse effect was first identified, and a few decades since climate denial and misinformation began muddying our sense of what scientists do know, we are left with a set of predictions that can appear falsifiable — about global temperatures and sea-level rise and even hurricane frequency and wildfire volume. And there are, it is true, feedback loops in the climate system that we do not yet perfectly understand and dynamic processes that remain mysterious. But to the extent that we live today under clouds of uncertainty about the future of climate change, those clouds are, overwhelmingly, not projections of collective ignorance about the natural world but of blindness about the human one, and they can be dispersed by human action. The question of how bad things will get is not, actually, a test of the science; it is a bet on human activity. How much will we do to forestall disaster and how quickly?

These are the disconcerting, contradictory lessons of global warming, which counsels both human humility and human grandiosity, each drawn from the same perception of peril. There’s a name for those who hold the fate of the world in their hands, as we do — gods. But for the moment, at least, many of us seem inclined to run from that responsibility rather than embrace it. Or even admit we see it, though it sits in front of us as plainly as a steering wheel. That climate change is all-enveloping means that it targets us all and that we must all share in the responsibility so we do not all share in the suffering — at least not share in so suffocatingly much of it.

Since I first began writing about climate a few years ago, I’ve been asked often whether I see any reason for optimism. The thing is, I am optimistic. But optimism is always a matter of perspective, and mine is this: No one wants to believe disaster is coming, but those who look, do. **At about two degrees** Celsius of warming, just one degree north of where we are today, some of the planet’s **ice sheets are expected to begin** their **collapse,** eventually **bringing**, over centuries, perhaps **as much as 50 feet of sea-level rise**. In the meantime, **major cities in the equatorial band** of the planet **will become unlivable**. There will be, it has been estimated, 32 times as many extreme heat waves in India, and even in the northern latitudes, heat waves will kill thousands each summer. **Given only conventional methods of decarbonization** (replacing dirty-energy sources like coal and oil with clean ones like wind and solar), **this is probably** our **best-case** scenario. It is also what is called — so often nowadays the phrase numbs the lips — “catastrophic warming.” A representative from the Marshall Islands spoke for many of the world’s island nations when he used another word to describe the meaning of two degrees: genocide.

You do not need to contemplate worst-case scenarios to be alarmed; this best-case scenario is alarming enough. **Two degrees would be terrible, but it’s better than three, at which point Southern Europe would be in permanent drought, African droughts would last five years** on average, and the areas burned annually by wildfires in the United States could quadruple, or worse, from last year’s million-plus acres. **And three degrees is much better than four**, at which point six natural disasters could strike a single community simultaneously; **the number of climate refugees**, already in the millions, **could grow** tenfold, or **20-fold**, or more; and, globally, damages from warming could reach $600 trillion — about double all the wealth that exists in the world today. We are on track for more warming still — just above four degrees by 2100, the U.N. estimates. So, if optimism is always a matter of perspective, the possibility of four degrees shapes mine.

#### Status Quo’s climate activism isn’t enough – the plan is key - Cook 19:

Cook, John, et al. [John Cook is a research assistant professor at the Center for Climate Change Communication at George Mason University ] “Editorial: Public Will, Activism and Climate Change.” Frontiers, Frontiers, 12 Nov. 2019, www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fcomm.2019.00072/full. //LHP MS

**While individual behavior** changes **can reduce emissions**, their **contributions are insufficient** **in the absence of large-scale,** systemic **change**. **For emissions to rapidly fall,** the **policies**, regulations, and technologies that shape our energy use **must change in** ways that promote sustainable lifestyles **and remove existing barriers to sustainable actions**. These **changes are more likely to be made if citizens and consumers demand them**. Thus, **collective action by citizens and consumers is** sorely **needed** **to prod legislators and corporations into enacting** the **policies** and practices **that can stabilize the climate.**

#### We control uniqueness – climate strikes aren’t protected - Campbell 19:

Campbell, Alexia Fernández. “5 Questions about Labor Strikes That You Were Too Embarrassed to Ask.” Vox, 20 Sept. 2019, [www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2019/9/20/20873867/worker-strike-walkout-stoppage-firing-job. //](http://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/2019/9/20/20873867/worker-strike-walkout-stoppage-firing-job.%20//)

One law professor pointed out that a walkout to protest government inaction [on] climate change, for example, is not protected under federal labor law because it’s not related to an employee’s working conditions. But if workers walk out because they believe their employer (like, say, Amazon) isn’t doing enough to make the company sustainable, then that would likely be a protected work stoppage.

**Links**

#### First, big tech has to listen to their employees – that necessitates concrete change – Baca and Greene 19:

Marie C. Baca, Jay Greene. “Amazon, Google, Other Tech Employees Protest in Support of Climate Action.” The Washington Post, WP Company, 20 Sept. 2019, [www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2019/09/20/amazon-google-other-tech-employees-protest-support-climate-action/](http://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2019/09/20/amazon-google-other-tech-employees-protest-support-climate-action/). // LHP PS

**Thousands of workers at the nation’s largest tech companies were expected to walk off their jobs Friday to urge industry and world leaders to address climate change more aggressively, part of a larger wave of demonstrations expected to draw millions of people across the globe. The group Amazon Employees for Climate Justice said more than 1,800 Amazon employees in 25 cities pledged to walk out. Google Workers for Action on Climate**[**tweeted**](https://twitter.com/GoogleWAC/status/1174683351480815616)**that they expected about 700 workers to strike as of Thursday. Similar groups that said they were representing employees at Microsoft, Facebook, Twitter, Square and other major tech companies tweeted that they also expected significant numbers of employees to walk out.** **Hundreds gathered Friday outside Amazon’s headquarters in downtown Seattle as part of the demonstrations.** **Participants chanted, “Hey hey, ho ho, fossil fuels have got to go” and held signs with messages such as “Amazon, Let’s lead.** **Zero Emissions By 2030.”** Rebecca Sheppard, 28, works in Amazon’s air, science and tech group to make the online retail giant’s planes more efficient. She said she thought about quitting last year over her concerns about Amazon’s massive carbon footprint, but colleagues discouraged her, saying she could effect change by sticking around. “We’ve just got to double down,” she said about employee efforts to produce change. The strike is being held in advance of a [Monday climate summit](https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-environment/us-takes-a-low-profile-as-nations-gather-to-debate-steps-to-combat-climate-change/2019/09/19/2008d92c-d8c7-11e9-ac63-3016711543fe_story.html?itid=lk_inline_manual_13) at the United Nations. U.N. Secretary-General António Guterres has insisted that instead of bringing “fancy speeches” with them to the meeting, the countries must offer concrete commitments such as reaching net zero emissions by 2050 or eliminating the construction of coal-fired power plants. **Strike organizers expected more than 1,000 events to take place in the United States alone.** The tech workers joined [millions of youths](https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-environment/2019/09/20/millions-youth-around-world-are-striking-friday-climate-action/?itid=lk_inline_manual_17) from more than 150 countries around the world who skipped school Friday in solidarity with the movement. Among them was 16-year-old Swedish climate activist [Greta Thunberg](https://www.washingtonpost.com/climate-environment/2019/09/13/teen-activist-greta-thunberg-takes-her-youth-climate-campaign-washington/?itid=lk_inline_manual_17), who has given a speech before the United Nations, met with political and business leaders, and has been nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize for her work. **Facebook released a statement Friday expressing its support for employees who chose to walk out and said that the company is “building sustainability into our operations as well as engaging the global community on this important issue with our products.”** Microsoft declined to comment. Google, Twitter and Square were not immediately available to comment. At Amazon, the walkout came a day after Bezos announced a “[Climate Pledge](https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2019/09/19/amazon-ceo-jeff-bezos-announces-new-climate-pledge-ahead-employee-protests/?itid=lk_inline_manual_22)” that would require signatories to meet the goals of the Paris climate agreement a decade early. The pledge also requires regular measuring and reporting of emissions, as well as obtaining net zero carbon across businesses by 2040, among other stipulations. Bezos said Amazon would be the first company to sign the pledge. Critics, who have long claimed Amazon does little to offset the emissions it produces, say the pact lacks transparency and standardized rules for what is measured and reported. Amazon declined to comment on the walkout. **In Seattle, workers who walked out held signs that opposed deals with gas and oil companies.** The crowd booed when a speaker noted that Amazon funds climate-denying lobbyists. **There was also a speaker from Google. Sarah Read, a user experience researcher with Prime Video, said Thursday’s announcement shows employees are having an impact.** She said she believes the Climate Pact is related to an employee-sponsored shareholder resolution that would have required the company create a plan to address climate change, a resolution that failed in spring.

#### Warming causes extinction - Xu 17:

Yangyang Xu 17, Assistant Professor of Atmospheric Sciences at Texas A&M University; and Veerabhadran Ramanathan, Distinguished Professor of Atmospheric and Climate Sciences at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, University of California, San Diego, 9/26/17, “Well below 2 °C: Mitigation strategies for avoiding dangerous to catastrophic climate changes,” Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America, Vol. 114, No. 39, p. 10315-10323

We are proposing the following extension to the DAI risk categorization: warming greater than 1.5 °C as “dangerous”; warming greater than 3 °C as “catastrophic?”; and warming in excess of 5 °C as “unknown??,” with the understanding that changes of this magnitude, not experienced in the last 20+ million years, pose **existential threats** to a majority of the population. The question mark denotes the subjective nature of our deduction and the fact that catastrophe can strike at even lower warming levels. The justifications for the proposed extension to risk categorization are given below. From the IPCC burning embers diagram and from the language of the Paris Agreement, we infer that the DAI begins at warming greater than 1.5 °C. Our criteria for extending the risk category beyond DAI include the potential risks of climate change to the physical climate system, the ecosystem, human health, and **species extinction**. Let us first consider the category of catastrophic (3 to 5 °C warming). The first major concern is the issue of **tipping points**. Several studies (48, 49) have concluded that 3 to 5 °C global warming is likely to be the threshold for tipping points such as the collapse of the western Antarctic ice sheet, shutdown of deep water circulation in the North Atlantic, dieback of Amazon rainforests as well as boreal forests, and collapse of the West African monsoon, among others. While natural scientists refer to these as **abrupt and irreversible climate changes**, economists refer to them as catastrophic events (49). Warming of such magnitudes also has **catastrophic human health effects**. Many recent studies (50, 51) have focused on the direct influence of extreme events such as heat waves on public health by evaluating exposure to heat stress and hyperthermia. It has been estimated that the likelihood of extreme events (defined as 3-sigma events), including heat waves, has increased 10-fold in the recent decades (52). Human beings are extremely sensitive to heat stress. For example, the 2013 European heat wave led to about 70,000 premature mortalities (53). The major finding of a recent study (51) is that, currently, about 13.6% of land area with a population of 30.6% is exposed to deadly heat. The authors of that study defined deadly heat as exceeding a threshold of temperature as well as humidity. The thresholds were determined from numerous heat wave events and data for mortalities attributed to heat waves. According to this study, a 2 °C warming would double the land area subject to deadly heat and expose 48% of the population. A 4 °C warming by 2100 would subject 47% of the land area and almost 74% of the world population to deadly heat, which could pose **existential risks to humans** and mammals alike unless massive adaptation measures are implemented, such as providing air conditioning to the entire population or a massive relocation of most of the population to safer climates. Climate risks can vary markedly depending on the socioeconomic status and culture of the population, and so we must take up the question of “dangerous to whom?” (54). Our discussion in this study is focused more on people and not on the ecosystem, and even with this limited scope, there are multitudes of categories of people. We will focus on the poorest 3 billion people living mostly in tropical rural areas, who are still relying on 18th-century technologies for meeting basic needs such as cooking and heating. Their contribution to CO2 pollution is roughly 5% compared with the 50% contribution by the wealthiest 1 billion (55). This bottom 3 billion population comprises mostly subsistent farmers, whose livelihood will be severely impacted, if not destroyed, with a one- to five-year megadrought, heat waves, or heavy floods; for those among the bottom 3 billion of the world’s population who are living in coastal areas, a 1- to 2-m rise in sea level (likely with a warming in excess of 3 °C) poses **existential threat** if they do not relocate or migrate. It has been estimated that several hundred million people would be subject to famine with warming in excess of 4 °C (54). However, there has essentially been no discussion on warming beyond 5 °C. Climate change-induced species extinction is one major concern with warming of such large magnitudes (>5 °C). The current rate of loss of species is ∼1,000-fold the historical rate, due largely to habitat destruction. At this rate, about 25% of species are in danger of extinction in the coming decades (56). Global warming of 6 °C or more (accompanied by increase in ocean acidity due to increased CO2) can act as a major force multiplier and **expose** as much as **90% of species to** the dangers of **extinction** (57). The bodily harms combined with climate change-forced species destruction, biodiversity loss, and threats to water and food security, as summarized recently (58), motivated us to categorize warming beyond 5 °C as unknown??, implying the possibility of **existential threats**. Fig. 2 displays these three risk categorizations (vertical dashed lines).

### ADV 2 – Democracy

#### Covid pushed back democracy – it’s on the brink – also proves solvency - Taylor 20:

Taylor, Adam. “Analysis | Democracies Are Backsliding amid the Coronavirus Pandemic.” The Washington Post, WP Company, 2 Oct. 2020, www.washingtonpost.com/world/2020/10/02/democracy-coronavirus-freedom-house/. // LHP PS

**Democracies around the world are suffering amid the global pandemic.**Th**e coronavirus has exposed inequalities in health care and weaknesses in economic safety nets; elite apathy and government mismanagement have helped push the global death toll**[**over 1 million**](https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2020/world/coronavirus-deaths-1-million/?itid=lk_inline_manual_3)**.** At the same time, **the virus has thrown up obstacles to voting in person and other forms of political participation that might fight these problems.** **Elected officials who are willing to lean into demagoguery have sought to exploit the pandemic for their own purposes — and in many cases, they may be succeeding.** A **new report released**[**Friday by Freedom House**](https://freedomhouse.org/report/special-report/2020/democracy-under-lockdown)**, a nongovernmental, nonpartisan advocacy organization** established in 1941, **found that since the start of the pandemic, the state of democracy and human rights has worsened in at least 80 countries out of 192 nations surveyed**. The report is based on an anonymous online survey of 398 experts and the work of Freedom House’s own analysts. It presents a troubling paradox: **The pandemic has made the case for political participation more urgent, while at the same time disrupting democratic institutions that enable that participation. Protests are one example. Freedom House identified significant political protests in at least 90 countries since the outbreak began. In many cases, the virus has helped to trigger action over long-standing grievances — protesters in authoritarian Belarus**, for example, **were brought out by both a disputed election and a lackluster and opaque pandemic response**. But, concurrently, **restrictions on protests have spread dramatically during this time of unrest**: Freedom House counted **158 countries where some form of new legislation has restricted protest during the pandemic, including some established democracies**. This week in Israel, where demonstrations against Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu have continued for months, the country’s parliament approved lockdown plans that would effectively end protests. “More than a campaign against the pandemic, this is a campaign against dissent,” the journalist [Gershom Gorenberg wrote](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2020/09/30/israel-second-lockdown-netanyahu-protests/?itid=lk_inline_manual_14). **The problem is acute in developing nations or countries where democracy was already under threat.** As a respondent to the Freedom House survey said of Turkey, the pandemic “was used as an excuse for the already oppressive government to do things that it has long planned to do, but had not been able to.” **In countries such as Egypt, Zimbabwe and Cambodia, governments were reported to be using emergency powers to crack down on political opposition**. “The judiciary has become a puppet of the executive branch,” a respondent said of Serbia, noting that trials were “conducted via video link, without the presence of defense attorneys.” **Experts from 66 countries said the virus had “led to a proliferation of disinformation coming from the government” in their nation. Assessing accurate information had become more difficult due to crackdowns on freedom of speech** **— in at least 91 of 192 countries studied, there were restrictions on news media.** **In nine countries, national elections have been disrupted by the pandemic.** **Freedom House points to places like Sri Lanka, where an election planned for April was postponed, effectively allowing President Gotabaya Rajapaksa to rule without an opposition-held legislature for months**. When that election was finally held in August, Rajapaksa’s party **“won the elections in a landslide, adding to fears that he and his brother, former president and current prime minister Mahinda Rajapaksa, would consolidate power and build an authoritarian regime,**” Freedom House noted. The U.S. presidential election is given its own section in the report. “Many experts have expressed doubt that local election authorities across the country are prepared for the November elections, citing increased demand for voting by mail, likely staffing shortfalls, and last-minute changes to electoral rules,” the report states. The Trump administration created **“a fog of misinformation” amid the pandemic**, Freedom House asserts, while **the country’s death toll rose to the highest total in the world, at**[**over 200,000**](https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2020/national/200000-death-toll-coronavirus/?itid=lk_inline_manual_26)**.** Such concerns increased after a divisive performance by President Trump at a presidential debate on Tuesday. “**Our motherland of democracy has gone down a dangerous path,**” Stephan Bierling, an international politics professor at the University of Regensburg in Germany, told [my colleagues](https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2020/09/30/trump-biden-debate-global-reaction-us-decline/?itid=lk_inline_manual_28), referring to the United States.

#### The plan stabilizes democracy –

#### [1] Participation – the plan fosters civic participation – that’s vital to democracy – McElwee 15:

McElwee, Sean. “How Unions Boost Democratic Participation.” The American Prospect, 16 Sept. 2015, prospect.org/labor/unions-boost-democratic-participation/. // LHP PS

Labor organizer Helen Marot once observed, "**The labor unions are group efforts in the direction of democracy."** What she meant is that more than simply vehicles for the economic interests of workers (which they certainly are), **labor unions also foster civic participation for workers**. And nowhere is this clearer than in voter turnout, which has suffered in recent years along with union membership. Indeed, **new data from the Census Bureau and a new analysis of American National Election Studies data support the case that unions' declining influence has also deeply harmed democracy**. In 2014, voter turnout was abysmal, even for a midterm. Census data suggest that only 41.9 percent of the citizen population over 18 turned out to vote. However, as I note in my new Demos report [Why Voting Matters](http://www.demos.org/publication/why-voting-matters), there are dispiriting gaps in turnout across class, race, and age. **To examine how unions might affect policy, I performed a new analysis of both Census Bureau and American National Election Studies data. The data below, from the 2014 election, show the differences in voter turnout between union and non-union workers (the sample only includes individuals who were employed, and does not include self-employed workers). While only 39 percent of non-union workers voted in 2014, fully 52 percent of union workers did.** As part of ongoing research, James Feigenbaum, an economics PhD candidate at Harvard, ran a regression using American National Election Studies data suggesting that **union members are about 4 percentage points more likely to vote and 3 points more likely to register (after controlling for demographic factors) and individuals living in a union household are 2.5 points more likely to vote and register.** This is largely [in line with the earlier estimates](https://www.nber.org/papers/w9992.pdf) of Richard Freeman. **Other research has found an even stronger turnout effect from unions**. **Daniel Stegmueller and Michael Becher**[**find that**](http://daniel-stegmueller.com/files/StegmuellerBecher_UnionTurnout_web.pdf)**after applying numerous demographic controls**, **union members are 10 points more likely to vote.** What's particularly important is **that unions boost turnout among low- and middle-income individuals. In a 2006 study, political scientists Jan Leighley and Jonathan Nagler**[**found that**](http://www.nyu.edu/gsas/dept/politics/faculty/nagler/leighley_nagler_unions06.pdf)**, "the decline in union membership since 1964 has affected the aggregate turnout of both low and middle-income individuals more than the aggregate turnout of high-income individuals."** In 2014, the gap between unions and non-union workers shrunk at the highest rung of the income ladder. **There was a 15-point gap among those earning less than $25,000 (40 percent turnout for union workers, and 25 percent turnout for non-union workers).** Among those earning more than $100,000, the gap was far smaller (49 percent for non-union workers and 52 percent for union workers). Individuals living in union households are also more progressive than those in non-union households. I examined 2012 ANES data **and find that union households aren't largely different from non-union households on many issues regarding government spending, but they are more likely to have voted for Obama, identify as Democratic, and support a robust role for the government in reducing income inequality**. **When looking at union members specifically, the gaps become slightly larger.** More upscale union members are far more progressive than their non-union counterparts. Non-union households with an income above $60,000 oppose government intervention to reduce inequality by 11 points, with 32.2 percent in favor and 43.4 percent against. But richer union households support government intervention, with 42.5 percent in favor and 29.9 percent opposed. As Richard B. Freeman has pointed out, "union members are more likely to vote for a Democrat for the House or Presidency than demographically comparable nonunion voters." He similarly finds that "unionism moves members to the left of where they would be given their socioeconomic status," in line with the data I examined from 2012. A [2013 study](http://sf.oxfordjournals.org/content/91/3/895.abstract) by Jasmine Kerrissey and Evan Schofer finds that **union members are not only more likely to vote, but also more likely to belong to other associations, and to protest.** **They also find that these effects are strongest among people with lower levels of education, suggesting that unions may help mobilize the least politically active groups**. **A**[**recent study**](http://www.researchgate.net/publication/276378628_What_Accounts_for_the_Union_Member_Advantage_in_Voter_Turnout_Evidence_from_the_European_Union_2002-2008?ev=pubfeed_top&_iepl%5BviewId%5D=55ef22e95cd9e3370e8b45ef&_iepl%5Bordinal%5D=1&_iepl%5Bcontexts%5D%5B0%5D=literature&_iepl%5BinteractionType%5D=publicationView)**of European countries finds union members vote more and identifies those aspects of union membership that contribute to the higher turnout. Other studies support the idea that civic participation creates a feedback loop that leads** **to higher voting rates**. Another factor is that union members make more money, and higher income is correlated with voting behavior. **Finally, union members are encouraged by peers and the union to engage in politics, which also contributes to higher levels of turnout.** It's not entirely surprising that politicians who savage unions often share a similar contempt for the right to vote. **Democracy in the workplace leads to democracy more broadly throughout society.** W**orkers with more democratic workplaces are more likely to democratically engage in in society.** Further, when unions and progressives demonstrate that government can benefit them, Americans are more likely to want to participate in decision-making. For all these reasons, unions play a unique and indispensable role in the progressive project. As Larry Summers, certainly not a leftist, [recently argued](http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonkblog/wp/2015/09/11/larry-summers-stronger-unions-must-be-part-of-the-national-agenda/), "the weakness of unions leaves a broad swath of the middle class largely unrepresented in the political process."

#### Extinction – multiple warrants - **Kendall-Taylor 16**:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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