# 1NC vs. Catonsville AT

## Offs

### T

#### 1] Interp – Unjust refers to a negative action – it means contrary.

Black Laws No Date "What is Unjust?" <https://thelawdictionary.org/unjust/> //Elmer

Contrary to right and justice, or to the enjoyment of his rights by another, or to the standards of conduct furnished by the laws.

#### 2] Violation – The Aff is a positive action – it creates a new concept for Space i.e. the leasing of orbit by the UN.

#### 3] Standards –

#### a] Precision – they eliminate a topical stasis point, justifying the aff talking about anything which explodes neg prep burden and nullifies any engagement. Nowhere does the resolution prescribe active action, so there’s no basis for reasonable negative ground – hold the line.

#### b] Limits – making the topic bi-directional explodes predictability – it means that Aff’s can both increase non-exist property regimes in space AND decrease appropriation by private actors – makes the topic untenable.

#### c] Ground – wrecks Neg Generics – we can’t say appropriation good since the 1AC can create new views on Outer Space Property Rights that circumvent our Links since they can say UN leasing approach solves.

#### 4] TVA – just defend that megaconstellation appropriation is bad with no leasing.

#### a] Fairness is a voter – debate’s a game that requires fair evaluation and rigorous testing – otherwise we can’t test if your arguments are true

#### b] Topicality is Drop the Debater – it’s a fundamental baseline for debate-ability and we can’t get new 2nr da’s so the debate’s permanently skewed.

#### c] Use Competing Interps – 1] Topicality is a yes/no question, you can’t be reasonably topical and 2] Reasonability invites arbitrary judge intervention and a race to the bottom of questionable argumentation.

#### d] No RVI’s - 1] Forces the 1NC to go all-in on Theory which kills substance education, 2] Encourages Baiting since the 1AC will purposely be abusive, and 3] Illogical – you shouldn’t win for not being abusive, which is a litmus test for argumentation

### K

#### You’re either with the state or against it – the aff’s method of reform through the state cements loyalty and enables the state to test the possible limits of violence, Laursen 21,

Laursen, E., 2021. The Operating System An Anarchist Theory of the Modern State The Operating System An Anarchist Theory of the Modern State. pg 64-68

**Who “controls” the operating system**? It’s conceived, designed, and built by human beings; once the operating system is launched, however, it begins to mold the individuals who refine and build on it, channeling their efforts and directing them to expand in certain directions according to the guidelines and constraints it imposes. Future developers and designers all have the same job, essentially, however different their specific projects: to build and reproduce the operating system. **A vast array of individuals and social strata, from capitalists and intellectuals to engineers and clerks and laborers, are all engaged in the same task: to build and reproduce the State**. To turn a well-worn assertion on its head, **if you’re not against the State, you’re for it.** Similarly, **the State** is conceived and set in motion by humans; once it is established, it **absorbs**, **regulates, and extracts value from more and more of society’s activities.** The Italian anarchist Errico Malatesta, who generally used “government” and “state” interchangeably, put it this way: “The government, though springing from the bourgeoisie and its servant and protector, tends, as with every servant and every protector, to achieve its own emancipation and to dominate whoever it protects.” 22 While their views differ on matters like war, peace, social welfare, and race relations, a vast array of individuals and social strata, from capitalists and intellectuals to engineers and clerks and laborers, are all engaged in the same task: to build and reproduce the State. To turn a well-worn assertion on its head, if you’re not against the State, you’re for it. In the tech world, users are often described as a community; that community and the machine are increasingly regarded as one. Likewise, **in the modern world, society (including civil society) and the State are increasingly perceived as one; the State is a vast simulacrum of the entire society, touching, altering, molding, imprinting its preferred pattern onto every dimension and aspect of our being.** According to Marx, the State constitutes “the illusory common interest” of a society—also known as the “public interest.” 23 Anthropologist David Graeber wrote, “States are the ‘imaginary totality’ par excellence,” a way of “imagining social order as something one can get a grip on, models of control.” 24 **When a new element or variable enters the social mix, the State must absorb it, assimilate it, and set rules for how it will operate as a component of the State**. **While laws, regulations, and customs are sometimes seen as straitjackets, they also confer identity and status within the orbit of the State** (as a soldier, a police officer, a licensed driver, a consumer with good credit, a head of household). **These designations cement our loyalty to the State or at least our acquiescence to it, but they also exploit our fear that without the State, we would have no identity. The better it is at replacing reality, the more anxiety the simulacrum creates; if it disappears, won’t the corresponding reality disappear as well?** If the State disintegrates, surely society will also? **Therefore, almost nothing is held to be more important than the security and preservation of the State: a doctrine called “reasons of State.**” Without the State, any discussion of social or economic justice, cultural expression, health and physical well- being is irrelevant. That’s one reason why so much of traditional narrative history, particularly from European and American sources, is really the story of the development of states. There’s something deeply paradoxical about the State as well. While it’s not a “thing,” it works to create a convincing façade of one in the form of buildings, monuments, roads, border checkpoints, and other physical manifestations. There’s nothing organic about a state, but it behaves in some respects like an intelligent being. It’s a human creation and consists of human beings—it’s an idea acted upon—but it behaves according to a logic of its own and molds people, including those in command, as much as they mold it. Its leadership is essentially self-selecting, but it claims to embody a wider community. It’s one and many at the same time, an “it” and a “they.” As a result, the State achieves a double deception: it provides cover for the individuals who build their personal power through it (“reasons of state”) while its leaders—especially conspicuous ones like kings, presidents, party leaders, and corporate chief executives—provide cover by giving it a relatable human face.  **We struggle to work within the State, but it resists fundamental change and remains focused always on preserving itself and extending its reach in every direction**. We also struggle to articulate our understanding of it, as shorthand names like the “system,” the “establishment,” and the “deep state” underscore. But all or most of us know what it is, in outline. When Democratic presidential candidate Joe Biden named Senator Kamala Harris of California as his vice- presidential running mate in 2020, Bill Daley, head of public affairs at Wells Fargo and former chief of staff to President Obama, told the Wall Street Journal , “I think she is a reasonable, rational person who has worked in the system. Is she progressive? Yes. Is she someone who wants to burn the building down? No. I think she wants to strengthen the building.” 25 No one had to be told what “the building” is: it’s government, but it’s also capitalism and the vast edifice of institutions, identities, and livelihoods grouped under those headings. In this book, we call it the State, but scholars and pundits have been studying aspects of it under various conceptual models for a long time. Global systems science, for example, aims to “provide scientific evidence and means to engage into a reflective dialogue to support policy-making and public action and to enable civil society to collectively engage in societal action in response to global challenges” such as “epidemics, finance, cities, the Internet, trade systems.” 26 A veritable cottage industry has grown up within academia in the last couple of decades that studies how complex global societies decline, lose legitimacy, and fall apart. Cambridge University established its Centre for the Study of Existential Risk in 2012 (“we aim to reduce the risk of human extinction or civilizational collapse”), and Princeton University established a high-profile research program in Global Systemic Risk a year later. 27 When we examine this literature closely, we find that “systems” and “societies” are nearly synonymous with the State as we’re defining it. For instance, the Princeton research program’s website tells us that a “massive and accelerating increase in international transactions beginning in the late 1970s” required “the construction of a complex system of global nodes and links providing the channels through which these can flow. The interdependence of massive global interactions and structures has caused systemic risk to increase exponentially in recent times.” Cutting through the jargon, that “complex system of global nodes and links” is the commercial side of the operating system the State molds, embodies, and presides over. When scholars and pundits express concern about the risk of collapse of “systems” or “societies,” then, what they’re really anxious about is the collapse of the State.  **State authority was, of course, founded on physical force, but as it pursued its goals and the society it governed became more complex and sophisticated, legitimacy and acceptance became just as important. The State is a hybrid creature; it exists simultaneously within the community it claims to represent, and over and above that community.** By definition, it’s a more impersonal institution than religion, the family, an ethnic or geographic community, or an economic class. From the beginning, then, the modern State has struggled to define itself in ways that persuade its inhabitants to give it their loyalty, their love, or at least their acceptance. The importance of this has only increased as populations have grown, denser urban environments absorb more people, and capitalist economies themselves become more complex and more difficult to manage.

#### The evocation of common heritage of “mankind” always excludes those who are the constitutive excluded—mechanisms like the aff multilateralism purport to be for the good of common humanity, but they in fact just reinforce the nation-state’s ability to make sovereign decisions over space. Cornum 18,

Cornum, Lou. “Event Horizon.” Real Life Mag, 12 Mar. 2018, https://reallifemag.com/event-horizon/.

The word *pioneer*, usually attached to innovation, is never too far from people like Jeff Bezos or Elon Musk or Peter Thiel. These men’s careers in tech startups, their origins in the digital commerce boom, and their pioneer identities were forged on the electronic frontier. Like pioneers of industry in the colonial expansion of the Americas, these men operate on the knife’s edge of sovereignty as it cuts a path for both state and capital to consolidate power. In space, these men see a chance to loosen further the bonds that still restrain the endless capital they’ve been chasing in their imagined rocket ships. Investors, architects of the financial and material future, have taken to using the term “NewSpace” to refer to the almost accessible ventures of asteroid mining, space shipping, spaceship travel, and other forms of space commerce. Still, there are minor contractual obstacles. **Even at the void’s edge, there is a treaty.** A couple of treaties actually. **Out there the governments still rely on these dusty remnants of the dying beast of nation-state sovereignty and the apparatuses of international relations first created to aid and abet the global distribution of white men’s control. The Outer Space Treaty of 1967, which has a more precise formal name** — Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, Including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies — **may seem surprisingly benevolent. It is sometimes summarized as saying that *nobody can own space*. But while it outlaws national appropriation, it allows incorporation without the state.** In a demotion from the sensual feel of its phrasing, “celestial bodies” become the body politic, managed sites of bans and requirements. While the U.S. did sign the Outer Space Treaty of 1967, it did not sign the 1979 Moon Treaty**,**more formally known as the Agreement Governing the Activities of States on the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies. The Moon Treaty, among other directives, bans any state from claiming sovereignty over any territory of celestial bodies; bans any ownership of any extraterrestrial property by any organization or person, unless that organization is international and governmental; and requires an international regime be set up to ensure safe and orderly development and management of the resources and sharing of the benefits from them. It also bans military activity such as weapons testing or the founding of extraterrestrial military bases (though it’s hard to see U.S. presence anywhere in the stars or on Earth as anything other than militaristic). **Evoking the common heritage of “mankind,” the Moon Treaty could appear a pie-in-the-sky attempt at more equitable relations to land than have been established on Earth since the advent of private property and national borders. But it is of course expressed only in the stop-gap measure of treaties that assign power to states, governments, and resource-management regimes. The power of the treaty is in its possible revoking. In making the decision to sign the treaty or not sign the treaty, the collectives state their unquestioned right to make decisions in space at all. Space is a place where old and new sovereignties, like asteroids desired for mining, are colliding or sometimes colluding. There is a line connecting the Dutch East India Company, the Hudson Bay Company, and SpaceX. These companies begin as corporate endeavors, but then as now the nation-state is sticky: It finds a way to adhere.** Take the case of Luxembourg, a polity that lives on tax loopholes (allowing large corporations to move money in and out of the nation with utmost secrecy and minimal charges) where, as Atossa Araxia Abrahamian [reports for the *Guardian*](https://www.theguardian.com/news/2017/sep/15/luxembourg-tax-haven-privatise-space), private space companies are finding their funding allies for financed trips to the moon, Mars, and the interstellar spots for satellites. The mixing of business and research mixes the money and power hungering of technocrats who don’t just want to own businesses but want people to see their businesses as the shareholders of humanity’s future.In middle school we didn’t have model U.N., but we did have model Earth. For field trips we’d be taken away to Biosphere 2, a site for space-colonization experiments built by Space Biosphere Ventures but owned by Columbia University by the time I visited. In these field trips to the desert outside a town auspiciously named Oracle, we walked around the display vivarium, always being reminded to call it biosphere *two*— biosphere *one* was the earth outside, the one we had momentarily left behind and one day might leave behind for good. That old planet was a past prototype. But the new prototype was itself already a defunct research facility. The closed-system experiment with human subjects had failed twice in the ’90s, and it now rests as one of the many dreams littering the desert of a new world.When a world is new, it creates alongside a space held for the older worlds. This is the drama between what can be brought from before and what will be made anew. It is why Aeneas carried his dying father Anchises on his shoulders out of Troy on his way to found Rome. The traveler always brings baggage. Jeff Bezos would like to be the one who carries that baggage to space or controls the robots and poorly paid temporary laborers who accomplish the carrying. In this supposedly new space, the regimes of inequality will be quite familiar. The space-goers insist it is something called humanity, with the ingrained hierarchical legacies of this category, that will be going.Leaders in industry who have always wanted to be world leaders are now positioning themselves as leaders of outer worlds. Elon Musk makes union busting seem like a cosmic necessity for the continuation of human life. The material and subsequent cultural valorization of certain kinds of work in the tech industry, wherein the “great minds” make all the money and those who maintain the machinery of day-to-day existence are treated like the shit they’re supposed to take, does not end at the stratosphere.Even the more lofty moral considerations of outer-space ethics (e.g., is terraforming ever morally acceptable?) often ignore their fundamental basis in deathly processes still very much situated on Earth. Any outer-space endeavor today or in the near future will be an extension of the life-destroying capacities of capitalists and their colonial countries. On the [Deep Space Industries page](https://deepspaceindustries.com/mining/) for asteroid mining, the exploitation and extraction of minerals is heralded as “an unlimited future for all mankind**.” The endless extension of capitalist accumulation comes with an extension of this delusion of “all mankind.” As if all such projects, the project of humanity itself, has not always been an exclusionary one.** SETI may appear to inhabit a different realm of speculation than that of the grandstanding services-and-commodities pioneers. But its project also follows a willful ignorance about human history and the exclusions that make humanity as a class possible. SETI proponents, much like Musk and his ilk, view themselves at the forefront of a new breakthrough not necessarily of capital but of knowledge. Their sites of expansion are not centered so much on the territories capital requires in order to enclose, privatize, and extract until depletion (though they can be intimately connected, as in the development of the university and research centers as global actors of dispossession), but on sites of encounter. Outer-space commerce and funded extraterrestrial contact-seekers operate on and reinforce damaging notions of land, life, and the future that actually hinder the survival of most Earth dwellers rather than provide anything like meaningful hope. Stories of contact are only ever understood as colonial stories. Every inquiry of future contact with extraterrestrial life, from academic and government-funded to amateur and whimsical, relies on the same stale comparisons of colonial conquest. Columbus, of course; Captain James Cook, often. Every episode of the podcast *Making New Worlds: Why Are We Going?*features historical authorities commenting on colonial situations of the past and comparing them to hypothetical situations with extraterrestrials. The topics convened by those who are granted the authority to speak on them are conducted under the tyranny of certain givens, the most persistent and damning of them being contact as conquest.

#### Anarchist revolutions are fragile; they need space apart, space to grow strong – and the process of reading the kritik is one of creating revolutionary spaces outside the state, Bevensee

Bevensee, Emmi. No Date. “Anarchists Need Space Because We’re Fighting in All Directions.” <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/emmi-bevensee-anarchists-need-space-because-we-re-fighting-in-all-directions>

**Anarchism requires creative experimentation and needs all the spaces possible to achieve its goals.** Because these spaces and projects are vulnerable we need all the defenses with the least tradeoffs we can muster. **Space-friendly anarchism offers us new horizons** to create, explore, and practice while simultaneously generating new and more defensible dynamics for our radical networks. **Whether as roaming insurrectionary pirates or horizontalist communes, we must make a case for space-centric anarchism** and then work through the intricacies of its ethics and practical requirements. Our Vulnerability is Our Strength. **Our enemies**, especially tankies, **always gloat over the fact that anarchists always get slaughtered**. “An anarchist revolution has never succeeded!” **Regardless of this misunderstanding of longstanding anarchist projects and societies, and the backhanded glorification of brutalist authoritarian regimes, they’re right in that it is hard to protect anarchism especially while it blossoms**. **We abhor unnecessary games of domination and the manipulative power plays that they require.** **We shy away from the zero-sum outlook that characterizes most of these so-called “successful revolutions” of the authoritarian communist or corporate capitalist varieties alike. We want to build societies where people don’t have to destroy each other to get their needs met.** We want societies where people have positive freedom not just social contracts with cartels of state and corporate violence. But we don’t just want it. **Anarchists are practical. We dream but we also birth these visions into the world.** We struggle against coercion at every level. It’s exhausting but,to an anarchist, everything is a front in the struggle for positive freedom. We are in constant struggle even if many parts of it just look like love and joy. **We don’t take the simple comfort of picking our battles as a movement even if we prioritize projects individually. For this reason our movements are diversely rich... and vulnerable.** Because we don’t focus on the game of thrones for power we are vulnerable to those that do. Our enemies seek to master the weapons that we rightfully fear. It corrupts them but they get better and better at it. It’s no coincidence that so few anarchist societies have thorough weapons training and the ability to practically defend themselves. **We don’t want to build power. We’d much rather try to build a world where a focus on offensive violence is unnecessary. So even in places where anarchists, or societies that practice anarchist values have found the ability to defend themselves such as Rojava, Spain, and the Zapatista autonomous zones, our physical defense has often either still eventually failed or succeeded because of their relationship with other, often creative, strategies.** But it’s not just monopolies of violence that we’re bad at, it’s also politics in general. We lean extraparlimentary as a movement and often try to build parallel movements outside of the reign of deeply compromised electoral politics. So while we’re building our own infrastructure and ways of doing things, the career politicians who are intimidated by us are always amassing their forces against us whether through the ballot or the police. These examples are just a taste of the ways in which our greatest assets, the very core of what we love, are some of our largest attack vectors. Insurrectionary, Parallel, and Creative Spaces for Experimentation **Because we’re vulnerable on all sides, we need space. In the immediate sense we need a place to meet, virtual or physical. We need to spread out.** **Space can be the abstract and general notion of the distance between two objects or the concrete but expansive area beyond our atmosphere.** The fact that they share a word in English (and many other languages) is itself evocative of what we want. **In our love of outer space, we are actually committing to our love of the path between things. The heart of anarchism is creative experimentation and the interplay between theory and practice. Our attempts at traversing these paths are often delicate**. Our experiments have the advantage of being decentralized and as such generate resilience. You can’t pick off our leaders if we have none. You can’t destroy our movement if it’s completely dynamic and constantly adapting it’s edges and vectors. They attack one point and that point just changes form or gets mimicked somewhere else. We have the power of whack-a-mole. **But that resilient adaptivity alone isn’t enough.** Tankies take this problem and use it to justify authoritarian centralism. “You can’t have a revolution without gulagging the saboteurs and enemies of that revolution! You need domination to create freedom!”Because we recognize the interdependent relationship between ends and means we fundamentally doubt the viability of movements that employ such tradeoffs and search for strategies without them. **Insurrectionary anarchism seeks to create these spaces through creative and stigmergic revolutionary pockets. In the joy of liberation people can experiment with alternative modes of self-organization**. Insurrection carves out the spaces in time and place that allow us to build without the constant attacks and pressing dynamics of power as it is. The longstanding gradualist processes and parallel infrastructures that we’ve been working for in the margins are then able to come in and take roots. We defend these spaces from all sides using a variety of means.

#### The state occasionally subverts capital in the name of stabilizing the overall system. Do not be deceived—the only way to get rid of capitalism is to get rid of the state.

Laursen, E., 2021. The Operating System An Anarchist Theory of the Modern State The Operating System An Anarchist Theory of the Modern State. pg 109-111

**The immediate interests of the State and capital are not always congruent— and when they are not, usually it is the State that determines the agenda**. For example, in 1834 the British Parliament downgraded the rich and politically powerful East India Company into a managing agency for the British government in India and in 1873 dissolved it (after a final dividend payment and stock redemption). The European carve-up of the developing world into colonies and protectorates, at around the same time, which in reality was sparked by political ambitions, territorial rivalries, and proxy warfare, not to mention the need to supply military and civil posts to members of polite families, was rationalized as a business proposition. But European capitalists and businesses underinvested in these territories, which served primarily to extend the State’s military and political control. Commercial exploitation took place mainly in other parts of the developing world, such as the Americas, that Europe did not politically control, and later in the former European colonies after they (re)gained independence. **More recently, the U.S. government for strategic reasons has forbidden American companies from doing business in post-revolutionary Cuba**, despite the fact that other governments have allowed their businesspeople to pursue opportunities there—**and U.S. companies have largely accepted the edict**. In 2020, the Chinese government shut down the initial public offering of Ant Group, the enormous Internet finance firm, when its controlling shareholder criticized Chinese regulators. 21 Meanwhile, the Trump administration pursued a damaging trade war with Beijing, regardless of the preferences of major corporations and agricultural interests that by then were intimately and profitably connected with China. Likewise, when the United States returned Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi to the throne of Iran in 1953 and replaced the UK as his government’s dominant foreign partner, it took over 40 percent of what had been Britain’s stake in Iranian oil production. U.S. oil companies initially weren’t interested, preferring cheaper Saudi Arabian oil, and had to be persuaded to participate in an enterprise that was primarily about extending Washington’s influence in the Middle East. But they understood their role to be, in part, as agents of Washington’s foreign policy in the region, and so, of course, they went along. A further instance occurred during the post–Cold War period in the 1990s, when the U.S. defense budget shrank—temporarily, as it happened—in the wake of the Soviet Union’s collapse, and the Defense Department forced the merger of dozens of American military contractors into three giants: Boeing Company, Raytheon Company, and Lockheed Martin Corporation. 22 Finally, there is the close cooperation Washington has exacted from high-tech and communications companies since 9/11 in its effort to expand its surveillance capabilities. **These examples underscore the State’s knack for taking the long view and the willingness of capital and big business to follow its direction, knowing that in the end, they all contribute to the same project. Lacking both the leadership and the protection (from itself) extended by the State, capital would either destroy itself or be quickly brought down.** **More fundamentally, the State dictates the environment in which capital functions, and unless a regime is directly hostile to capital itself, business and financial interests will play ball.** Following months of street protests against Beijing’s increasing encroachment on Hong Kong’s autonomy, for example, many large foreign-owned banks, trading houses, and other enterprises were expected to relocate from the island city to other parts of East Asia, perhaps crippling the territory’s economy. But it quickly became clear that wasn’t going to happen. “Global financial institutions that are deeply rooted in Hong Kong ... have already been adapting to a changing business environment,” the Wall Street Journal reported weeks after a repressive new national security law was imposed. “They have ramped up hires of Mandarin speakers and Chinese professionals [Hong Kong residents’ principal language is Cantonese] and positioned themselves to win more deals and attract more money from Chinese companies and investors.... Western banks ... have been careful not to say anything critical of Chinese policy or the national-security law.” Just as the law was coming into effect, Hong Kong “played host to a blizzard of stock sales,” the Journal noted, and “the city’s famously expensive real- estate market has been resilient.” To bolster confidence, regulators announced new rules making it easier to move money across China’s borders. 23 If Beijing wanted to crack down on civil liberties in Hong Kong, multinationals were not going to let that get in the way of business. **Capitalism, then, is not a closed or all-encompassing operating system; it needs the State to function**. But the State needs capital to realize its goals. **The Left tends to see this relationship quite differently, if it sees the relationship at all**. “Capitalism is not the solution to urban America’s problems,” anthropologist and geographer David Harvey wrote in response to the economic collapse during the COVID crisis; “capitalism itself is the problem.” “Unless we address the root causes of those problems in the structure of our economic system,” he declared, “we’ll never be able to solve them.” 24 This is true so far as it goes, but **unless we first understand the capitalist system as a component of the larger system of the State, any attempt to move beyond capitalism will only lead to a further buildup of the State and, in the end, the reproduction of capitalism in some form. This was precisely the outcome at the end of the “socialist decades” following the Russian Revolution and the heyday of social-democratic governments in Europe and elsewhere. The more that social movements and collective and cooperative practices were integrated into the State, the more likely they were to be displaced by practices that relied on capital. To get rid of capitalism requires getting rid of the State.**

#### Capitalism is a death cult and the apocalypse is currently happening – Earth is doomed to climate change, but we can escape, Allinson 21

Allinson, J. (2021). *The tragedy of the worker: towards the proletarocene*. Verso Books. pg 8-17

Capitalism, like certain bacteria, like the death-drive, is immortal. It has its limits and crises but, perversely, seems to *thrive* on these. Unlike the multi- species life-systems powering it, **the only *terminal* limit to capital’s perpetual augmentation is**, if driven towards from within, external: **either revolution or human extinction**; communism, or the common ruin of the contending classes. Long ago, both Max Weber and Walter Benjamin saw an occulted religious foundation in capitalist civilisation. As Michael Löwy points out, Benjamin, by defining capitalism as a cultic religion, went much farther than Weber in identifying a Puritan/Capitalist guilt-driven imperative to accumulate. ‘The duration of the cult’, for Benjamin, ‘is permanent’. There are ‘no days which are not holidays’, and ‘nothing has meaning that is not immediately related to the cult’. In what sense is capitalism a cult? What are its rituals, its fetishes? Those of investment, speculating, buying and selling. It has no dogma other than those ‘real abstractions’, as Alfred Sohn-Rethel put it, entailed by its rituals. In Sohn-Rethel’s words, the act of commodityexchange is the key exemplar of a social action governed by an abstraction of which the participants have no consciousness. The buyer may be concerned only with the sensuous particularities of the commodity, the needs it fills, but behaves, structurally, in the moment of exchange as though what matters is the quantity of exchange-value embedded in it. Ritual action determines dogma; social being, that is, determines consciousness. Capitalist theology, however, instates not dogma but unyielding imperatives governing action. ‘Accumulate, accumulate! That is Moses and the prophets!’, Marx sarcastically withered in *Capital.* **Accumulation is, for capital, an imperative, not an option**. To exist as a unit of capital in conditions of universal competition is to accumulate or die. As long, therefore, as there is labour-power to exploit and, in Jason W Moore’s term, ‘cheap nature’ to appropriate, capital will augment itself. This very bifurcation of life into the exploitable and the appropriable, which Moore identifies as the foundation of a ‘Cartesian dualism’ unsustainably counterposing ‘Nature’ to ‘Society’, is not dogma but programme. It is related to a distinctive move of capitalist theology, currently given right- Evangelical sanction by Calvin Beisner and the Cornwall Declaration, to disavow in practice the existence of inherent physical limits. It posits, in its action, the earth as limitless cornucopia over which humans have dominion, and from which limitless accumulation must be extracted. This disavowal, this ‘real abstraction’, is the social basis of capitalist *implicatory denial:* the seemingly evidence-proof conviction of capitalist states that capitalogenic climate change can be remedied by means, and according to systems, that guarantee its perpetuation. The capitalocentric purview is commonly, but mistakenly, identified with the anthropocentrism of ancient and medieval monotheisms. Here, however, it is clearly *not* the Anthropos that stands at the centre, as though appointed by God to steward the garden of earth. At the centre is the ritual: that unconditional imperative to accumulate. And insofar as this imperative drives ‘adorers’, as Benjamin put it, to the horizon of human extinction, **capitalism** can – **must** – **be described as a death** **cult**. **Fossil capital** **is** but **one modality of** **the death cult**, albeit a paragon. **The ‘externalities’ of capital – climate chaos, biosphere destruction, resource depletion, topsoil erosion, ocean acidification, mass extinction, the accumulation of chemical, heavy metal, biological and nuclear wastes – extend far beyond the specific catastrophe of a carbonised atmosphere.** Capitalism is a comprehensive system of work-energetics. The food industry, which powers waged labour, and is key to the shifting value of labour-power itself, is as central to the deterioration of the biosphere as is fossil-fuelled transit. Nonetheless, the continuing decision for fossil fuels as a solution to the energy demands of capitalist production, for all the growing denial of climate-change denial among the antivulgarian ruling class, for all their concerned mouth music, is an exemplary case of the capitalist imperative of competitive accumulation at work. As Andreas Malm has fiercely and beautifully argued, **capitalism did not settle for fossil fuels as a solution to energy scarcity. The common assumption that fossil energy is an *intrinsically* valuable energy resource worth competing over**, and fighting wars for **is**, as geographer Matthew Huber argues, **an example of fetishism. At the onset of steam power, water was abundant, and, even with its fixed costs, cheaper to use than coal.** The hydraulic mammoths powered by water wheels required far less human labour to convert to energy, and were more energy-efficient. **Even today, only a third of the energy in coal is actually converted in the industrial processes dedicated thereto: the only thing that is efficiently produced is carbon dioxide. On such basis, the striving for competitive advantage by capitalists seeking maximum market control ‘should’ have favoured renewable energy.** Capital, however, preferred the spatio-temporal profile of stocks due to the internal politics of competitive accumulation. **Water use necessitated communal administration, with its perilously collectivist implications**. Coal, and later oil, could be transported to urban centres, where workers were acculturated to the work-time of capitalist industry, and hoarded by individual enterprises. This allowed individual units of capital to compete more effectively with one another, secured the political authority of capital and incorporated workers into atomised systems of reproduction, from transport to heating.  **Thus, locked in by the short-termist imperatives of competitive accumulation, fossil capital assumed a politically privileged position within an emerging world capitalist ecology**. It monopolised the supply of energy for dead labour, albeit in a highly inefficient way. This is the tragedy of the worker. That, as avatar of a class in itself, she was put to work for the accumulation of capital, from capitalism’s youth, amid means of production not of her choosing, and with a telos of ecological catastrophe. **That thus, even should the proletariat become a class for itself, and even if it does so at a point of history where the full horror of the methods of fossil capitalism is becoming clear, it would – will – inherit productive forces inextricable from mass, trans-species death. This does not preclude systemic, planet-wide transformatio**n. Particularly given the inevitably uneven global growth of class consciousness and resistance, however, and the concomitant embattledness of any reformist, let alone revolutionary, power on the global stage, **it does ensure that it faces extraordinary barriers**. As will become clear**. As of 2015, estimates suggested that humanity produced a total of 15.5 trillion watts of energy each year, of which a considerable 29 per cent was not used**. At an average of 2,000 watts per person (rising to 10,000 watts in the core capitalist economies), the majority was used for industry, commerce and transit, with only 22 per cent for household consumption. Some 90 per cent of this output was powered by fossil fuels: oil, coal, gas. This monopoly, enabling superprofits as monopolies do, ensured that fossil capital would always realise profit margins far higher than the industrial average. It has, in Malm’s term, become worth a ‘planet of value’. Each fossil fuel plant represents decades of investment awaiting realisation.  **To avert planetary disaster is to inflict an earth-sized blow on capitalist industry. It is to choose between burning a planet of value, and burning the planet itself.** But the death cult is so strong, so pervasive, that, against all resistance, the choice has already been made. **Apocalypse has begun. The button has been pushed**. Humanity is already committed to irreversible climate change. In May of 2020, levels of CO2 in the atmosphere hit 417 parts per million, the highest ever recorded – and the first breach of 400 ppm since the Pliocene. Climate activists are, in Richard Wilbur’s phrase, ‘mad-eyed from stating the obvious’. To understand the scale of what faces us, and the way it ramifies into every corner of our lives, is to marvel that we aren’t having emergency meetings in every city, town and village every week. **We are, increasingly, out of time. In** the capitalist *untimelich,* the time of the living and the time of the dead, human history and the history of inorganic sediments, collide. ‘Millions of years of concentrated solar energy’, as Huber calls it, have been released in an historical blink of an eye, only to rebound just as fast: the Deep Time equivalent of an asteroid strike. **The cyclical time of seasons turns freakish, leaving us uneasily sweating in the clammy mid-winter. Spring comes too early, hurricane-force winds and flash floods break the October calm, polar ice melts while temperate zones are plunged into polar winter. The Arctic burns, boreal forests turned to charred sticks. The Greenland ice sheet melts even in winter. Antarctic sea ice has suddenly and drastically contracted in recent** **years**. The polar vortex wanders, perturbed, and the mid-West freezes. In a parody of Revelations, Mediterranean storms rain fish on the island of Malta. **Stochastic weather events accumulate. Birds fall dead from the sky.** The progression of geological deep time, with its periods, eras and epochs speeds up so rapidly that it precipitates a crisis in the temporal order itself: spinning so fast, we may as well be standing still. The progressive time of human civilisation, reduced to the endless accumulation of stuff, collapses into nonsense. The cycle of ice ages, a necessary condition for human evolution, melts away for eternity. With awareness of which comes a wave of eco-anxiety, for which we grope for names – Glenn Albrecht’s ‘solastalgia’, Ashlee Cunsolo and Neville Ellis’s ‘ecological grief’, Renee Lertzmann’s ‘environmental melancholia’. Even at the end of 2018, 70 per cent of Americans describing themselves as ‘worried’ about climate change, and it has been a long two years for that fear to wax. **The sixth mass extinction, signalled by what one study calls ‘biological annihilation’, is underway**. **The oceans, which produce roughly half of the oxygen we breathe, are acidifying, and are swept by heatwaves, says a recent study, ‘like wildfire’. Coral reefs, home to a quarter of marine life, are bleaching. Insect biomass collapses, with 40 per cent of all species undergoing drastic decline**. **The bees, that once we believed were saved, are disappearing eight times faster than are mammals, birds or reptiles. Without their pollination work, 70 per cent of the crops that feed 90 per cent of the planet will fail**. **The question of human survival is inextricable from that of what sort of humans we should be. By 2070, MIT research says, the new norm for ‘many billions’ of people will be impossibly high temperatures that will kill less fit people and make outdoor work impossible. Half a billion will experience temperatures that would ‘kill even healthy people in the shade within six hours’**. **The Arctic, that ‘sluggish and congealed sea’ discovered by Pytheas, a breathing ‘mixture like sea-lung’, will be gone, on conservative estimates by 2040.** In 2019, the usually snow-bowed woodlands circling this uncanny sea-continent burned more fiercely than ever. Precise metrics of the scale of what will unfold are to be determined, not least by class struggle, but there is no longer, if there ever was, a choice between adaptation and mitigation. **So adapt. But to what?** Those species now going extinct were once well adapted. The widely accepted geo-logism, ‘Anthropocene’, is in one sense an obvious political evasion, diluting as it does the necessary focus on capital accumulation itself. Yet, of course, capitalism is something that the human species, and no other, does. And while there are unthinkably vast disparities in power and responsibility in the production of petro-modernity, the latter has had a proven – if, crucially, hardly irrevocable – popular base: the vatic rage of activists notwithstanding, no politician has been crucified for promising fuel tax cuts. This fact can easily be weaponised by the right. Of the recent protests of the gilets jaunes in France against declining wages and rising inequality and sparked by a rise in diesel tax later reversed by Macron faced by the scale of the protests, Trump tweeted that ‘[p]eople do not want to pay large sums of money ... in order to maybe protect the environment’. In fact, however, and allowing that the movement is hardly monolithic, the French uprising was characterised by a remarkable *refusal to refuse* to engage with questions of ecology, particularly compared, say, to the fuel- price protests in the UK in 2000 and 2005. Far from being characterised by ecological indifference, what characterised much of the French protest was disagreement between those for whom talk of ecology comes too soon, and those for whom such talk is inextricable from social – class – justice. One example of the former is visible in the claim of the prominent activist Jerôme Rodriguez that ‘[e]ventually, when we obtain the first things, ecology will have its place’; of the latter, the words of another, François Boulot, that ‘[t]he social and ecological emergencies are inseparable’, that ‘[w]e will not be able to operate the ecological transition without an equitable wealth redistribution’. Rodriguez’s rationale for his position, that ‘nowadays, people aren’t concentrated on this’, is not supported by the superlative gilets jaunes slogans, ‘End of the month, end of the world: same perpetrators, same fight’, and ‘More ice sheets, fewer bankers’. This refusal to compartmentalise is energising evidence of the new politicisation of the moment. Still, that not everyone opposed to the fuel tax rise has been so assiduous in drawing the connections is in part because the dispersed, privatised accommodation and individualised transportation of modern life offer individualised, immediate-term and distinctively capitalist answer to specifically human strivings. The concept of the Anthropocene is a tacit acknowledgment that the alienated labour of humanity has itself become a selective evolutionary pressure. It has already forced rapid adaptation in some species, where it has not resulted in extinction, as Bernard Kettlewell’s experiments with peppered moths show. The besooting of tree bark in industrial areas became a powerful selective force, favouring darker moths, harder for birds to see and pick off**. Now such pressures are coming for us, as powerful as the asteroid strike behind the Cretaceous-Paleogene mass extinction. We are compelled to adapt to ourselves.** From this point of view, there is no difference between adaptation and mitigation. **To close the fossil fuel plants, to destroy a planet of value, or even, dare we hope, the value-form itself:** are these not adaptations**?** Of course, this is not what is generally meant by adaptation. Implicit is a Green Zone-style survivalism of the rich; explicitly touted are permanent adaptations of capitalism to the consequences of capitalism. The ideology of ‘adaptation’ has become the ideology of capitalism’s triumph over all life.

#### The alternative is an anarchist space program – anarchists leave the Earth to establish new colonies free of capitalist exploitation. The aff makes this impossible by banning private appropriation. Revolution on earth is doomed, and through the alternative we are imagining utopia that exists outside the state, a form of anti-statae rhetoric, Debord 2020,

Debord, Syzygy. 2020 “Another Galaxy for Another Life.” <https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/syzygy-debord-another-galaxy-for-another-life>

Closed Doors Brings Open Minds **Life on this planet being, at best, an utter bore and, at worst, entirely grotesque** — **there remains to open-minded, irresponsible, thrill-seeking pro-revolutionaries only to disregard the government, build our own spaceships, and establish outer-space autonomous communities.** The world of Tomorrowland is already yesterday with the totality of capitalism complete. **If the socialistic alternatives couldn’t defeat the capitalist system in its earliest stages, what hope is there in the present? Or worse, how much longer must one wait for the material conditions for a revolution to be appropriate? Accepting the existing order in one way or another is absurd. What is needed is an alternative to the alternative.** **A program that begins with the rejection of the spectacle’s permanence and holds no definitive end.** An alternative that yields to individualist self-determination in place of concessions to reactionaries and counter-revolutionaries. **The only alternative possible: autonomous astronauts. “It’s easier to imagine the end of the world than it is to imagine the end of capitalism,”** so says some benign theorist. **But! We have no need to imagine either if we leave this planet. Let the capitalists fret over their sacred private property.** Let the Earth cowards cling to their faith of monetary riches. Let these Terran revelers keep their third world, third rate, third class slum known as “America.” **They can have this wretched heap they are so fond of, their patriotic submission**. They can stay behind and suffocate on the noxious fumes of pollution while battling yet another carnivorous disease. **Let them enjoy their skies cluttered by ugly fucking buildings and their repugnant light pollution that asphyxiates the night. Such archaisms are of no use to us. We won’t even give a minute of our life in the hope that the multitude will suddenly become aware and take off! If the gravitationally oppressed are not ready to raise the launchpad, this is a problem of the gravitationally oppressed**.[[1]](https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/syzygy-debord-another-galaxy-for-another-life#fn1) **Let us begin by detailing why we have abandoned the socialist alternative on Earth. Assuming even a poor understanding of dialectics, with capitalism serving as the thesis and the socialistic tree as the antithesis — the synthesis is always a reinforced spirit of capitalism**. Perhaps in some instances the abuses of the capitalist system against the working class lessen, but overall, **the socialist and communist antitheses only serve as mere corrections and additives to the initial thesis of capitalism. Nothing truly changes.** Not even in what you feel. **In our hearts, we all know Earth will not be saved.** Every revolt is cut off from its mode of success in advance. The empire squats solidly upon its own immunity! **However, this does not mean the proposed systems in space will necessarily fail. What will a socialistic community look like without imperialism imposing on self-determination? What will anarchistic communities look like when freed of the threat of state violence? What objectives, what plans, what lives, what adventures are there when the oppressions are abandoned and we float away from the world; not disabled by disillusionment, but unburdened by it? No gods, no masters, no gravity** – no problem! lways Falling **Life on this planet is unsatisfactory. Yet we are not resigned to it. We refuse to be fooled. We fear nothing: being misunderstood, being criticized, being labelled ‘jokers’ or ‘insane’, suffering, life or death – nothing. We are neither dreamers nor idealists nor unrealistic…** The AAA is an attitude of reaction, defiance, and distrust. A distrust of the illusory philosophies at the level of the naïve, a distrust of unctuous and sonorous morals… No galaxy is obscure… So as not to be overloaded with rhetoric or cloying sincerity, the astronaut’s message is no less a song in which emotion’s modesty dismisses fine transports. When a spider flings itself from a fixed point down into its consequences, it continually sees before it an empty space in which it can find no foothold, however much it stretches. And yet, it finds corners and crevices to build its place of rest, its source of nourishment. So it is with the AAA; before us is continually an empty space, and we are propelled by the conditions that lie behind us. **What is going to happen? What will the future bring? I do not know, I offer no presentiment. Those who consider our goals impossible to achieve will necessarily find our methods impossible to think.** **Trapped in the false permanency and ahistoricism of the spectacle, these “realistic” pro-revolutionaries are quick to assure our naivety and imploring failure. But why not fail? Is the guarantee of dying from boredom recourse from the risk of dying from spaghettification?** Perhaps knowing there is no future is our greatest freedom. Waiting With The Coffins Under Heaven **The AAA is not a strand of Posadism and does not share their helpless hopes of communistic Alien salvation or global collapse. Their yearning is the same as the pious Christians, waiting for Christ’s return and direction to a better place in a better time.** The lathe of heaven does not exist. It must be built. Nor does the AAA urge a resignation to one’s docile fate on this planet. **However much it hurts to hope for the impossible, to imagine a future we don’t believe in (the Earth being saved, Global revolution, etc.), what matters is the strength we feel every time we don’t bow our heads, every time we destroy the false idols of civilization, every time our eyes meet those of our comrades, every time that our hands set fire to the symbols of Power**. **In those moments we don’t ask ourselves: ‘Will we win? Will we lose?’ In those moments we just fight. Even if we have no future on this planet, we can still find life on it today**. One does not have to return to sleep after the alarm clock rings. **Most importantly, we are not advocating a definitive plan for leaving this planet or for what ought to be done in space. It is left to the self-determination of individuals and unions to decide what is appropriate and ideal for them. The accent is placed not on the content of a choice proposed, but the fact of choosing.** **Thus, the AAA decision is a decision to decide no longer (that is, the free activity of space without geography would be betrayed if it is subordinated to some conception beforehand.)** As I could sit here and lament about Stanford Toruses, O’Neill Cylinders, and my frothy daydreams of surgically implanting bonsai trees into lungs and dining at souvlaki space stations, but why burden this manuscript with frivolities? **Better to go out without constraint later, when day is done, to perfect the design – grown greater in the uncertain twilight of mere dream – in that inward moment that turns upon itself, yet never repeats itself. The AAA is less of an organization than it is a network of individuals and unions cooperatively working toward a defined beginning – leaving this planet.** All that can come from the AAA are tools, not answers. Because as much as this reads as a manifesto, it isn’t one. It is an invitation. I’ll see you on the dark side of the moon… **Astronauts of all determinations, unite! We have a world to lose, but a universe to gain!**

## Case

### Advantage

#### No Escalation over Satellites:

#### 1] Uncertainty from debris collisions creates restraint not instability.

MacDonald 16, B., et al. "Crisis stability in space: China and other challenges." Foreign Policy Institute. Washington, DC (2016). (senior director of the Nonproliferation and Arms Control Project with the Center for Conflict Analysis and Prevention)//Elmer

In any crisis that threatens to escalate into major power conflict, political and military leaders will face uncertainty about the effectiveness of their plans and decisions. This uncertainty will be compounded when potential conflict extends to the space and cyber domains, where weapon effectiveness is largely untested and uncertain, infrastructure interdependencies are unclear, and damaging an adversary could also harm oneself or one’s allies. Unless the stakes become very high, no country will likely want to gamble its well-being in a “single cosmic throw of the dice,” in Harold Brown’s memorable phrase. 96 The novelty of space and cyber warfare, coupled with risk aversion and worst-case assessments, could lead space adversaries into a situation of what can be called “hysteresis,” where each adversary is restrained by its own uncertainty of success. This is conceptually shown in Figures 1 and 2 for offensive counter-space capabilities, though it applies more generally. 97 These graphs portray the hypothetical differences between perceived and actual performance capabilities of offensive counter-space weapons, on a scale from zero to one hundred percent effectiveness. Where uncertainty and risk aversion are absent for two adversaries, no difference would exist between the likely performance of their offensive counter-space assets and their confidence in the performance of those weapons: a simple, straight-line correlation would exist, as in Figure 1. The more interesting, and more realistic, case is notionally presented in Figure 2, which assumes for simplicity that the offensive capabilities of each adversary are comparable. In stark contrast to the case of Figure 1, uncertainty and risk aversion are present and become important factors. Given the high stakes involved in a possible large-scale attack against adversary space assets, a cautious adversary is more likely to be conservative in estimating the effectiveness of its offensive capabilities, while more generously assessing the capabilities of its adversary. Thus, if both side’s weapons were 50% effective and each side had a similar level of risk aversion, each may conservatively assess its own capabilities to be 30% effective and its adversary’s weapons to be 70% effective. Likewise, if each side’s weapons were 25% effective in reality, each would estimate its own capabilities to be less than 25% effective and its adversary’s to be more than 25% effective, and so on. In Figure 2, this difference appears, in oversimplified fashion, as a gap that represents the realistic worry that a country’s own weapons will under-perform while its adversary’s weapons will over-perform in terms of effectiveness. If both countries face comparable uncertainty and exhibit comparable risk aversion, each may be deterred from initiating an attack by its unwillingness to accept the necessary risks. This gap could represent an “island of stability,” as shown in Figure 2. In essence, given the enormous stakes involved in a major strike against the adversary’s space assets, a potential attacker will likely demonstrate some risk aversion, possessing less confidence in an attack’s effectiveness. It is uncertain how robust this hysteresis may prove to be, but the phenomenon may provide at least some stabilizing influence in a crisis. In the nuclear domain, the immediate, direct consequences of military use, including blast, fire, and direct radiation effects, were appreciated at the outset. Nonetheless, significant uncertainty and under-appreciation persisted with regard to the collateral, indirect, and climatological effects of using such weapons on a large scale. In contrast, the immediate, direct effects of major space conflict are not well understood, and potential indirect and interdependent effects are even less understood. Indirect effects of large-scale space and cyber warfare would be virtually impossible to confidently calculate, as the infrastructures such warfare would affect are constantly changing in design and technology. Added to this is a likely anxiety that if an attack were less successful than planned, a highly aggrieved and powerful adversary could retaliate in unanticipated ways, possibly with highly destructive consequences. As a result, two adversaries facing potential conflict may lack confidence both in the potential effectiveness of their own attacks and in the ineffectiveness of any subsequent retaliation. Such mutual uncertainty would ultimately be stabilizing, though probably not particularly robust. This is reflected in Figure 2, where each side shows more caution than the technical effectiveness of its systems may suggest. Each curve notionally represents one state’s confidence in its offensive counter-space effectiveness relative to their actual effectiveness. Until true space asset resilience becomes a trusted feature of space architectures, deterrence by risk aversion, and cross-domain deterrence, may be the only means for deterrence to function in space.

#### 2] Planning Priorities

Bowen 18 Bleddyn Bowen 2-20-2018 “The Art of Space Deterrence” <https://www.europeanleadershipnetwork.org/commentary/the-art-of-space-deterrence/> (Lecturer in International Relations at the University of Leicester)//Elmer

Space is often an afterthought or a miscellaneous ancillary in the grand strategic views of top-level decision-makers. A president may not care that one satellite may be lost or go dark; it may cause panic and Twitter-based hysteria for the space community, of course. But the terrestrial context and consequences, as well as the political stakes and symbolism of any exchange of hostilities in space matters more.

The political and media dimension can magnify or minimise the perceived consequences of losing specific satellites out of all proportion to their actual strategic effect.

### Mining

#### Loss of satellites will shut down terrestrial mining

Les Johnson 13, Deputy Manager for NASA's Advanced Concepts Office at the Marshall Space Flight Center, Co-Investigator for the JAXA T-Rex Space Tether Experiment and PI of NASA's ProSEDS Experiment, Master's Degree in Physics from Vanderbilt University, Popular Science Writer, and NASA Technologist, Frequent Contributor to the Journal of the British Interplanetary Society and Member of the American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics, National Space Society, the World Future Society, and MENSA, Sky Alert!: When Satellites Fail, p. 105

Resource Location

Looking for rare minerals to be mined for our many gadgets, household appliances, and industrial machines? Soil type is often a strong indicator of whether or not underground deposits of metals and minerals are located. By using satellite data to identify promising surface structural features and different soil types, mining companies can better identify promising mining locations, wasting less time and effort in finding the best places to obtain much-needed industrial resources. Without satellite images, the finding and assessment of promising new mines would grind to a halt as the industries retooled back into the days of much slower and labor-intensive field surveys (but without GPS!).

#### Amazon mining will cause extinction

Charito Ushiñahua 11, Anthropologist Working for the Preservation of Indigenous Amazonian Cultures, “Yanomami Indians: The Fierce People?”, http://www.amazon-indians.org/yanomami.html

A mineralogical survey of the northern Amazon by the Brazilian government in 1975 revealed the presence of gold ore in the Roraima region of Brazil. By the early 1980's, miners in search of gold began invading the Yanomami territory in Brazil and by 1987 it had become a full-fledged gold rush. Over 30,000 prospectors entered Yanomami lands and established over a hundred clandestine mining operations. The resulting massacres and diseases brought by these invaders is estimated to have caused the death of over 2,000 Yanomami. One of the problems with gold mining is the environmental destruction it causes. In order to separate gold from rocks and soil, mercury is used. Mercury in the rivers and streams bio-accumulates and permeates the entire ecosystem. The mercury accumulates in predators and hunters (such as the Yanomami) higher up the food chain and creates a neurotoxin that causes birth defects and abnormal child development. The Yanomami have had increased child mortality rates while their birth rates have declined putting their very existence into risk. Moreover, malaria increased in the area due to the stagnant pools left by the miners that increase the mosquito populations that are vectors of the disease. Some have estimated that malaria is responsible for the deaths of about 13% of the Yanomami population every year. However, the negative influence of the miners extends beyond physical health. Their introduction of alcohol and other western goods has had an immense negative effect on Yanomami society itself.

In response to the crisis created by the gold miners, in 1992 the Yanomami territory was protected by the Brazilian government by creating a federal indigenous reserve. However, the gold miners were not happy about the creation of the reserve and in July, 1993, a group of miners tried to exterminate an entire village in what has become to be known as the "Haximu Massacre." At lease 16 Yanomami were killed in what many have called genocide. Some of the miners were tried and convicted and after numerous appeals on the 7th of August, 2006 the Brazilian Supreme Federal Court reaffirmed that the crime known as the Haximu Massacre and upheld the ruling sentencing the miners to 19 years in prison for genocide. However, to this day there is political pressure by the mining industry to reduce the Yanomami territory and allow commercial mining operations on their lands.

In the year 2000, a journalist named Patrick Tierney published a book called, "Darkness in El Dorado," and accused anthropologist Napoleon Chagnon and his colleague geneticist James Neel of numerous misdeeds, among them intentionally creating an epidemic of measles among the Yanomami people in order to study the effects of natural selection on primitive societies. Tierney states that the resulting epidemic caused the death of hundreds of Yanomami. Incredibly, Tierney charged that the experiments were funded by the US Atomic Energy Commission, who sought to model the societal consequences of mass mortality caused by nuclear war. In addition to the measles epidemic, Tierney charged that Chagnon mischaracterized the Yanomami as "The Fierce People" when in fact it was Chagnon who was causing the violence by introducing enormous amounts of western goods such as machetes into the Yanomami society, thus stimulating warfare over the introduced goods. Tierney also accused Chagnon of fraud by staging films, such as "The Axe Fight" that he helped produce. The journalist charged that the anthropologist prescripted the films and that they were not spontaneous as portrayed.

Tierney's book caused an uproar in the anthropological community and the American Anthropological Association (AAA) got involved in the debate. In fact, the AAA convened a special commission to investigate the allegations against Chagnon and Neel. The report by the AAA issued in May, 2002 exonerated the anthropologist and geneticist from causing a measles epidemic among the Yanomami. Nonetheless, the AAA criticized some aspects of Chagnon's research, including his portrayal of the Yanomami as "The Fierce People," and his bribing of Venezuelan officials. However, the AAA debate was not over and three years later in June, 2005 they rescinded the acceptance of the 2002 report.

As someone who is working to support indigenous people, I would like to point out that over the many years since publishing his first book on the Yanomami (whose revenues made him a millionaire), Chagnon has failed to bring significant aid to the Yanomami people. In fact, he sought to damage the indigenous movement by publicly criticizing Davi Kopenawa, a Yanomami activist who helped establish the Yanomami reserve in Brazil. One might ask if it was proper behavior for an anthropologist to hurt the efforts of an indigenous Amazonian activist attempting to defend his people. Interestingly, the Yanomami leader Davi Kopenawa has predicted the destruction of the entire human race if the Amazon Rainforest is destroyed. Kopenawa states, "The forest-land will only die if it is destroyed by whites. Then, the creeks will disappear, the land will crumble, the trees will dry and the stones of the mountains will shatter under the heat. The xapiripë spirits who live in the mountain ranges and play in the forest will eventually flee. Their fathers, the shamans, will not be able to summon them to protect us. The forest-land will become dry and empty. The shamans will no longer be able to deter the smoke-epidemics and the malefic beings who make us ill. And so everyone will die." Many ecologists seem to agree with Kopenawa, believing that the Amazon Rainforest are the "lungs of the Earth" and that if the Amazon is destroyed, it will cause a global ecological disaster resulting in the eventual destruction of the human race.