## 1

**The cybernetic system is hidden under the guise of liberalism – vast populations will be surveilled and controlled as their data becomes collected to fuel the capital political project. Algorithms accurately explain the decisions of society and this new power has transformed our material instantiation of power and will cause the subjectification of our bodies.**

**Paul 20** (Ian Alan Paul – an independent artist, scholar, and theorist whose work examines regimes of power and practices of resistance in global contexts. "Controlling the Crisis" *Ianalanpaul*, https://www.ianalanpaul.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/ControllingTheCrisis\_IanAlanPaul.pdf, DOA: 6-28-2020, tjht)

One of the central contradictions that defines the power of contemporary borders is that they both facilitate and hinder movement, allowing for some flows to proceed largely unregulated while forcefully halting others. In the context of the EU**, flows of those with proper passports, of commodities, and of financial assets circulate unimpeded, while vast populations are subjected to policing and control measures intended to extinguish even the possibility of their movement**. In this way, **the cyberneticization of the European border regime can be understood as a rearticulation of historical relations of subjugation and domination which have come to be technically expressed as “an autonomous world of apparatuses so blended with the capitalist project that it has become a political project**.”33 While social media posts are subjected to intense monitoring and analysis in relation to border controls, encrypted wire transfers to offshore accounts remain shrouded in privileged cloaks of opacity. While Frontex worries about “individuals posing a security threat and economic migrants attempting to abuse the system by claiming a false nationality” in its annual risk reports, in practice **they are only concerned by “security threat(s)” and “abuse(s) of the system” of targeted dividual characteristics that are algorithmically determined to be out of alignment with European power**.34 In this way, cybernetic control can be conceived as both totalizing and differential in its processual enactment. Control is totalizing in the sense that everything and everyone in the world is targeted by the expansive digital sensing of interconnected surveillance apparatuses, and so all subjects are subjected to the systems of communication and computation that compose cybernetic systems. And yet, crucially, the control measures that are activated in response to that sensed data are fundamentally differential as they are differently enacted in relation to politically differentiated subjects. While 31  For more on operational images, see Harun Farocki’s series of video essays Eye / Machine I, II, and III. 32 Tiqqun, “The Cybernetic Hypothesis.” 33 Tiqqun, “The Cybernetic Hypothesis.” 34  “Frontex, “Risk Analysis for 2016: Annual Report.” Controlling the Crisis 79 **society itself can be understood as being totally regulated by the logic of cybernetics**, the intensity of that regulation is nonetheless distributed unevenly, mobilized differentially against particular groupings of subjects based upon how distant their dividual characteristics are from the calibrated settings and norms of the larger social system. In this way, subjects become caught between the two extreme and counterposed processes of de- and reconstitution, in which bodies come to be understood as being pure expressions of particular kinds of social difference within a liberal society (along the lines of race, class, gender, sexuality, etc.) just as they are disaggregated and disintegrated into atomized streams of dividual characteristics within the analytic apparatuses of cybernetics. Ultimately, both liberalism and cybernetics should principally be understood as fantasies, as political and technical imaginations of a society’s structure that are mobilized to restructure society in those imagined forms. The subjects of liberalism and cybernetics never entirely exist in ways that liberal and cybernetic societies imagine them, but nonetheless **liberal and cybernetic imaginations act upon bodies as real forces of subjectification that effectively capture them within their respective fantastical structures**.35 As fantasies of power and domination, the infinite number of differences that constitute the gulf between the liberal and cybernetic fantasies of the world and the world itself are not comprehended as being a problem of fantasies but rather simply as a problem for fantasies to correct. As a consequence, the historical instantiation of the liberal and cybernetic fantasies is inconsistent and often contradictory, allowing for societies to dream of frictionless global f lows of information, bodies, and capital on one night, and of border detention camps in need of ever more police, tear gas, motion sensors, and concertina wire on the next. However, just as the **cybernetic organization of power hasn’t replaced disciplinary power but rather has substantially transformed its material instantiation and formal enactment,** cybernetics should equally be understood not as liberalism’s replacement but as a complementary elaboration of its logic.36 In other words, while the modulatory feedback of cybernetics now constitutes the principal technical mechanism of power, governmentality, and control that acts upon dividual characteristics, nonetheless liberal sovereignty remains deeply involved in the diferential enactment and distribution of cybernetic power across individualized bodies. In this way, contemporary subjectivity itself is increasingly an expression of the formal contradiction that exists between liberal and cybernetic imaginaries, persistently decomposed into a multiplicity of dividual bits and bytes within the machines of cybernetic systems and ceaselessly 35  For more on the corresponding fantasies of liberalism and cybernetics, see Hayles’s How We Became Posthuman, particularly the sections on the cyberneticist Norbert Wiener who she notes was“ less interested in seeing humans as machines than he was in fashioning human and machine alike in the image of an autonomous, self-directed individual” (7). 36  Deleuze noted throughout his work that the theorization of control would have been impossible if Michel Foucault hadn’t already undertaken the theorization of discipline. In Foucault, Deleuze notes that for Foucault “(the) prison, as a hard (cellular) segmentarity refers back to a flexible and mobile function, a controlled circulation, a whole network that also crosses free areas and can learn to dispense with prison” (43), which of course already suggests the logic of control. For what it is worth, Foucault also suggested that the 21stcenturywould be Deleuzian precisely because of the emergence of control. 80 Ian Alan Paul reconstituted into legible individuals within the discourses, regimes of representation, and legal / juridical structures of liberal society. This apparent contradiction between liberalism and cybernetics ultimately resolves itself conjunctively, within which the crisis of liberalism and the control of cybernetics come to constitute, sustain, and intensify one another. **As a society denounces migrants as being an existential threat to the supposed equalities, rights, and forms of welfare afforded to subjects within a liberal social order, migrants appear as a crisis for liberal society and thus in need of cybernetic control and regulation**. The ban on women’s veiling in various nation states within the EU could similarly be figured as a crisis for liberalism, where the niqab is seen as a foreign cultural imposition that islamophobic liberal societies cannot tolerate. Of course, **the unveiled face is precisely also the face that is available for facial recognition systems to capture and analyze**, subjecting muslim women to increasing degrees of cybernetic control (it is not coincidental that “veil” and “surveillance” share etymologies, after all).37 In response to crises, bodies come to be subjectively parsed by and subsumed within historically demarcated forms of liberal difference (as liberalism’s constitutive “other”) just as they are permeated by concatenated processes of communication and control, conjunctively dominating life ever more intimately and totally. Simultaneously produced as individual subjects and disintegrated into dividual components, particularly targeted pieces or patterns of data (“Sends Money Electronically to Nigeria,” “Types in Arabic,” “Detectable South Asian Ethnic Facial Geometry and Skin Tone,” “Wears a Hijab,” etc.) can be acted upon by cybernetic systems as a means of dominating a differentiated subject or group of subjects within the enforced hierarchies of a liberal social order. In other words, **the totalizing structure of cybernetic control appears alongside liberal crises as part of a conjunctive historical movement, within which a perceived threat to the universality of liberalism must be persistently defended by the differential enactment of cybernetic power**. In this sense, subjectivity itself becomes unthinkable absent either the individualizing force of liberalism or the corresponding set of apparatuses, devices, and mechanisms that materially constitute the cybernetic systems responsible for both producing and dominating individual subjects dividually.38

#### The topic’s call for unionization and strikes might have worked a century ago, but post digital infosphere, the solvency is impossible.

**Berardi 11** [Franco Berardi, Italian communist theorist and activist in the autonomist tradition, whose work mainly focuses on the role of the media and information technology within post-industrial capitalism “Chapter 4 Exhastion and Subjectivity.” After the Future, by Franco Bifo Berardi et al., AK Press, 2011. P. 107-108 // LEX JB]

The financial cycle is bleeding the social environment dry: sucking energies, resources, and the future. And giving nothing back. Recovery of the financial process of valorization of capital is totally separated from the cycle of material production and social demand. Financial capitalism has obtained autonomy from social life. Let’s consider the political side of the same problem: once upon a time when society was suffering the blows of recession, workers reacted with strikes, struggle and political organization, and forced state intervention in order to increase demand. Industrial growth needed mass consumption and social stability. What is impressive in the ongoing crisis, on the contrary, is the widespread passivity of the workers, their inability to unionize. The political trend in Europe is the meltdown of leftist parties and the labor movement. In the US, Obama is daily attacked by racist and populist mobs, but no progressive social movement is emerging. 1.2 million people have had their mortgages foreclosed upon and lost their houses following the sub-prime swindle, but no organized reaction has surfaced. People suffer and cry alone. In the old time of industrial capitalism, the working class could fight against a target that was precisely identified: the boss, the entrepreneur who was the owner of material things like the factory, and of the product of his laborers. Nowadays the boss has vanished. He is fragmented into billions of financial segments, and disseminated into millions of financial agents scattered all around the world. The workers themselves are part of recombinant financial capital. They are expecting future revenues from their pension fund investments. They own stock options in the enterprise exploiting their labor. They are hooked up, like a fly in a spider web, and if they move, they get strangled, but if they don’t move, the spider will suck their life from them. Society may rot, fall apart, agonize. It is not going to affect the political and economic stability of capitalism. What is called economic recovery is a new round of social devastation. So the recession is over, capitalism is recovering. Nonetheless, unemployment is rising and misery is spreading. This means that financial capitalism is autonomous from society. Capitalism doesn’t need workers: it just needs cellular fractals of labor, underpaid, precarious, de-personalised. Fragments of impersonal nervous energy, recombined by the network. The crisis is going to push forward technological change, and the substitution of human labor with machines. The employment rate is not going to rise in the future, and productivity will increase. A shrinking number of workers will be forced to produce more and more, and to work overtime. The real bubble is the work bubble. We have been working too much; we are still working too much. The human race does not need more goods, it needs a redistribution of existing goods, an intelligent application of technology and a worldwide cut in the lifetime dedicated to labor. Social energies have to be freed from labor dependence, and returned to the field of social affection, education, and therapy. We should take seriously the concept of autonomy. In the present condition autonomy means exodus from the domain of economic law: Out-onomy, abandonment of the field of economic exchange, self-organization of knowledge and of production in a sphere of social life which is no longer dependent on economic culture and expectations – barter, free exchange of time and of competence, food self reliance, occupation of territories in the cities, organization of self-defense.

#### The policy that the aff proposes is the new link in the chain of command – it’s the next process in the permanent cybernetic control that the state deputizes. The carceral system, War on Terror, logistical drone warfare and the [aff] are all part of the broader system that faces an ontological problem. Their planning is due to the aff’s assumptions of correction and the need to change people – they think there’s an endpoint that must be reached which only furthers the extension of cybernetic logistical control

**Moten and Harney 13** (Fred Moten – Professor of English at the University of California, Riverside. Stefano Harney – Professor of Strategic Management Education at Singapore Management University. "The Undercommons: Fugitive Planning & Black Study", pgs. 74-77, DOA: 6-29-2020, jzn)

What we are calling policy is the new form command takes as command takes hold. It has been noted that with new uncertainties in how and where surplus value is generated, and how and where it will be generated next, economic mechanisms of compulsion have been replaced by directly political forms. Of course for the colonial subject this change is no change as Fanon understood; and as Nahum Chandler has pointed out, the problem of the color line is neither a matter of a new nor an old primitive accumulation. The problem is nothing other than the way the difference between labor and capital remains prior to its remainder and is made abundant or into abundance. Moreover what we are calling policy comes into view now not because management has failed in the workplace, where it proliferates as never before, but because economic management cannot win the battle that rages in the realm of social reproduction. Here management encounters forms of what we will call planning that resist its every effort to impose a compulsion of scarcity through seizing the means of social reproduction. In the undercommons of the social reproductive realm the means, which is to say the planners, are still part of the plan. And the plan is to invent the means in a common experiment launched from any kitchen, any back porch, any basement, any hall, any park bench, any improvised party, every night. This ongoing experiment with the informal, carried out by and on the means of social reproduction, as the to come of the forms of life, is what we mean by planning; planning in the undercommons is not an activity, PLANNING AND POLICY 75 not fishing or dancing or teaching or loving, but the ceaseless experiment with the futurial presence of the forms of life that make such activities possible. It is these means that were eventually stolen by, in having been willingly given up to, state socialism whose perversion of planning was a crime second only to the deployment of policy in today’s command economy. Of course, the old forms of command have never gone away. The carceral state is still in effect and strategic wars on drugs, youth, violence, and terrorism have even given way to logistic wars of drones and credit. But horrible as such state command remains, it now deputises and delegates its power to seemingly countless and utterly accountable and accounted for agents who perform contemporary internal versions of the knightriders and settlers of earlier state violence deputisations. Or rather, since nightriders and settlers never really went away, deputised for segregation, anti-communism, migration, and nuclear family heteropatriarchy in much of the Global North, what policy represents is a new weapon in the hands of these citizen-deputies. Stand your ground – because man was not born to run away, because his color won’t run, because again and again the settler must incant the disavowal and target the epidermalised trace of his own desire for refuge – is only the most notorious iteration of this renewed dispersal and deputisation of state violence, aimed into the fugitive, ambling neighbourhoods of the undercommons. Content neither with abandoning the realm of social reproduction nor conditioning it for the workplace, the two always related moves of the relative autonomy of the capitalist state, today capital wants in. It has glimpsed the value of social reproduction and wants control of the means, and no longer just by converting them into productivities within formal industrialisations of care, food, education, sex, etc. but by gaining access to and directly controlling the informal experiment with the social reproduction of life itself. To do this, it has to break up the ongoing plans of the undercommons. And here, with bitter irony, is where the hope West could still speak of in 1984, which has subsequently gone back underground, is conjured as an image whose fecklessness is also its monstrosity. What we talk about, in its survival, 76 THE UNDERCOMMONS as planning appears, in its waning, as hope, which has been deployed against us in ever more perverted and reduced form by the ClintonObama axis for much of the last twenty years. Planning is self-sufficiency at the social level, and it reproduces in its experiment not just what it needs, life, but what it wants, life in difference, in the play of the general antagonism. Planning starts from the solidity, the continuity, and the rest of this social self-sufficiency, though it does not end there in having placed all these complex motion. It begins, as this disruption of beginning, with what we might call a militant preservation. And these are its means. Policy deputises those willing to, those who come to want to, break up these means as a way of controlling them, as once it was necessary to de-skill a worker in a factory by breaking up his means of production. And it does this by diagnosing the planners. Policy says that those who plan have something wrong with them, something deeply – ontologically – wrong with them. This is the first thrust of policy as dispersed, deputised command. What’s wrong with them? They won’t change. They won’t embrace change. They’ve lost hope. So say the policy deputies. They need to be given hope. They need to see that change is the only option. By change what the policy deputies mean is contingency, risk, flexibility, and adaptability to the groundless ground of the hollow capitalist subject, in the realm of automatic subjection that is capital. Policy is thus arrayed in the exclusive and exclusionary uniformity of contingency as imposed consensus, which both denies and at the very same time seeks to destroy the ongoing plans, the fugitive initiations, the black operations, of the multitude. As resistance from above, policy is a new class phenomenon because the act of making policy for others, of pronouncing others as incorrect, is at the same time an audition for a post-fordist economy that deputies believe rewards those who embrace change but which, in reality, arrests them in contingency, flexibility, and that administered precarity that imagines itself to be immune from what Judith Butler might call our undercommon precariousness. This economy is powered by constant and automatic insistence upon the externalisation PLANNING AND POLICY 77 of risk, the placement at an externally imposed risk of all life, so that work against risk can be harvested without end.

#### Unintelligibility is key— by making ourselves incomprehensible, we corrupt academic production and access an immanent strategy that truly allows escape from hegemonic power structures.  Waugh 20

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Thug also has a tendency to relentlessly switch between vocal personas during his songs in a subversion of hip-hop’s traditional reliance on authentically stable identity, a trait that exemplifies his relationship to the mutable ephemerality of social 1 This article does not study Young Thug’s output in the context of discourses of race in depth, focusing instead on its relationship to social media. However, it could certainly be argued that his oft-unintelligible – ‘alien’ – vocals (and those of mumble rap in general) demonstrate a new evolution of Afrofuturist experimentation in popular music, an artistic trend located in hip-hop/R’n’B (Rammellzee, OutKast, Janelle Monáe, etc.) and beyond (Sun Ra, Drexciya, Parliament-Funkadelic, etc.). There is scope to analyse Thug’s position in this history of ‘post-soul possibility’ (David 2007) elsewhere. For more on Afrofuturism, see Dery (1994) and Eshun (1998, 2003). 2 It is worth noting that this article was completed prior to the release of Young Thug’s 2019 album So Much Fun, on which he exhibited a more comprehensible – if still malleable and experimental – set of vocal techniques. His vocals prize inscrutable inconsistency, mirroring the instability of contemporary existence. As Richards notes, ‘rap music is an attempt to make sense of this world out of rhythm and rhyme. Thug is the sound of that world being dismantled. [His] post-verbal eruption [...] reflects the incomprehensibility of the right now’ (Richards 2015). His flows, delivery styles and even genre selections transform from line to line without warning, reflecting the changeability of digitality. The rapper inhabits multiple voices and personas on songs ‘Best Friend’ (2015), ‘Haiti Slang’ (2011) and ‘Offshore’ (a 2018 collaboration with Swae Lee whose improvised two-minute Thug verse demonstrates a vast array of flows and vocal inflections), creating the illusion that several vocalists appear on each track. The disparate vocal identities depicted in contrasting tracks such as ‘Harambe’ (with its barks, squeals and grunts), ‘Me Or Us’ (a gentle acoustic serenade) and ‘Kanye West’ (where Thug wails and hums over a Wyclef Jean-featuring calypso pastiche) serve only to amplify this diversity, as does Thug’s tendency to employ a different flow on every verse of a single song (see ‘Safe’, ‘Texas Love’ (2016) and ‘Gangster Shit’ (2016)]. Phillips observes that mumble rappers have an instinctive ‘grasp of spontaneous switch-ups. In the middle of any verse, the rapper can completely alter their approach. They’re married to no flow’ (Phillips 2018). Thug has equally refused to be restricted by the genre limitations of hip-hop/trap, effortlessly morphing his voice to explore country [‘Family Don’t Matter’ (2017)], EDM [‘Heatstroke’ with Calvin Harris (2017); ‘I Know There’s Gonna Be (Good Times)’ with Jamie xx and Popcaan (2015)] and Latin pop (his appearance on Camila Cabello’s ‘Havana’); indeed, it could be argued that he has moved beyond hip-hop entirely.

#### Young Thug utilizes musical inconsistency to deploy paradoxical linguistic symbolism to the Infosphere—an excess of language that exists outside the limits of control. Waugh 2

Waugh, M. (2020) [is a Deputy Degree Programme Director in Media, Culture and Heritage at Newcastle University, having previously lectured at University of Hertfordshire and as a Graduate Teaching Assistant at Anglia Ruskin University. He was awarded his doctorate in Media Studies at Anglia Ruskin University in March 2016, and his PhD thesis incorporated qualitative research through interviews with fifteen independent artists (including composer/media practitioner Holly Herndon, digital film-makers Ryan Trecartin and Jesse Kanda, and musicians including Arca, SOPHIE, Jam City and Evian Christ). His research explores popular culture, digitality, identity and fandom]. “Every time I dress myself, it go motherfuckin” viral’: Post-verbal flows and memetic hype in Young Thug’s mumble rap. Popular Music, 39(2), 208–232. doi:10.1017/s026114302000015x//Aanya

Thug’s songs even continue their inconsistent composition process post-release, with projects such as JEFFERY and BEAUTIFUL THUGGER GIRLS being changed after their initial arrival on streaming services (with the respective later addition of guest vocals by Travis Scott to ‘Floyd Mayweather’ and Quavo to ‘You Said’) in an echo of Kanye West’s much-publicised 2016 evolving album The Life Of Pablo (Caramanica 2016). In addition to his changeable voice and his lyrical/representational indecipherability (further illustrated in the unpronounceable title of unreleased debut album Hy!£UN35 and in his insistence that ‘I don’t want to explain [anything]. I hate explaining’; Stephenson 2014), Thug ‘raps obsessively about wetness, frequently bragging about the drippiness of his diamonds and the viscosity of his sexual encounters. [He] sloshes syllables around in his mouth, cultivating a new kind of fluidity’ (Richards 2015). His malleable ability to make words sound formless and ephemeral, partially a result of his foregrounding of extended vowels, contrasts with the solid consonance of more conventional rap. He has an ‘allergy to consonants. He extracts them from words. [He] repeatedly blurts [words that do not] require him to close his mouth [and] reshapes the vowels of certain words [to] make them rhyme’ (ibid.). On ‘Drippin’ and ‘Nigeria’ (2013) he rolls words around his mouth as if gargling liquid, evoking abstract aural images of flowing water and provoking the previously mentioned comparisons with Jackson Pollock’s drips and splatters. The tender sounds of ‘Worth It’ – a dedication to his fiancée Jerrika Karlae – are generated through a similar stretching of words such as ‘whine’ until they become onomatopoeic. Thug’s fascination with twisting and reshaping vowels allows him to rhyme words and phrases that would otherwise be non-homophonic (a trait he undoubtedly inherited from Lil Wayne, whom he has proclaimed to be his biggest musical influence; Cook-Wilson 2015). A typical Thug verse can rhyme ‘unlocked’, ‘watch’, ‘charge’ and ‘narcs’, followed by ‘emotions’, ‘roaches’, ‘rolling’, ‘broadie, ‘macaroni’, ‘token’ and ‘cozy’ (‘You Said’) fluently. Clearly, then, Young Thug’s molten voice anthropomorphises ambiguity and slipperiness, but even his lyrical content – certainly somewhat secondary within his work – explores these themes (at least after the words have been deciphered by the listener). Thug relishes the use of surreal linguistic symbolism reminiscent of Salvador Dali’s melting paintings, deploying lyrics such as ‘diamonds they shower me’ (2015’s ‘Dome’) and ‘that pussy wet so I’ma slide’ (2014’s ‘Imma Ride’); producing track titles including ‘Drippin’ and ‘Florida Water’ (2014); and exhibiting an ever-present preoccupation with ‘slime’. He utilises onomatopoeic sounds in both his ad-libs (see, as just one example, the punctuating ‘aah’ on each line of 2017’s ‘On Fire’) and lyrics [‘Diamonds they go boing/Hop inside that pussy like a trampoline, boing boing’ and ‘Beep beep beep like a bus on that ass’ from 2015’s ‘Raw (Might Just)’], replacing lyrics with infantile noises.

#### Thus, the Role of the Ballot is to Embrace Thuggerz: endorse a revolutionary method modeled after Thug’s post-verbal flows. Waugh 3

Waugh, M. (2020[is a Deputy Degree Programme Director in Media, Culture and Heritage at Newcastle University, having previously lectured at University of Hertfordshire and as a Graduate Teaching Assistant at Anglia Ruskin University. He was awarded his doctorate in Media Studies at Anglia Ruskin University in March 2016, and his PhD thesis incorporated qualitative research through interviews with fifteen independent artists (including composer/media practitioner Holly Herndon, digital film-makers Ryan Trecartin and Jesse Kanda, and musicians including Arca, SOPHIE, Jam City and Evian Christ). His research explores popular culture, digitality, identity and fandom]). “Every time I dress myself, it go motherfuckin” viral’: Post-verbal flows and memetic hype in Young Thug’s mumble rap. Popular Music, 39(2), 208–232. doi:10.1017/s026114302000015x//Aanya

While there are drawbacks to Thug’s oversharing, not least the fact that many fascinating tracks are released with little fanfare [and no attachment to larger projects, in the cases of ‘Safe’ (2017), ‘MLK’ (2018), ‘Pacifier’ (2015), etc.], he has evolved beyond the ‘quantity over quality’ issue that often marred his predecessors’ output, producing songs that demonstrate either groundbreaking experimentation or mainstream potential with unprecedented frequency. Referring to his break-out singles, Thug boasts that he ‘can do a perfect song in ten minutes. I did [“2 Bitches (Danny Glover)”] in eight minutes. “Stoner” took me almost an hour’ (Sandberg 2015). These tracks achieved then-improbable recognition for such an instinctively spontaneous writing/recording style – 2013’s ‘2 Bitches (Danny Glover)’ was popular in clubs internationally and 2014’s ‘Stoner’ charted at number 47 on Billboard – but Thug’s influence has subsequently led to high chart positions for comparably impulsively produced tracks such as Lil Uzi Vert’s ‘XO TOUR Llif3’, Future’s ‘Mask Off’, Lil Pump’s ‘Gucci Gang’, 21 Savage’s ‘Bank Account’ and Playboi Carti’s ‘Magnolia’ (all 2017). There is no question, however, that the unpredictability and spontaneity of Young Thug are exemplified in his vocal style, whose experimentation exceeds those of his mumble rap predecessors in its rejection of classical hip-hop techniques. Thug’s rapping – if, indeed, it can be referred to as such – pushes the limits of human vocalisation while dissolving the fundamental rules of hip-hop flow. In his musicological overview of ‘flow’, Adams concludes that, despite the diversity of flows deployed within the genre, there has historically been a specific set of unifying technical rules and expectations binding them all together (Adams 2009). Indeed, he suggests that the ‘rhythm’ of flow was the element of hip-hop that most ‘developed as rapping evolved [into] an art form’ (ibid.). The musicality of rappers’ flows has, alongside observational lyricism, thus long been held up as a signifier of the genre’s importance and worthiness-of-discourse. Yet instead of following these stringent (but unwritten) rules by remaining on-beat or staying ‘in-the-pocket’, Thug constantly ignores/eludes the rhythmic patterns of the production over which he raps. He is more interested in performing a variety of novel vocal acrobatics to make himself sound as alien as possible, switching swiftly from falsetto crooning to percussive scatting, and from surreal mumbling to discomfiting whines and yelps, even if this means completely disrupting the flow of the track. This ‘structureless hip-hop’ (Wilhite 2018) is demonstrated on early hit ‘Lifestyle’ (2014), whose almost unintelligible chorus relies on purely emotive vocalisations to connect with its audience; listeners are forced to hum along with the melody in the absence of discernible lyrics. The song, which also featured fellow Atlantan Rich Homie Quan and Cash Money label-head Birdman, was released in conjunction with the collaborative project Rich Gang: Tha Tour Part 1 (2014), and the novelty of both had immediate impact (Drake 2014; Pearce 2014; Vozick-Levinson 2014). Undoubtedly Thug’s most prominent placement to that point, he utilised the platform presented by Quan’s more reserved and comprehensible crooning to foreground his own ‘tantalising unorthodoxy’, ‘hieroglyphic raps’ (Zaworski 2014) and ‘impulsive, almost volatile’ vocalisations (Pearce 2014). On Rich Gang..., Young Thug ‘leap[s] octaves without warning, often vaulting from a purr to a squawk. [He lets] certain vowels buzz in the back of his throat so that they become percussive enough to imply rhythm [and he fills] empty spaces with nonsensical blah-blahs’ (Richards 2015). Indeed, the overall effect of Thug’s sound is so unique that journalists have found it difficult to locate a language to define it precisely. Descriptions vary from ‘onomatopoeic’ (Sandberg 2015) to ‘Jackson Pollock splatters’ (Richards 2015) to comparisons with the improvised chaos of ‘free jazz’ (ibid.), highlighting the intense abstraction of his aesthetic. Thug often replicates the repetitive stylings of mumble rappers such as Future, twisting his voice into new shapes and employing unique patterns with each recitation, ultimately locating the structure/tone that best amplifies that section’s emotionality (see, for example, the rapid chanting on the chorus of 2016’s ‘Digits’ or the surreal slur of 2014’s ‘OMG’ with Gucci Mane). While he can certainly ‘rap’ conventionally (see, for example, his virtuosic performances on tracks such as 2014’s ‘Givenchy’, 2016’s ‘Drippin’ and 2017’s ‘Sacrifices’, a collaboration with Drake and 2 Chainz that features an uncharacteristically lucid verse from Thug), he seems to deem words somewhat inconsequential (exemplified by the repetition of certain basic themes, lines and phrases across his catalogue, their presence existing merely as convenient tools/outlets for his vocal experiments). Thug’s sound is a celebration of form over content, emphasising the invention of novel flows and atmospheric soundscapes (constructed by producers such as Metro Boomin, TM88, Wheezy and London On Da Track, and mixing engineers Alex Tumay and Kesha Lee) rather than poetic language. According to producer Dun Deal, Thug does not actually write lyrics prior to recording these outbursts of emotion. He ‘draw[s] what he want[s] to do on paper. He would draw [...] weird signs and shapes [and say] “I don’t need no words”’ (Greene 2015b). This abstract (perhaps apocryphal) compositional technique provokes the image of Thug using his voice as a spontaneous instrument, favouring tone, repetition and melody over technical lyricism. ‘Stoner’ exemplifies all of these aspects, taking the previously discussed sloganeering of Future’s refrains to a logical conclusion. Its procession of repeated hooks, bridges and choruses eliminates the complex poetic verses of traditional hip-hop in favour of looping but distinct refrains including ‘I feel like Fabo’, ‘I’m a stoner’ and ‘just like a boss’.

#### Now logistics have encroached upon the linguistic commons ie the ways in which we interact to the point where even thoughts themselves are quantifiable and financialized. But, as ubiquitous as this system is – it is always vulnerable to the system glitch – neural firings that were never supposed to happen and movement that cannot be expropriated.

Beller 2017 (Jonathan Beller – director of the Graduate Program in Media Studies, Pratt Institute, and the author of The Cinematic Mode of Production (2006) and The Message is Murder: Substrates of Computational Capital (2017). “The Fourth Determination”, *e-flux* Journal #85 – October 2017 – ERW)

Analogous to the land- and water-based commons that was planet earth, the cognitive-linguistic, the visual-poetic, and the imagination have undergone massive colonial expropriations, following immediately upon their separation and “liberation” from traditional ties to the body, and have entered directly into capitalist servitude. Bernard Stiegler refers to this phenomenon of cognitive collapse and short-termist thinking, organized by what he refers to as mnemotechnologies (technologies of memory that include print, cinema, and computation), as the “proletarianization of the senses.” This follows upon and overlaps with the proletarianization of the masses by the long industrial revolution and the capture and unspeakable violation of designated bodies by the slave trade. These aggressive and oftentimes annihilating encroachments on corporality, the senses, and the linguistic commons, achieved by cybernetic means, are mediological and technical phenomena as much as they are sociopolitical ones. Put another way, the mediological and the technical have been sociopolitical all along—to such an extent that with the level of technical saturation present today, “the political” has been lost. The “loss of the political” is an acknowledgement of the subsumption of policies and programs by capitalized financial calculus that chains representation to the process of accumulation. What indeed can “political” mean in a world increasingly characterized by algorithmic governance and platform sovereignty, that is, where capitalist power is increasingly automated, and discursive and affective labor is posited as a mere subroutine of capitalized computational processes—as engines of value creation? What of the political when “politics” has become a subroutine of computational capital and its discourses and actions are a modality of value extraction? It is an old lesson but it still applies (and we can see it from Israel to Burma): if subalterns use the same media and therefore modes of value extraction as oppressors in their struggles, then politics is simply a war over who will get the spoils of exploitation. The expropriation of the cognitive-linguistic by capital reduces discursive production—including the discourse of politics—to the subroutine of an abstract machine. This “machine,” though abstract, is nonetheless functional and material—we recognize it as the increasingly ubiquitous, increasingly networked computer or discrete state machine, but we must not see it as mere technology. The universal Turing machine, which when unified posits what I call the World Computer (“the invisible hand” codified as AI), has become the preeminent form of fixed capital. Machinic enslavement, whether to the assembly line, to the “media,” or to the computer, is indeed enslavement by other means, though we must insist that many of the “older” methods of extraordinary servitude stubbornly persist and the pain, like the profit, remains unevenly distributed. Following a backlash, in August 2017 the popular “FaceApp” removed a series of racially themed filters it had issued. The app had allowed digital blackface, yellowface, brownface, and a Caucasian setting to be added to selfies. Inequality, now sedimented into institutions and machines as materialized abstractions and designed into apparatuses, operationalizes historically variegated injustice, to produce and reproduce a planetary culture that at bottom is founded upon racism, gender inequality, national and cultural codifications, modern slavery, and a near total dispossession for billions. Machines, too, must be understood as racial formations. Given the data-logical nature of financialized systems underpinning “cultural” expression and iterated in and as machines, it is no surprise that Facebook’s machine-learning algorithm “Deep Face” imaged the minimally recognizable human face as that of a white man. Converting social life and social history into digital information and digital machines facilitates the as yet un-transcendable program of quantification that runs parallel to social-historical processes of social differentiation for the purpose of accumulation. The social emerges not as an abstract idea, but as a concrete substrate of computation. Sociality is posited then programmed as a series of leveraged accumulation strategies operating above or below or explicitly in and through everyday consciousness. Public faces are forms of data visualization and, circulating as images, are both programs and programmable. Bodies become “necessary media” of machinic digital operations that require from us (us bodies) attention, cognition, neuro-power, virtuosity, and sheer survival. As the auto-enthnography that is critical theory in the West might indicate, the remainders—interiorities and isles of awareness that fall away from informatic throughput—are in large part melancholic, cynical, disaffected, and abject laments. The rise of actually existing digitality thus appears as inseparable from the development and intensification of capitalism, that is, of media technologies as media of capital, which is also to say as media for the leveraging of agency and representation, such that decisions are made hierarchically and systemically while many aspects of life become almost unrepresentable and thus also unknown and unknowable. The ordinary taxonomies of social history continue to index zones and inflection points of this total and in certain definitive respects totalitarian process of digital enclosure. Our situation is effectively one of platform totalitarianism in which (the social) metabolism itself is captured by a leveraged exchange with capital and our media and machines are not only social relations but racial formations. This leveraged exchange of metabolism for forms of currency at rates set by platform capitalism is managed by ambient and ubiquitous computation, an electro-mechanical network that is composed primarily of fixed capital. The skeins of accumulation by means of informatic uptake lay closely upon body, mind, and time, and what value is extracted are the products of these. Thought and feeling are rendered quantifiable, computable, and indeed programmable. However, it is always a mistake to imagine that the impact of technology flows only in one direction: technical form emerges in a dialectics of domination and struggle. The global, technical evolution in the scale and granularity of the metabolic capture of what was once called labor power and social cooperation—a capture that fragments and cellularizes populations as well as bodies, minds, and neural networks—is not without its emancipatory potentials, as a Benjamin or a Brecht might remind us were they alive today. “The bad new things” are built out of and in response to new forms of struggle, and as Antonio Negri has always emphasized, the innovations of capitalist techné come from below, from the ways that the oppressed outflank domination and persist in living. A survey machine for customer feedback on the "immigration experience"—as long as the feedback is expressed in the form of smiley or frowny emojis. Towards a Reclamation of Value How then to investigate the capture and neutralization of the political domain and its uncountable longings by media-interfaced Computational Capitalism? How to transform and reprogram the failing powers of analysis, sensibility, and action such that they may function beyond the horizon of capitalist control? Four main hypothesis can guide us: 1) Computational Capitalism is an ambient financial calculus of value extraction working through any and all media. 2) Computational Capitalism is a development of Racial Capitalism and is thus also Computational Colonialism: vectors of race, gender, nation, sexuality, and other forms of social difference have been configured by and as strategies of value extraction and, like “structural racism,” have been sedimented into the operating systems and machine architectures of our machines. 3) The specter of revolution is everywhere visible if one knows how to see it. 4) For the first time in history a thoroughgoing revolution is possible that does not replicate the failed strategies of the radical break so tragically characteristic of twentieth-century revolutionary movements, but instead works to decolonize computation by transforming the money-form from within. I take it as axiomatic that the items telegraphically listed in the previous paragraph have become inseparable. What we thought of simply as computation is in fact computational capital—a supple and adaptive machine-mediated calculus on the social metabolism, one that can be gleaned through a deeper reflection on the notion of convergence. To illustrate aspects of convergence, we note that racialization and nationalization, along with regimes of gender, sexuality, borders, and incarceration, are part and parcel of the overall process of corporeal inscription, codification, and programmatic control endemic to digitization. Niche marketing and profiling are but two of the ways in which our bodies and practices are coded for capitalist and state-capitalist processing. One could add here the attempted subsumption of entire demographics under codifications indexed by “thug” and “terrorist.” Historical codes, including but not limited to race, gender, nation, class, and sexuality, are inscribed on our bodies, read, written, and rewritten by informatic machines. This functionalization of social difference (representational, biometric), to say nothing of the branding and scarring of bodies that is both past and present at so many levels, serves both as a means and a medium of capitalization and value extraction and as a necessary substrate to the development of computation. Within and at the scenes of inscription, the code works us and we work the code—again with historically overdetermined statistical variance. This is how it is at both the micro and the macro levels of struggle and organization. IBM’s role in the Holocaust, to give but one example, must also be understood as the Holocaust’s role in IBM and in the development of Hollerith punch cards and computational architectures, including search engines. Sociality and global lifetimes themselves have become the conditions of possibility for what, writ large, is the totalitarian emergence of the World Computer. That is why no existing political discourse can approach this horizon because current concepts and the activities of thought itself are fully circumscribed by it—ideas themselves have become operators (media) fully functionalized by and in the matrix of information. Understanding the transformation of semiotic process by information functioning as a form of capital, we can take the general formula for capital M-C-M’ (where M is money, C is commodity and, M’ is a greater quantity of money) and rewrite it as M-I-C-I’-M’, where I is image and C is code. The commodity as a distributed social relation has, with computation, become both produced and distributed in nonlinear networked operations that, unlike the assembly line, depend upon digital forms of attention, cognition, images, and codes for full valorization. This dependence on transformed conditions of labor germane to the social factory is (now) true even of older forms of production (e.g., automobiles) inasmuch as they are also networked in the world of information, advertising, Instagram, and the like. The valuation of a commodity requires a calculus of the image that modifies code, as does any interaction that transfers rights and value to said commodity (what used to be called sales). Production, circulation, valuation are all mediated by image and code, and that mediation occurs on a global scale. As the Anthropocene and its derivative concepts might testify, little or nothing remains untouched by this process of computational capital that penetrates down to the level of atoms. Here I want to propose further that this formula can be further modified to read M-I-M’, where I is information. To put this modification simply, money becomes more money through the movement of discrete state machines, the motor force of which is ultimately the bios (what was once thought of as the human life-world) struggling to survive its informatic capture. Labor becomes informatic labor and, as I endeavor to show in The Message is Murder, M-I-M’ means less that the commodity is one form of information, and more that the domain of intelligibility known as “information” directly emerges in the footprint of the value-form. Data visualization by computational processes screen-interfaced with the bios is a fundamental condition of the current regime of accumulation sometimes called post-Fordism. In generating M’ from M, it also effects what Paolo Virno calls “the communism of capital.” The programmable image as a worksite transforms and colonizes nearly all mental, sensual, and neuronal process while submitting them to interoperable regimes of background monetization. This financialization of everyday life, where everyone is forced to continuously throughput information in order to manage volatility and risk, facilitates a machinic enslavement profoundly enabled by and integrated with inherited forms of oppression. Navigating the matrix of capital-information is not an option, it is a matter of survival. Somewhere along the way, “consumer society” and “conspicuous consumption” became a semiotic game of survival. In the dominant order, these encodings are among the terms of wealth and power and only those who strive to organize in accord with a different order (or disorder) altogether have more than an inkling that there are better ways to be. We are dealing with the failure of revolutions, the overcoding of bodies and practices, and the absorption of political energy by strategies of accumulation. Computational capital names the integration of discrete state machines with fixed capital and sociality such that Marx’s “vast automaton” has become a global financialized socio-cybernetic system. “Politics” has been operationally reduced to a mere subroutine in the encroachment of this computationally integrated system on planetary life, and as Harney and Moten have pointedly underscored, “politics” and “policy” are today always on the side of the state—and the state is a state of capital.

## Case

#### Growth is unsustainable and poses an existential risk —local movements pushing for a transition away from current growth paradigms are gaining global traction – but now is uniquely key

Kirk ’18 – cofounder and director of strategy for The Rules, a global collective of writers, thinkers, and activists dedicated to challenging the root causes of global poverty and inequality, citing Deloitte’s 7th Annual Millennial Survey and a study published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences

(Martin, “What if economic growth isn’t as positive as you think?,” Fast Company, edited for ableist language, <https://www.fastcompany.com/90202203/what-if-economic-growth-isnt-as-positive-as-you-think>)

But there are some new strains of thought that take a more nuanced and sophisticated view of growth. That say, yes, all other things being equal, economic growth is a positive thing. But all other things are not equal. There’s no such thing as a free lunch, and, for all its positives, economic growth has a dark side; its ecological impact. The impacts of our ever-growing economy have become so stark and so widespread that they are by any ~~sane~~ [reasonable] measure portents to catastrophe. Whether it’s the fact that Antarctic ice is now melting three times faster than we thought, or the unfolding “biological annihilation” that has already wiped out 50% of all animals and up to 75% of all insects, or the fact that, in spite of all this, we are pumping out CO2 at record levels, it takes willful ignorance or a ~~blinding~~ [unreasonable] ideology to deny the severity of the crisis. This creates a terrible paradox: Economic growth keeps economies stable today, but threatens not just future growth but medium-term social and civilizational cohesion, and ultimately the very capacity of this biosphere to sustain life. A paper published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences last year suggested that “the window for effective action is very short, probably two or three decades at most.” And that even this dire prediction is considered “conservative” by the authors, “given the increasing trajectories of the drivers of extinction.” In terms of practical politics, that means acting immediately, preferably yesterday. Most politicians deal with this paradox by ignoring it. It’s by far the easiest option; one afforded every incentive and reward by this political economy and the beliefs that underpin it. This belief system has been dominant for a long time now. We are, as a society, deeply comfortable with it, which means many of its core assumptions are considered unassailable–too obvious to question. The most profound being this idea that growth is always good. Questioning this amounts to political suicide for any politician. Or, at least, it used to. We are starting to see some movement in interesting corners of the global political landscape that suggest that some leaders are showing the sort of political courage needed to shift established norms. It may well be starting to become something of a bonafide political movement. It’s young and small, still, but so were all movements at one time. A little thought experiment shows how growth can be a problem: Insert the word “a” before it. “A growth.” That feels very different from just “growth,” right? Growth is a big part of what we all understand happens in a healthy life. Children grow, knowledge grows, love grows. But “a growth” is what happens when life gets corrupted. “A growth” is when the growth is unchecked, and thus a symptom not of health but disease; when it takes on the character of an invader, attacking its host. The word for growth that gets out of control in this way, such that it becomes “a growth,” is, of course, cancer. But wait, I hear you cry, technological progress will save us! We can just grow meat in test tubes rather than needing so much land and clean air space for cows and their methane-laden farts, or we can all switch to renewable energy, or recycle more and better, and then we can get back to the promise of infinite growth. Unfortunately, the evidence is clear that this is simply not possible. Yes, we can make dents in our impact with such measures, and we should with all possible speed, but the way the global economy is currently programmed means such things are important–but also entirely insufficient. So, once we discard the vain hope of being able to grow the economy infinitely and indefinitely, what are we looking at? This is where the innovation and bravery come in. A new alliance was formed in 2017, called the Wellbeing Economy Alliance. What they are shooting for is one–or many different–economic model(s) that have, “the fundamental goal of achieving sustainable well-being with dignity and fairness for humans and the rest of Nature.” Which means they cannot just reach for socialism or any other historical model–socialism, like capitalism, relies on growth, as does communism. They have recognized that we can’t rely on past thinking; we must genuinely put our best brains forward and innovate. We’re not talking about a bunch of random, dreamy utopians here, but real politicians who have won real elections and are exercising real power. So far, the roster of governments signing up to the Alliance includes Scotland, Costa Rica, Slovenia, and New Zealand. Other governments that are actively looking at the issue include Italy, and there are political parties emerging, like the Alternative Party in Denmark, which is also embracing the innovation challenge. These are not what are often referred to as Tier 1 countries in the international order, but neither are they so small they are irrelevant. Scotland, for example, provides a direct line into both the U.K. and (at least for the time being) the EU. Costa Rica has long been a pioneer of innovative economic and social thinking, with impressive results: It is routinely in the top three countries in the world when measured for the well-being and happiness of their people. New Zealand is, perhaps, the most newly bold. Its prime minster has not only called growth-at-all-costs capitalism “a “blatant failure” but also has said her government would no longer accept GDP as the sole, supreme measure of progress. “The measures for us have to change,” she said in October last year. “We need to make sure we are looking at people’s ability to actually have a meaningful life, an enjoyable life, where their work is enough to survive and support their families.” And this is where social and economic forces start to align in very interesting and potentially powerful ways. And open the door for seeing electoral strategies in an agenda based on innovations to take us beyond traditional growth-at-all-costs economics. Consider a few facts: More than 50% of millennials say they would take a pay cut to find work that matches their values, while 90% want to use their skills for good. And these trends are on the up. Deloitte’s 7th Annual Millennial Survey of 12,000 young people, for example–both millennials and gen Z–reports record low opinions of businesses. Fewer than half now believe that businesses behave ethically, and this directly affects how loyal they feel to their employers; 43% of millennials and a whopping 61% of gen-Zers expect to stay in a job no more than two years. And all this against a backdrop of general public opinion that is also looking increasingly unkindly on the economic paradigm we have.

#### Increased strikes sabotage the economy – they cause major disruptions and lower income for workers.

Grabianowski 6 [Ed; Author and freelance writer. He’s worked as a contributing writer for io9, HowStuffWorks, and Sweethome. His fiction has appeared in Black Static, Fear Project, and other publications and anthologies, including Fear After Fear; “How Strikes Work,” HSW; 3/24/06; https://money.howstuffworks.com/strike.htm]//SJWen

Labor strikes can cause major disruptions to industry, commerce and the lives of many people who aren't even connected to the strike itself. The Professional Air Traffic Controllers Association strike in 1981 resulted in the firing of thousands of air traffic controllers, and the New York City transit strike in late 2005 affected millions of people. The history of strikes and labor unions is a key chapter in the story of the Industrial Revolution.

While the reasons behind strikes can be complex, they all boil down to two key elements: money and power. In this article, we'll find out how labor strikes have affected the balance of power between corporations and workers, what laws regulate strikes and learn about some important strikes in history.

It's difficult to say when the first real labor strike occurred. The word "strike" was first used in the 1700s, and probably comes from to notion of dealing a blow to the employer [ref]. In 1786, a group of printers in Philadelphia requested a raise and the company rejected it. They stopped working in protest and eventually received their raise. Other professionals followed suit in the next few decades. Everyone in a city who practiced the same profession agreed to set prices and wages at the same rate. Members would shun anyone who diverged from the agreement, refusing to work in the same shop and forcing employers to fire them. By the 1800s, formal trade societies and guilds began to emerge.

To have a strike today, you must have a union (though not necessarily an official union) -- an organization of workers that bargain collectively with an employer. Workers form unions because an individual worker is powerless compared to an employer, who can set low wages and long working hours as long as it adheres to labor laws. When workers combine to form a union, they collectively have enough power to negotiate with the employer. The main weapon the union has against the employer is the threat of a strike action.

At its most basic level, a strike occurs when all the workers in the union stop coming to work. With no workers, the business shuts down. The employer stops making money, though it is still spending money on taxes, rent, electricity and maintenance. The longer the strike lasts, the more money the employer loses. Of course, the workers aren't getting paid either, so they're losing money as well. Some unions build up "war chests" -- funds to pay striking workers. But it isn't usually very much, and it's often not enough for a prolonged strike.

Strikes help explain why unions are more powerful than individuals. Imagine if an employer refuses to give a raise to an individual worker. She then decides to stop coming to work in protest. The employer simply fires her for not coming to work. That one worker has no power to influence the employer. However, it can be very costly for an employer to fire every single worker when a union goes on strike (though it has happened).

#### Atkinson 6-9

Caroline Atkinson, 6-9-2021, "The American Economy Is Confounding Everyone," BRINK – Conversations and Insights on Global Business, https://www.brinknews.com/the-american-economy-is-confounding-everyone/

The U.S. economy is sending mixed signals as the post-pandemic economic recovery continues to confound experts. What happens next? Caroline Atkinson, former Head of Global Policy at Google and former Deputy National Security Adviser for International Economics under former President Barack Obama, has a long career in economic policy. She joins [hosts Peter Schechter and Muni Jensen](https://altamar.us/about-the-hosts/) on Altamar’s latest podcast episode to discuss the contradictory nature of the U.S.’s economy and what comes next. Atkinson is the former U.S. “sherpa” for G7 and G20 meetings, and she held positions in the U.S. Treasury, the International Monetary Fund, the Bank of England, among others. She is also a contributor to news outlets such as The Washington Post, The Economist and The Times of London. As the U.S. opens up, people are returning to pre-pandemic activities; planes and restaurants are full. Gyms are returning apace. Meanwhile, the U.S. administration is putting in place policies to spur economic growth and create a fast post-pandemic recovery. But, so far, it’s been a bumpy ride, and recently, we’re seeing questions about rising inflation and, seemingly, a paradox of high unemployment rates while many industries are suffering labor shortages. Economists and experts are scratching their heads. The U.S. economy is sending confusing signals, and it has real implications for the rest of the world. “It is a very confusing time, and anybody who’s honest admits that. And the most honest economic analysts, when asked, “What’s going to happen to inflation and to unemployment?” will admit that they don’t really know,’ says Atkinson. The world economy is demonstrating that it is not easy to go back to “life as normal” after more than a year of mandated office and school closures, massive layoffs and, of course, inevitable global health implications. “There’s an economic theoretical term, which is called ‘reallocation friction.’ That’s just a fancy way of saying when a lot of jobs have been lost, businesses have closed, people have been fired or people have been forced to cut the hours, it takes a while to restart. And that’s the friction. And if you’re restarting in a different sector, there’s even more friction. So that’s the reallocation friction that always happens after a recession. It happens, especially if you have a really big drop in employment. So, I think we will know much more soon. I know this is not a very satisfactory answer, but we will know much more in three months from now over the summer,” says Atkinson. Is ‘Bidenomics’ a Thing? President Joe Biden entered office at a time of great scrutiny, and his bold economic policies have garnered a lot of criticism from both the political left and right. Deemed too much or too little, depending on who you ask, “Bidenomics” is drawing concern, even from allies. “The big question for me is, ‘will the shift in policies help push wages up more than prices?’ If prices go up more than wages, then you’re not getting the real income increase that you want. I think there are two ways in which [President] Biden’s plan really can be helped by the Fed and should help worker’s incomes and inequality. The first is running the economy hot, which helps pull in people who’ve been marginalized before. It helps drive down unemployment and bring in low-paid workers. And if firms can’t find workers, they will dig a bit deeper and look into [labor] pools that they might not have thought about before. And that will be good,” says Atkinson. For the first time in decades, inflation is now a concern in America. Who would have thought that after years of experts and respectable news outlets touting the era of low inflation, all eyes are now on rising prices? “We want inflation to go up a bit,” notes Atkinson. “It’s been too low for a long time, and if inflation stays at these levels in the next two to three months, they [the Federal Reserve] will start signaling in August or September that they need to stop buying assets. And they may even start to raise interest rates next year, rather than waiting another full year, which is what they had planned.” Rising prices at home also means important questions abroad. “A lot of the challenges for the world now are global ones. I mean, obviously health, but also climate, poverty and migration. And those require cooperation among the big economies and politicians. I do think that the U.S. may get lots of things wrong, but when it’s on its game, the U.S. does want to make the world a better place. And it is quite good at grabbing leadership and pushing for improvements,” says Atkinson.

#### Democratization causes civil war – credibility commitment problems, nationalism, diminished SMLV

Savun, Poli Sci Prof @ Pitt, 11

(Burcu, Foreign Aid, Democratization, and Civil Conflict: How Does Democracy Aid Affect Civil Conflict?, American Journal of Political Science, Vol. 55, No. 2, pp. 233-246)

As Cederman, Hug and Krebs (2007) note, most theoretical and empirical treatments of the democratization-conflict link have occurred with a focus on interstate wars. In From Voting to Violence, Snyder (2000) provides one of the first exclusive systematic studies of the link between democratization and civil conflict, particularly ethnic conflicts. Snyder (2000) proposes that during the early phases of the democratization process, two conditions favorable to the initiation of civil conflict emerge: (a) political elites exploit rising nationalism for their own ends to create divisions in the society and (b) the central government is too weak to prevent elites’ polarizing tactics. According to Snyder, before democratization, the public is not politically active and hence its sense of belonging to a nation is relatively weak (35).3 Democratization increases the feeling of nationalism, especially with the provocation of the elites who feel threatened by the arrival of democracy. To maintain or increase their grab on political power, the elites may depict the political opponents and the ethnic minorities as traitors by invoking nationalist sentiments in the public (37).4 These polarizing tactics, in turn, create tensions among ethnic groups and hence increase the risk of violent clashes in the society.5 For example, during 1987 Milosevic skillfully used the Serbian state TV to convince the Serbian minority that Serbs in the Kosovo were suffering discrimination and repression at the hands of the Albanian majority. These kinds of inciting polarizing tactics by Milosevic and the Serbian nationalist elites were pivotal in contributing to violence in Kosovo. Violent struggles in post-communist regimes such as Croatia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia during the 1990s are other examples of nationalist upheavals incited by the domestic political elites during democratization process. Snyder (2000) argues that the elites’ use of exclusionary nationalism is particularly strong and damaging if the democratizing state has weak political institutions. If state institutions are strong, the institutions may be able to deter the elites’ opportunistic behavior and curb its potentially damaging impacts. However, during early phases of democratization, the institutions are usually new and fragile and the central authority is weak. The weakening of central authority gives the elites the opportunity to monopolize the media, create divisions in the society, and control the political discourse. Without the constraints of strong institutions and state authority, the political elites have more leeway to pull the society to any direction their interests dictate. Rustow’s (1970) seminal work on regime transition divides democratization into three phases. In the preparatory phase, a prolonged political struggle representing different interests takes place.6 Polarization of the elites usually ensues in this phase. In such an environment, a weakening of the central authority is inevitable. As the balance of power shifts from the old authority to the new actors in political life, a power vacuum emerges. The transition of power also weakens the state’s monopoly on the use of force as the military usually plays a key (and often independent) role in the democratization process, as was the case in most democratization episodes in Latin America. In addition, the early phase of a regime change usually renders the policing capacity of the state inefficient and thereby increases its vulnerability to attacks by domestic groups. The extant literature on civil war shows that organizationally and politically weak central governments make civil conflicts feasible due to weak local policing and inept counterinsurgency practices (Fearon and Laitin 2003, 75). The weaker the central government, the less likely it is to deter domestic groups from using violence. Weak states also provide the opportunity for rebellion because the rebels’ chances of scoring a victory increase. As the state capacity weakens and questions arise about its legitimacy, the rebels find it easier to recruit and thereby strengthen their base. During democratization, uncertainty also looms large (e.g., Gill 2000; O’Donnell, Schmitter, and Whitehead 1986; Teixeira 2008). As Rustow (1970) puts it, “a new political regime is a novel prescription for taking joint chances on the unknown” (358). Uncertainty of the regime change creates several credible commitment problems. First, the political elites have difficulty in trusting each other’s intentions and promises. As Karl (1990) suggests, during regime transitions political actors “find it difficult to know what their interests are, who their supporters will be, and which groups will be their allies or opponents” (6). The new political elites and the old regime are wary of each other’s intentions and hence are unlikely to believe that any promises made or concessions given during the transition period will be honored once the central authority and institutions are consolidated. The key problem is that the elites perceive each other as “conditional in their support for democracy and equivocal in their commitment to democratic rules of the game” (Burton, Gunther, and Higley 1992, 31). The “equivocal commitment to democratic rules” increases the level of distrust and suspicion among the elites and thereby increases the risk of collapse of the political rule. Another credibility problem arises between the elites and ethnic groups in the state. The weakening of the state authority, combined with the uncertainty in the environment, increases the sense of insecurity that comes with the transition (Pridham 2000). This insecurity is particularly acute among minority groups who feel unprotected in an environment of nascent institutions, opportunistic elites, a weak state authority, and rising nationalism. Weingast (1997, 1998) formally demonstrates that during fundamental political changes in a society, institutions are typically weak and everything is at stake. This implies two things. First, the mechanisms limiting one ethnic group from using the state apparatus to take advantage of another are not effective. That is, institutions cannot credibly commit to protect the state apparatus from being captured by any group to exploit the other (Weingast 1998). The literature on democratization similarly contends that the new regimes are not usually successful in honoring their commitments and showing self-restraint (e.g., Huntington 1991). Second, since the stakes are high during regime change, the critical threshold probability that breeds violence based on fears of victimization is particularly low (Weingast 1998, 191). That is, it does not take much for the minority group to resort to violence out of its fear. The extant literature on civil wars shows that minority groups are more likely to resort to violence if they fear that there is a risk of annihilation in the future and the commitments made by the state are not credible (e.g., Fearon 1998; Walter 1997, 2002).

#### Civil wars spillover

Thyne, Poli Sci Professor @ University of Kentucky, 12

(Clayton, Causes of Interstate and Intrastate War, http://www.uky.edu/~clthyn2/salehyan\_thyne.pdf)

In addition to local effects, Collier and his colleagues (2003) provide evidence to suggest that all states are negatively affected by civil violence, which they refer to as the outer “ripple” effects of civil wars. The second ripple includes adjacent states. The most direct problem for adjacent states is the flood of refugees fleeing violence (Siverson and Starr 1991; Gleditsch 2007). At the beginning of 2011, the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) estimated the total number of refugees to be around 10.4 million. Refugees place a heavy burden on a state’s ability to provide public services. They also advance the spread of infectious diseases, such as HIV and malaria (Montalvo and Reynal-Querol 2002) and raise the risk of civil war contagion (Salehyan and Gleditsch 2006). Additional evidence suggests that, having a neighboring state at war severely disrupts a state’s economy, which is often due to disrupted trade flows and decreases in FDI (Murdoch and Sandler 2002). Ultimately, both the strain on public services and a decline in economic growth work to destabilize neighboring states.

The final set of consequences from civil wars is global. The infectious diseases associated with civil conflicts rarely remain confined to the borders of the state experiencing the civil conflict. For example, Smallman-Raynor and Cliff (1991) trace the global epidemic of HIV to the Ugandan civil war in 1979, where rape and refugee flows allowed the disease to spread throughout the globe. Civil wars are also associated with the global spread of illegal narcotics because they provide territory outside the government s control, which enables the production and distribution of drugs. Around 95 percent of the global produedon of opium, for instance, is in civil war countries (Collier et al. 2003). Notably, Afghanistan produces around 90 percent of the world’s opium. Likewise, the ongoing violence in Colombia has transformed over time to become less about class struggles and more about the production of cocaine (Collier and Hoeffler 2004). Finally, scholars are beginning to explore the links between civil wars and international terrorism. Civil wars promote terrorism by providing a safe haven for people to organize outside the government’s control. Illegal products from the conflicts, such as alluvial diamonds, also provide revenue for terrorist organizations such as A1 Qaeda (Collier et al. 2003). Overall, whether it is a focus on the spread of diseases, drugs, or terrorism, there is a strong reason for all people to better understand how civil wars begin, continue, and end.

#### Democracy destroys the environment – extinction

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(Charles, To what extent is democracy detrimental to the current and future aims of environmental policy and technologies?, POLIS Journal Vol. 7, Summer 2012)

This is exactly what Mark Beeson suggests in his argument for the coming of environmental authoritarianism. He acknowledges the fact that individual liberty has led to ‘environmentally destructive behaviour’ (Beeson 2010: 276). Whilst democracy has allowed for a more open discussion on environmental issues as well as raising awareness, there has been too much trust put on ecological enlightenment through education. For Beeson, this ‘relies too much on an optimistic, naïve view of human nature’ (Beeson 2010: 282), the idea that an attitude of respect, through the emergence of a shared cosmopolitan rhetoric will produce environmental improvement is wide of the mark. As Beeson rightly points out, the ‘sobering reality’ is that as the human population continues to grow, consuming resources on an unprecedented scale, ‘policy-makers will have less and less capacity to intervene to keep damage to the environment from producing serious social disruption’ (Beeson 2010: 283). Liberal democracy, through the necessities dictated by a capitalist economy has built its survival on the continued exploitation of environmental resources to a point where an attempt to gain control of this practice has become almost impossible. The article, whilst not wholly advocating the Asian political model (indeed Beeson highlights the fact that China is a ruthless exploiter of its own natural environment and sets a poor example for the rest of the continent), is appropriately pessimistic towards the success of liberal democracy. It therefore seems rational to put forward soft authoritarianism as a viable alternative: for it avoids trust in the individual, taking a negative view of human nature and advocates the need for state control, particularly surrounding urgent policy issues like the environment. Whilst it is difficult to accept, it may be the case that ‘good forms of authoritarianism, in which environmentally unsustainable forms of behaviour are simply forbidden, may become not only justifiable, but essential for the survival of humanity’ (Beeson 2010: 289).