#### The subject is alienated when it articulates its desires – incomplete signifiers structure the emergence of subjectivity and produce repetitive drives to fill the lack that justify coercive violence. Thus, the ROB is to traverse the fantasy – that means exposing drives.

Matheson 15 Calum Matheson, PhD, 2015, “Desired Ground Zeroes: Nuclear Imagination and the Death Drive,” University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, [Calum Matheson is author of Desiring the Bomb: Communication, Psychoanalysis, and the Atomic Age (University of Alabama). He is a former high school debater. His research focuses on intersections of rhetoric, media, and theories of psychoanalysis and deconstruction. His current work focuses on right-wing political extremism, conspiracy thinking, and Lacanian concepts of anxiety and psychosis. He has also published work on argument, history of rhetoric, and games. Dr. Matheson is a former debate coach at Harvard University and a current candidate at the Pittsburgh Psychoanalytic Center.], <https://cdr.lib.unc.edu/concern/dissertations/6682x4537>

The Real Jacques Lacan’s notion of the Real is notoriously difficult to define. In his book on the subject, Tom Eyers calls it the “most elusive” of Lacan’s concepts, but one that is also one that is “central” and “determining” for psychoanalysis (1). There are common elements of the various definitions. First, an agreement that both the economy of tropes that allows the conditions for meaning to emerge (the Symbolic) and the meanings and values invested in these tropes, including the subject itself (the Imaginary), do not and cannot perfectly capture all of existence or experience. Second, this unassimilable remainder structures the Symbolic and Imaginary, just as they structure each other, and thus all three registers are knitted together as demonstrated in Lacan’s famous “Borromean Knot.” The Real is what escapes mediation, what disrupts language itself. To explain its significance and relationship to desire requires examining its foundational role in the formation of the subject. The Real can be understood as the constitutive lack of the subject, its separation from the rest of existence by the self-definition necessary for it to come into being in the first place. This is made clear in the mirror stage, where the subject moves from a fragmented, disorganized concept of the body to the “finally donned armor of an alienating identity that will mark his [sic] entire mental development with its rigid structure” (Lacan, “Mirror Stage” 78). The formation of a discrete subject (a function in the Imaginary register) is a compromise. Its formation allows for participation in the Symbolic because to participate in that economy of exchange requires a “social I” (Lacan, “Mirror stage,” 79). This participation comes at the cost of alienation because the subject trades in a world of symbols which by their nature stand in for what is not present, and thus inescapably mediate the (Real) world outside of the subject, rather than making it present. This lack built in to the subject is the engine of desire: the subject’s divide from an object is a prerequisite for the desire of such an object, but the condition of mediation makes it impossible to ever incorporate it in a perfectly satisfying way. Thus desire remains unfulfilled and each chase for a symbol leads to another in loop which the very constitution of the subject dictates must be endless. This is the basic operation of the death drive which is not distinct from Eros. Were the impossible to occur and the drive of Eros to be fulfilled, it would be extinguished, as there would be nothing left to desire. Thus all drives aim, in a sense, at their own extinction, and therefore there is in a sense only one—the drive that aims towards the extinction of desire through its complete fulfillment in continuity with the world that was lost when the subject became distinct from it in the mirror stage. Although the death drive might stand in for the singular character of the drive, it should not be understood as a desire for the actual biological death of the subject’s body, or even the desire to inflict death on others. The self-destruction of the death drive is a desire to break the limits of the self as the alienating armor of the subject by experiencing unmediated contact with the Real. Death still defines its operation in other ways. The last portion of Lacan’s “The Function and Field of Speech and Language in Psychoanalysis” explains the metaphorical centrality of death as the center of a torus formed by incessant symbolization. The fort-da game is most significant not because it shows that the child wishes to destroy its mother or even inoculate itself against that possibility, but because it assimilates the child into the Symbolic order through the repetition of the signifiers fort and da, which stand in for presence and absence. Death is central to language because the symbol itself invokes the absence and loss of nonexistence since its function is to stand in for something that is gone. Language swirls around this absent center of death, a primordial absence encased in the inner ring of the torus, while the outer surfaces of language hold all else that cannot be symbolized at bay on the outside (Lacan, “Function and Field” 260-264). Paradoxically, death is necessarily evoked by the symbol as that which is absent and also made possible in the first place by that same symbol. The separation of the subject into its alienating identity as a social object makes a meaningful concept of death possible because without it there is no dasein, no individual, no singular human to die. George Bataille explains this with an entomological example. If a scientist picks one fly from a swarm, that fly is subject to death, because its end means the end of the discontinuous being selected by the entomologist. Without differentiation of its members, however, the swarm lives on; the selection of the fly is for the entomologist, not the animal (Bataille, “Hegel, Death and Sacrifice” 14-16). Thus it is with human beings. The subject is founded by a rejection of its sole animal nature by participating in a world of work and accumulation, mediated by language—essentially Lacan’s Symbolic. Thus individuals are made discontinuous with the general economy of matter and energy from which all things are formed by a conceptual separation inextricably bound up in death. Our existences are thus defined by discontinuity from a world of continuity, and for Bataille as for Lacan, our drives are singular in the sense that sex is a coupling that unifies with another and momentarily overcomes discontinuity just as death is the end of the subject’s brief separation from a universe differentiated only by the dismembering violence of our imposition of symbols upon it (Bataille, Erotism 13-17). The experience of death may still be unique because it suggests the absence implied by the sign and because it can be experienced only once by the subject—and for obvious reasons, cannot be symbolized by anyone with first-hand experience. As Freud argues in “Thoughts For The Times On War and Death,” we cannot even hope to imagine our own deaths because to do so demands that we imagine them from some perspective which would be destroyed in the experience itself. Death and the Real are therefore not identical, but are closely linked. The most important characteristic of the Real is not just that it suggests existence beyond language, but that this world-for-itself (to borrow from Eugene Thacker) intrudes on human reality and reveals it to be incomplete. Encompassing Max Picard’s concept of silence, the Real is not the absence of human reality so much as the traumatic revelation that that reality was always incomplete, always feigned in the face of existence so much more than human mediation has already covered. Chris Lundberg uses Lacan’s distinction between reality, being the social world of human construction, and the Real, being the occasional but inevitable failure of that reality, to develop his own distinction between failed unicity and feigned unicity. The Symbolic operates as an economy of interconnected and mutually-referential tropes weaving a kind of fabric that is the precondition for meaning, an environment in which social relationships can be understood in context. When the unified illusion of the social fails, we are compelled to stitch the tears in that fabric to maintain the world that gives us meaning (Lacan in Public 2-3). An account by Bill Laurence, the only journalist allowed to witness the Trinity test, provides evidence for this rupture and repair. While “not a sound could be heard” for the period after the flash and before the thunder, Laurence saw civilization itself collapse in an instant: The big boom came about one hundred seconds after the great flash—the first cry of a newborn world. It brought the silent, motionless silhouettes to life, gave them a voice. A loud cry filled the air. The little groups that had hitherto stood rooted to the earth like desert plants broke into a dance—the rhythm of primitive man dancing at one of his fire festivals at the coming of spring. They clapped their hands as they leaped from the ground…The dance of the primitive man lasted but a few seconds, during which an evolutionary period of about 10,000 years telescoped. Primitive man was metamorphosed into modern man—shaking hands, slapping his fellow on the back, all laughing like happy children. (12)

#### They link - The 1AC is an ideological fantasy constructed by relentless planning at the expense of scapegoated identities, all for recognition from the Other in an attempt to fill the lack. Cross apply this to the aff’s attempts to fulfill the res or achieve their fw (i.e. recognizing the right to strike) to produce a more perfect world.

Gunder 05 Michael Gunder, 2005, “The Production of Desirous Space: Mere Fantasies of the Utopian City?” Planning Theory 2005 4: 173, DOI: 10.1177/1473095205054604, all brackets were in the original text

Jouissance is one of the four structuring elements of social discourse,4 or social interactions, links and relationships, where synchronic language meets diachronic speech to evoke an effect on the Other (Lacan, 2004: 3). Zupancic (2004) associates Lacan’s (2004) theory of the Four Discourses (see Gunder, 2003a, 2004; Hillier and Gunder, 2005) with the Marxian theory of commodification and surplus-value via Lacan’s concept of surplus-enjoyment (plus-de-jouir). Lacan (2004: 111) contends that surplusvalue and surplus-enjoyment are historically equivalent, especially in the situation of the Master’s injunction of ‘No!’ in the emerging early phase of Calvinistic repressive capitalism. In contrast to the historical authority and rationality of the Master’s repressive command, late capitalism is structured under a rationality of the university or bureaucracy. Now knowledge and technology, not the Master’s injunction, become ‘agency expressing a logic of governmentality and expertise (including that of planning) that does not prohibit enjoyment, but rather channels jouissance in ways that produces a “bio-politics” (after Foucault) of an alienated subject that has no option, but to enjoy and be satisfied’ (Hillier and Gunder, 2005; Gowan, 2004; Zˇ izˇek, 2004b; Zupancic, 2004). In this regard, ‘a nation exists only as long as its specific enjoyment continues to be materialised in a set of social practices and submitted through national myths [or fantasies] that structure these practices’ (Zˇ izˇek, 1993: 202). This is taken further by the barely challenged international hegemonic discourse of global capitalization and the fantasies it induces in externally structuring the nation state’s very enjoyment (Stavrakakis, 2003a: 63; Zˇ izˇek, 2004b: 61). Even the ruling British Labour government, with its ‘Third Way’, in contrast to its tradition of socialism, has placed ‘economic globalisation’ as ‘the most significant factor in shaping Labour Party thinking since the early 1990s’ (Allmendinger, 2003: 326). As McGowan (2004) observes: we trust fully in the staying power of global capitalism. The alternatives, which once seemed to be just around the corner, have become unimaginable today. The universe of global capitalism is, or so we think, here to stay, and we best not do anything to risk our status within it. Hence, we pledge our allegiance to it, and we put our trust in it. This is the fundamental mode of contemporary obedience to authority. Only by coming to understand this obedience to the dictates of global capitalism as obedience can we hope to break out of it. Global capitalism seems an unsurpassable horizon simply because we have not properly recognized our own investment in sustaining it. We see it as unsurpassable because we don’t want to lose it – and the imaginary satisfaction that it provides. (McGowan, 2004: 193) Illusion resides under this global fantasy of capital where ‘the basic feature of’ this dominant cultural imperative ‘no longer operates on the level of ideals and identifications, but directly on the level of regulating jouissance’ (Zˇ izˇek, 2004b: 113). Even in Lefebvre’s day, this was a capitalism where surplus-value was synonymous with surplus-enjoyment supporting the injunction: ‘you must enjoy!’. In this light, the role of planning is to facilitate enjoyment by sustainably providing the correct space – healthy, competitive, fit and attractive – where enjoyment can be effectively materialized and maximized under the imperative of global capitalism. Consequently: urbanism is nothing more than an ideology that claims to be either ‘art’ or ‘technology’ or ‘science’, depending on the context. This ideology pretends to be straightforward, yet it obfuscates, harbours things unsaid: which it covers, which it contains, as a form of will tending towards efficiency. Urbanism is doubly fetishistic. First, it implies the fetishism of satisfaction. What about vested interests? They must be satisfied, and therefore their needs must be understood and catered to, unchanged . . . Second, it implies the fetishism of space. Space is creation. Whoever creates space creates whatever it is that fills space. The place engenders the thing and the good place engenders good things. (Lefebvre, 2003: 159) This is exacerbated further in the current milieu of consumerist post-democracy personified by the master signifier: global capitalism. ‘Post-democracy is founded on an attempt to exclude the political awareness of lack and negativity from the political domain, leading to a political order which retains the token institutions of liberal democracy but neutralizes the centrality of political antagonism’ (Stavrakakis, 2003a: 59). In response to the dominant ‘logic’ of global competitiveness, the technocrats and experts including planners, shape, contextualize and implement public policy in the interest of the dominant hegemonic bloc. This is constructed under the logics and knowledges of university discourses (see Gunder, 2004), with an objective to remove existing or potential urban blight,‘dis-ease’ and dysfunction detracting from local enjoyment and global competitiveness (Gunder, 2005; McGuirk, 2004). Of course, the hegemonic network, or bloc, initially shapes the debate as to what constitutes desired enjoyment and what is lacking in urban competitiveness. In turn, this defines what is blighted and dysfunctional and in need of planning remedy. This is predicated on a logic, or more accurately a rhetoric, that a lack of a particular defined type of enjoyment, or competitiveness, is inherently unhealthy for the aggregate social body. Planners, programmers, and users want solutions. For what? To make people happy. To order them to be happy. It is a strange way of interpreting happiness. The science of the urban phenomenon cannot respond to these demands without the risk of validating external restrictions imposed by ideology and power. (Lefebvre, 2003: 141) Yet this lack and its resolution are more often technical in nature, rather than political. As a consequence, the technocrats in partnership with their ‘dominant stakeholders’ can ensure the impression of happiness for the many, while, not to mention, achieving the stakeholders’ specific interests. Material happiness for all but that evil other Lacanian theory suggests that a subject’s jouissance is given freest rein when an act of desire contains a dimension of transgression. It is the ‘little sin’ that gives the most pleasure; it is the prohibition as such which elevates a common everyday object into an object of desire (Zˇ izˇek, 2004b: 177). The bio-politics of contemporary planning are predicated on enjoyment – you will enjoy! – not the prior duality of repression/freedom of the Weberian capitalist master’s injunction: ‘No you cannot do that!’. The achievements of traditional utopian goals were ones of freedom to act against the repression of the negative injunction. Contemporary injunctions are to enjoy – or at least to sustain our happiness – regardless of what we actually desire. Happiness is not a class of truth, but one of an ontological class of being where: ‘happiness’ relies on the subject’s inability or unreadiness fully to confront the consequences of its desire: the price of happiness is that the subject remains stuck in the inconsistency of its desires. In our daily lives, we (pretend to) desire things which we do not really desire, so that, ultimately, the worst thing that can happen is for us to get what we ‘officially’ desire. Happiness is thus hypocritical: it is the happiness dreaming about things we do not really want. (Zˇ izˇek, 2002a: 59–60) Planning continues to succeed because it underpins the primal desire of most subjects in society for a conflict-free, safe and assured happy future, even if it can only deliver this as a fantasy-scenario of material happiness, rather than as an impossible reality that actually sates all desires (Gunder, 2003a, 2003b). This is a fantasy predicated on an obedience to a shallow consumptive quantitative imperative to be materially happy, which often occurs at the expense of our actual qualitative psychic desires. In our contemporary global society the ‘moral law’ is no longer the imperative that acts as a limitation, stopping us from enjoying too much. Instead, the cultural imperative, the now dominant moral Law itself, in its injunction for us to enjoy becomes ‘the ultimate “transgression”’ should one wish to pursue a life of moderation (Zˇ izˇek, 2004b: 174). Further, ‘the fantasy of a utopian harmonious social world can only be sustained if all the persisting disorders can be attributed to an alien intruder . . . a certain particularity which cannot be assimilated, but instead must be eliminated’ (Stavrakakis, 1999: 108). This is the stranger, the Other that is not us that can act as the ‘“scapegoat” to be stigmatised as the one who is blamed for our lack, the Evil force that stole our precious jouissance’ and stopped the fantasy from achieving its utopian vision (Stavrakakis, 2003a: 58). Even our ‘“complex” contemporary societies rely on the basic divide between included and excluded’ (Zˇ izˇek, 2004b: 86). Zˇ izˇek (2004b: 86) continues: in any society ‘there is a multitude within the system and a multitude of those excluded, and simply to encompass them both within the scope of the same notion amounts to the same obscenity as equating starvation with dieting.’ It is continually this Other that permits the delusion of harmony in our identity defining groups and for this to transpire we require an Other, external to the group for the group to define itself. We require a disparity, or gap, to allocate a degree of difference to an Other to conceptualize the group identification as who we are not and on this Other we can attribute all the signs of disharmony that jeopardize our shared fantasy (Zˇ izˇek, 1997: 5). Difference is essential to complete our fantasy of harmony, but only by providing the sacrificial Other on which we can blame the disappointment of the fantasy to deliver (Zˇ izˇek, 2004a: 158–9). In this light, planning,‘as part of the apparatus of the modern state, makes its own imprint, has its own powers for good and evil’ (Sandercock, 2004: 134). This is especially so as planning identifies, or at least names and legitimizes, what constitutes an urban pathology that detracts from what is desirous of the globally competitive city. Planning then sets out to remedy this lack or deficiency. Civil society, i.e. the public stage, and media of information dissemination are central to this process. Of course, our media are not ideologically neutral. As a consequence, media access for putting forth particular tropes of desire constitutes a central component of social, as well as economic, capital. This is well documented by Flyvbjerg (1998a) where the Aalborg Chamber of Commerce controlled the editorial content of the local newspaper. This argument is central to that of Chomsky’s (2003) multinational corporate steering of mass media content in the, so-called, ‘free’ press. This is where the mass media are free to publish almost anything, provided, of course, they do not alienate their corporate clients who provide their majority of income and profits via their advertising payments. Gunder (2003b) documented how planning actors and their affiliated partners gained public agreement via the rhetorical use of culturally shared ‘master signifiers’ and their related metonymies and metaphors. Here each signifier was linked to associations in the public’s unconscious that induced a conscious expression of desire for a particular set of values or specific consequential actions. Effective deployment of rhetorical tropes can seduce subjects ‘to relinquish previous desires (including identifications and embrace new ones) – or alternatively, to invest all the more completely in old ones’ (Bracher, 1993: 51–2). For example, does anyone wish to live in a city that is losing enjoyment to other locations because it lacks the fitness to compete? In Lacan, the construction of reality is continuous with the field of desire. Desire and reality are intimately connected . . . The nature of their link can only be revealed in fantasy . . . when harmony is not present it has to be somehow introduced in order for our reality to be coherent. It has to be introduced through a fantasmatic social construction. (Stavrakakis, 1999: 62–3) This is where, from a Lacanian outlook, by accepting rationalization as the means to fulfil a desire for completeness – via the utilization of falsifying words – ‘man does not adapt himself to reality; he adapts reality to himself’ (Roudinesco, 1997: 114). Ideological fantasies as to what constitutes an enjoyable and satisfying city are deployed to hide the dysfunctions and unpredictabilities that are ubiquitous throughout all social spheres, particularly for those lacking in sufficient capital to offset adversity. Social reality ‘is sustained by the “as if”, the fantasy of what things are like’ (Dean, 2001: 627). Rationalization, or realrationalität as Flyvbjerg (1998a) calls it, exists between the everyday activities of social life and the held universal ideals or values of what ought to be, even if it is not so, in social reality. The belief that planning is not political, but technical ‘allows the myths of objectivity, value neutrality, and technical reason to persist, and thereby fosters a certain delusion about planning practice’ (Sandercock, 2004: 134). Sandercock (2004: 134) continues: planning ‘helps to redefine political debate, producing new sources of power and legitimacy, changing the force field in which we operate’. Lefebvre suggests that planning is based on a strategy of mixing scientificity and rationality with ideology. ‘Here, as elsewhere, scientificity is an ideology, an excrescence grafted onto real, but fragmentary, knowledge’ (Lefebvre, 2003: 166). In particular, Lefebvre argues that quantitative expertise including the technology of urban planning is largely a myth. This is because planning administrators: and bad administrators at that, rarely use much actual technology. However, they have the ability to persuade the people as a whole that because these are technological decisions they should be accepted. In other words, a large part of Lefebvre’s criticism [of planners] is not that technocrats are technocrats, but that they are precisely the opposite. Technology should be put to the service of everyday life, of social life rather than being precisely the condition of its suppression and control. Urbanism, for example, is an ideology that operates under the cover of this myth of technology. (Elden, 2004: 145) Social reality can only exist in the symbolic and imaginary registries as it is composed, that is constructed, as a ‘result of a certain historically specific set of discursive practices and power mechanisms’ (Zˇ izˇek, 2001: 66). Flyvbjerg (1998a) illustrates this well in his exposé of the Aalborg Chamber of Commerce’s intervention in that city’s planning process. Here this grouping of dominant business people is given hegemonic voice to determine what constitutes acceptable transportation modes and spatial development in Aalborg’s town centre. In this example the planner’s technical facts, by themselves, produced the weaker argument. This was perhaps because the dissemination of these facts and their implications for planning action were ineffectively articulated to the public, if at all, via the local information media controlled by the Chamber of Commerce. In contrast, in Sydney, McGuirk (2004) documented how planners actively participated in and facilitated the dominant network of actors successfully pushing for a series of local, regional and national policies supporting Sydney’s global competitiveness. It appeared to be of little consequence that these policies induced adverse effects on the rest of the country, not to mention many of Sydney’s residents. Not dissimilarly, the Auckland case cited in the introduction illustrates how the planners actively consulted the dominant commercial stakeholders in developing their growth strategy, yet failed to have direct consultation with the Region’s actual residents (ARGF, 1999; Gunder, 2003a). Planners and their governance forum of dominant stakeholders appeared to inherently know what is in the best interests of their region’s residents. Planning as agonistic ethics Notwithstanding the ‘full rendering of the antagonisms which traverse our society, we indulge in the notion of society as an organic whole, kept together by forces of solidarity and co-operation’ (Zˇ izˇek, 1997: 6). Planning is one such instrument that shapes and justifies the governing ideals of utopian desire and in this ‘sphere, the fantasmatic ideal of harmony is dominant’ (Stavrakakis, 1999: 110). The subtle and not so subtle application of power defines truth, reason and rationality and this particularly comprises the deployment of power in our planning and related practices (Flyvbjerg, 1998a). Moreover, a Lacanian line of reasoning about knowledge and truth indicates that the constituting components of these induced fantasies of truth and rationality are mediated on the wants and needs of actors with the capacity to inflict their desires and wants on the Other and, as if, these desires belong to those who have been imposed on. This is via assertions of unquestionable ‘truth’, which are often supported and empowered by selected ‘distorted’ knowledge, practices and language put forward by their ideological supporters, employed professional experts and controlled media. Further, in this light traditional Kantian and related enlightenment ‘ethics is nothing more than a convenient tool for any ideology that tries to pass off its own commandments as authentic, spontaneous, and “honorable” inclinations of the subject’ (Zupancic, 1998: 41). In contrast to traditional ethics, Lacan’s (1992) theorizing may provide an alternative way to develop new values beyond those already constituted by society as traditional morals of good or evil shaping acceptable behaviours. Traditional ethics is predicated on a reality principle as to what is possible without transgression in social reality. As Zupancic (2003: 77) observes, this ‘reality principle itself is ideologically mediated; one could even claim that it constitutes the highest form of ideology, the ideology that presents itself as empirical factor or (biological, economic . . .) necessity.’ This ‘beyond good or evil’ does not have to lead to postmodern nihilism, rather Lacan lays a groundwork for an ethics of the Real, where through acknowledgement of this Real that we cannot know or articulate we can establish new ‘truths’ in relationship to the ‘good’ (Stavrakakis, 2003b; Zupancic, 2000, 2003). This is through a mechanism of ethical sublimation where we create ‘a certain space, scene, or “stage” that enables us to value something that is situated beyond the reality principle, as well as beyond the principle of common good’ (Zupancic, 2003: 78). It is the space, or stage, created when the planner, or other actor, makes the ethical decision to recommend an action or permission that is contrary to existing regulations, precedence, professional expectations, or cultural imperatives. This is perhaps because somehow for the planner, perhaps simply driven by strong feelings, the ‘correct’ and expected action is perceived as not being the right thing to do. From the Lacanian perspective of the ethics of the Real, to make the sensed wrong into a rightness is the ethically correct task, even if this requires the agent to act against what he/she thinks society expects of that actor. This act of transcending the reality principle, and being true to the actor’s desires,5 makes possible a new good, a new potential, it changes the rules as to what is possible (Gunder and Hillier, 2004: 230). ‘The ethical, then, is the constellation of events in which the subject frees herself from the symbolic law (“freedom”), commits herself to an act (“agency”), and thereby makes it possible for the law to be rethought’ (Kay, 2003: 109). The ethical ‘act is an “excessive”, trans-strategic intervention which redefines the rules and contours of the existing order’ (Zˇ izˇek, 2004b: 81). Viewed from this perspective, Kant’s categorical imperative must be rethought itself as purely transgressive: the ethical act proper is a transgression of the legal norm – a transgression which, in contrast to a simple criminal violation, does not simply violate the legal norm, but redefines what is a legal norm. The moral law does not follow the Good – it generates a new shape of what counts as ‘Good’. (Zˇ izˇek, 2001: 170) This is a transgression that introduces new spaces for what can be considered ‘good’ and hence a wider space for jouissance, beyond that of mere technically produced materialist satisfaction. Of course, a key question becomes: how can a credible planner, or other actor, transcend the accepted norms and expectations of a society to create a new space for a new concept of ‘good’? Further, how can one effectively and reasonably mobilize such an ethics of the Real in everyday life when it is so contrary to the consensual instrumental rationality of the modern project and its ready-made solutions, that are, arguably planning’s purpose and foundations? Planning theorists (e.g. Gunder and Hillier, 2004; Pløger, 2004) and researchers in other disciplines (e.g. Mouffe, 1999, 2000; Stavrakakis, 2003a; Thrift, 2004a, 2004b) are currently attempting to address these complex issues that essentially require new insight and perhaps even profound change in our very relationships towards social reality, itself. Further, they are attempting to do so in a manner that does not simply impose a new intransigent set of ideals to replace our late-modern cultural imperatives, but rather to encourage diverse opportunities for multiple opening in which imminence may continually occur (after Deleuze). Coherent and implementable means to achieve this desired state are yet to emerge as new knowledges and practices, if they can ever do so. Yet, this author suggests that mere awareness and articulation of the impossible implications that the Lacanian Real has on traditional rationality are perhaps one of many points of commencement. Of course, this discourse also may fall into the trap leading to transcendental idealism, i.e. a process of identifying a lack, or void, in our knowledge and practices and then presenting a hegemonic solution that must be implemented, regardless of effect and affect! This author suggests that to change social reality, to begin to question and where necessary traverse our norms and laws, while avoiding the imperative of idealism, calls for a return to agonism that reawakens the political awareness of lack and negativity in place of the technical injunction: you will enjoy! This permits a space for an inclusive acceptance of strife or agonism that does not exclude the Others’ voice attempting to articulate their desires and wants in response to the ‘irreducibility of the Real’ (Stavrakakis, 2003b: 331). Rather this re-politicization of the planning problematic from that of the technical, quantified, solution is one that values Lacan’s Real and Lefebvre’s lived space by making the ‘key “jump from quantity to quality”, from antagonisms subordinated to differences to the predominant role of antagonism’ as pure agonism (Zˇ izˇek, 2004b: 92). In Lefebvre’s city ‘unconscious desires and passions lay dormant, dormant beneath the surface of the real, within the surreal . . . waiting for . . . the day they can be realized in actual conscious life’ (Merrifield, 2000: 178). In this regard, rather than continuing to fill the lack generating the urban problematic and produce a largely phallic enjoyment, Stavrakakis (2003b: 332) reminds us that in Lacan’s later teachings he spoke of another form ‘of jouissance – female or feminine jouissance – which values this lack per se as something that entails a different kind of enjoyment.’ Perhaps this feminine jouissance may be more appropriate to politicize the needs and wants of lived space. Yet, to do so would require a politics that acknowledges the impossibility of the Lacanian Real. In contrast to the notion that what is meant by an utopia is an imagined ‘ideal society; what characterizes utopia is literally the construction of a u-topic space, a social space outside the existing parameters, the parameters of what appears to be “possible” in the existing social universe’ (Zˇ izˇek, 2004b: 123). This proposed utopia is one that may permit, at least aspects of Lefebvre’s ‘lived space’ of the qualitative to be both visible and articulated in conscious life. Rather than contestant cities and regions competing globally under one cultural imperative to attract and retain finite capital and resources via one ‘logic’ and vision, this article calls for a planning ethos that encourages diverse groups within cities and regions to actively contest their perspectives and desires without threat of exclusion. To achieve such a state requires planning ‘to find ways of working with agonism without automatically recurring to procedures, voting, representativity, forced consensus or compromises’ that inherently exclude (Pløger, 2004: 87). This requires a planning ethos predicated on a central awareness of the irreducible Real. This is an understanding that any forced resolution always excludes a remainder, what cannot be articulated or perceived. Further, this remainder will continue to have unconscious effect in terms of what drives our materialized actions. This suggests an overt democratic planning process, representative of a society that is explicitly and overtly hegemonic for all participants, not tacitly hegemonic in its privileging of specific groups with access to power and technocratic justification that is constituted under a logic implicitly desiring social order (Critchley, cited in Zˇ izˇek, 2004b: 95). This is in contrast to the existing social reality, where political processes, such as planning, appear to strive for public participation culminating in an harmonious public consensus, when of course this is but an ideological foil that excludes in the name of a ‘general interest’ defined by a privileged few and legitimized by technocratic ‘reason’. In contrast, a strong society ‘places conflict and power at its centre’ by guaranteeing the very ‘existence of conflict’ (Flyvbjerg, 1998b: 229). Our current dominating fantasy of harmony is sustained by the illusion of continued consumer abundance produced and brought by the cornucopia of global capitalism, at least for the first world. This enjoyment of global capitalism ‘constitutes a (partial) reality with hegemonic appeal, a horizon sustained by the hegemony of an administration of desire with seemingly unlimited resources’ (Stavrakakis, 2003a: 61). Of course, resources and global carrying capacities are axiomatically finite. So perhaps must be our desires, for they can never be sated. Traversing our fundamental fantasy for harmony: a start, not a conclusion! Lacan and his followers, such as Stavrakakis, Zˇ izˇek or Zupancic, produce valid arguments for a psychoanalytically derived philosophy of reality and ideology ‘capable of theorizing the ways our deepest commitments bind us to practices of domination’ (Dean, 2001: 627). Revealing and transversing the ideological constructs that shape and structure our social reality is inadequate in itself as a mere academic critical exercise of knowledge production. This author argues that we must radically challenge our underlying beliefs for ourselves, and, in particular, not externalize them to ‘larger cultural practices and technologies’ so that hegemonic networks, or partnerships, of dominant actors, including intellectuals and bureaucratic professionals, can do our believing and desiring for us through planning and related diverse agencies of social guidance (Dean, 2001: 628). To do so we must traverse our fundamental fantasies that seek harmony and security. This article’s application of Lacan, augmented with some of Lefebvre’s urban insights, gives us a combination of Freudian and Marxist thought that is considerably at odds to that conjured up by the Frankfurt School’s vision of society as ‘a liberated collective culture’ with little space for the individual histories of unique subjects (Jameson, 2003: 8). The latter is the School, or project, drawing on Marx and Freud, which eventually created the Habermasian product of communicative rationality. This is a rationality that sought as its seldom if ever achieved ideal, to produce undistorted (ideologically free) speech acts ‘based on recognition of the corresponding validity claims of comprehensiveness, truth, truthfulness, and rightness’ constituting a basis for consensually agreement as to how we should act (Habermas, 1979: 3). Yet, as Hillier (2003) illustrates, this is an ideal of undistorted speech that is an impossibility because of the Lacanian Real and the incompleteness it always induces in language, not to mention the impossibility of absolute truth. Yet, this author would agree with Habermas’ call for the supremacy of discourse over mere technical reason. Habermas’ last two validity claims of truthfulness to our desires and the need to act in regard of what our unconscious feeling says is rightness, even if this sense is perhaps not readily justifiable with symbolic knowledge and reasoned argument, should be given due regard through our discourses. In contrast to Habermas’ validity claims of truth and comprehensiveness, Lacan’s theorizing suggests a much more fundamental contextualization of urban ideology based on the fantasies we construct to paper over the lack induced by the Real. This is a perspective that situates our very social reality, including space and social interaction, as principally constituted and composed of ideological fantasy constructs, misrecognitions and misunderstandings (see Hillier, 2003). As Jameson (2003: 37–8) observes, we owe to Lacan ‘the first new and as yet insufficiently developed concept of the nature of ideology since Marx’. Drawing on Althusser, Jameson (2003: 37–8) continues that ideology is ‘the “representation” of the Imaginary relationships of individuals to their Real conditions of existence’, so that ‘the individual subject invents a “lived” relationship with collective systems.’ This is a symbolic, materialized, relationship of practices and rituals (Krips, 2003: 149). Here, it is the desire of this Other that we fundamentally seek and wish to please as we constantly strive to return to our idealized primordial desire for infant maternal security and contentment (Hillier and Gunder, 2005). So we construct and share illusions and fantasies – ideologies – that we are somehow achieving this impossible task. It is the aggregate of these Others, and the illusions we generate about them and ourselves, that constitutes the social reality that is our lived space.

#### Impact is value to life – only the death drive and accepting the finitude of death allow one to enjoy true pleasures of life

McGowan ‘13 [Todd, Assoc. Prof. of Film and Television Studies @ U. of Vermont, Enjoying What We Don’t Have: The Political Project of Psychoanalysis, pp. 223-227]VC

On the level of common sense, this opposition is not symmetrical. What thinking person would not want to side with those who love life rather than death.3 Everyone can readily understand how one might love life, but the love of death is a counterintuitive phenomenon. It seems as if it must be code language for some other desire, which is how Western leftists often view it. Interpreting terrorist attacks as an ultimately life-affirming response to imperialism and impoverishment, they implicitly reject the possibility of being in love with death. But this type of interpretation can't explain why so many suicide bombers are middle-class, educated subjects and not the most downtrodden victims of imperialist power. 4 We must imagine that for subjects such as these there is an appeal in death itself. Those who emphasize the importance of death at the expense of life do so because death is the source of value.5 The fact that life has an end, that we do not have an infinite amount of time to experience every possibility, means that we must value some things above others. Death creates hierarchies of value, and these hierarchies are not only vehicles for oppression but the pathways through which what we do matters at all. Without the value that death provides, neither love nor ice cream nor friendship nor anything that we enjoy would have any special worth whatsoever. Having an infinite amount of time, we would have no incentive to opt for these experiences rather than other ones. We would be left unable to enjoy what seems to make life most worth living. Even though enjoyment itself is an experience of the infinite, an experience of transcending the limits that regulate everyday activity, it nonetheless depends on the limits of finitude. When one enjoys, one accesses the infinite as a finite subject, and it is this contrast that renders enjoyment enjoyable. Without the limits of finitude, our experience of the infinite would become as tedious as our everyday lives (and in fact would become our everyday experience). Finitude provides the punctuation through which the infinite emerges as such. The struggle to assert the importance of death – the act of being in love with death, as bin Laden claims that the Muslim youths are – is a mode of avowing one’s allegiance to the infinite enjoyment that death *doesn't extinguish* but instead spawns.6 This is exactly why Martin Heidegger attacks what he sees as our modern inauthentic relationship to death. In *Being and Time* Heidegger sees our individual death as an absolute limit that has the effect of creating value for us. As he puts it, "With death, Dasein stands before itself in its ownmost potentiality-for-being. This is a possibility in which the issue is nothing less than Dasein's Being-in-the-world.”7 Without the anticipation of our own death, we flit through the world and fail to take up fully an attitude of care, the attitude most appropriate for our mode of being, according to Heidegger. Nothing really matters to those who have not recognized the approach of their own death. By depriving us of an authentic relationship to death, an ideology that proclaims life as the only value creates a valueless world where nothing matters to us. But of course the partisans of life are *not actually eliminating death* *itself*. They simply *privilege life over death* and see the world in terms of life rather than death which would seem to leave the value-creating power of death intact. But this is not what happens. By privileging life and seeing death only in terms of life, we change the way we experience the world. Without the mediation that death provides, the system of pure life becomes a system utterly bereft of value.8 We can see this in the two great systems of modernity – science and capitalism. Both modern science and capitalism are systems structured around pure life.9 Neither recognizes any ontological limit but instead continually embarks on a project of constant change and expansion. The scientific quest for knowledge about the world moves forward without regard for humanitarian or ethical concerns, which is why ethicists incessantly try to reconcile scientific discoveries with morality after the fact. After scientists develop the ability to clone, for instance, we realize what cloning portends for our sense of identity and attempt to police the practice. After Oppenheimer helps to develop the atomic bomb, he addresses the world with pronouncements of its evil. But this rearguard action has nothing to do with science as such. Oppenheimer the humanist is not Oppenheimer the scientist.10 The same dynamic is visible with capitalism. As an economic system, it promotes constant evolution and change just as life itself does. Nothing can remain the same within the capitalist world because the production of value depends on the creation of the new commodity, and even the old commodities must be constantly given new forms or renewed in some way.11 Capitalism produces crises not because it can't produce enough – crises of scarcity dominate the history of the noncapitalist world, not the capitalist one – but because it produces too much. The crisis of capitalism is always a crisis of overproduction. The capitalist economy suffocates from too much life, from excess, not from scarcity or death. Both science and capitalism move forward without any acknowledged limit, which is why they are synonymous with modernity.12 Modernity emerges with the bracketing of death's finitude and the belief that there is no barrier to human possibility. The problem with the exclusive focus on life at the expense of death is that it never finds enough life and thus remains perpetually dissatisfied. The limit of this project is, paradoxically, its own infinitude. It evokes what Hegel calls the bad infinite – an infinite that is wrongly conceived as having no relation at all to the finite. We succumb to the bad infinite when we pursue an unattainable object and fail to see that the only possible satisfaction rests in the pursuit itself. The bad infinite -the infinite of modernity- depends on a fundamental misrecognition. We continue on this path only as long as we believe that we might attain the final piece of the puzzle, and yet this piece is constitutively denied us by the structure of the system itself. We seek the commodity that would finally bring us complete satisfaction, but dissatisfaction is built into the commodity structure, just as obsolescence is built into the very fabric of our cars and computers. Like capitalism, scientific inquiry cannot find a final answer: beneath atomic theory we find string theory, and beneath string theory we find something else. In both cases, the system prevents us from recognizing where our satisfaction lies; it diverts our focus away from our activity and onto the goal that we pursue. In this way, modernity produces the dissatisfaction that keeps it going. But it also produces another form of dissatisfaction that wants to arrest its forward movement. The further the project of modernity moves in the direction of life, the more forcefully the specter of fundamentalism will make its presence felt. The exclusive focus on life has the effect of producing eruptions of death. As the life-affirming logic of science and capitalism structures all societies to an increasing extent, the space for the creation of value disappears. Modernity attempts to construct a symbolic space where there is no place for death and the limit that death represents. As opposed to the closed world of traditional society, modernity opens up an infinite universe.14 But this infinite universe is established through the repression of finitude. Explosions of fundamentalist violence represent the return of what modernity's symbolic structure cannot accommodate. As Lacan puts it in his seminar on psychosis, "Whatever is refused in the symbolic order, in the sense of *Verwerfung,* reappears in the real.”15 Fundamentalist violence is blowback not simply in response to imperialist aggression, as the leftist common sense would have it. This violence marks the return of what modernity necessarily forecloses.

#### Vote negative to embrace the lack – this requires being open to the anxiety that occurs from an encounter with the other and breaks down fantasy and drives.

McGowan 13 Todd McGowan, 2013, “Enjoying What We Don’t Have: The Political Project of Psychoanalysis,” University of Nebraska Press/Lincoln and London

The alternative — the ethical path that psychoanalysis identifies — demands an embrace of the anxiety that stems from the encounter with the enjoying other. If there is a certain ethical dimension to anxiety, it lies in the rela- tionship that exists between anxiety and enjoyment. Contra Heidegger, the ethics of anxiety does not stem from anxiety’s relation to absence but from its relation to presence — to the overwhelming presence of the other’s enjoyment. In some sense, the encounter with absence or nothing is easier than the encounter with presence. Even though it traumatizes us, absence allows us to constitute ourselves as desiring subjects. Rather than producing anxiety, absence leads the subject out of anxiety into desire. Confronted with the lost object as a structuring absence, the subject is able to embark on the pursuit of the enjoyment embodied by this object, and this pursuit provides the subject with a clear sense of direction and even meaning. This is precisely what the subject lacks when it does not encounter a lack in the symbolic structure. When the subject encounters enjoyment at the point where it should encounter the absence of enjoyment, anxiety overwhelms the subject. In this situation, the subject cannot constitute itself along the path of desire. It lacks the lack — the absence — that would provide the space through which desire could develop. Consequently, this subject confronts the enjoying other and experiences anxiety. Unlike the subject of desire — or the subject of Heideggerean anxiety — the subject who suffers this sort of anxiety actually experiences the other in its real dimension.¶ The real other is the other caught up in its obscene enjoyment, caught up in this enjoyment in a way that intrudes on the subject. There is no safe distance from this enjoyment, and one cannot simply avoid it. There is nowhere in the contemporary world to hide from it. As a result, the contem- porary subject is necessarily a subject haunted by anxiety triggered by the omnipresent enjoyment of the other. And yet, this enjoyment offers us an ethical possibility. As Slavoj Žižek puts it, “It is this excessive and intrusive jouissance that we should learn to tolerate.”27 When we tolerate the other’s “excessive and intrusive jouissance” and when we endure the anxiety that it produces, we acknowledge and sustain the other in its real dimension.¶ Tolerance is the ethical watchword of our epoch. However, the problem with contemporary tolerance is its insistence on tolerating the other only insofar as the other cedes its enjoyment and accepts the prevailing symbolic structure. That is to say, we readily tolerate the other in its symbolic dimen- sion, the other that plays by the rules of our game. This type of tolerance allows the subject to feel good about itself and to sustain its symbolic identity. The problem is that, at the same time, it destroys what is in the other more than the other — the particular way that the other enjoys.¶ It is only the encounter with the other in its real dimension — the encounter that produces anxiety in the subject — that sustains that which defines the other as such. Authentic tolerance tolerates the real other, not simply the other as mediated through a symbolic structure. In this sense, it involves the experience of anxiety on the part of the subject. This is a difficult posi- tion to sustain, as it involves enduring the “whole opaque weight of alien enjoyment on your chest.”The obscene enjoyment of the other bombards the authentically tolerant subject, but this subject does not retreat from the anxiety that this enjoyment produces. If the embrace of the anxiety that accompanies the other’s proximate enjoyment represents the ethical position today, this does not necessarily provide us with an incentive for occupying it. Who wants to be ethical when it involves enduring anxiety rather than finding a way — a drug, a new authority, or something — to alleviate it? What good does it do to sustain oneself in anxiety? In fact, anxiety does the subject no good at all, which is why it offers the subject the possibility of enjoyment. When the subject encounters the other’s enjoyment, this is the form that its own enjoyment takes as well. To endure the anxiety caused by the other’s enjoyment is to experience one’s own simultaneously. As Lacan points out, when it comes to the enjoyment of the other and my own enjoyment, “nothing indicates they are distinct.” Thus, not only is anxiety an ethical position, it is also the key to embracing the experience of enjoyment. To reject the experience of anxiety is to flee one’s own enjoyment.¶ The notion that the other’s enjoyment is also our own enjoyment seems at first glance difficult to accept. Few people enjoy themselves when they hear someone else screaming profanities in the workplace or when they see a couple passionately kissing in public, to take just two examples. In these instances, we tend to recoil at the inappropriateness of the activity rather than enjoy it, and this reaction seems completely justified. The public display of enjoyment violates the social pact with its intrusiveness; it doesn’t let us alone but assaults our senses. It violates the implicit agreement of the public sphere constituted as an enjoyment-free zone. And yet, recoiling from the other’s enjoyment deprives us of our own.¶ How we comport ourselves in relation to the other’s enjoyment indi- cates our relationship to our own. What bothers us about the other — the disturbance that the other’s enjoyment creates in our existence — is our own mode of enjoying. If we did not derive enjoyment from the other’s enjoyment, witnessing it would not bother us psychically. We would sim- ply be indifferent to it and focused on our own concerns. Of course, we might ask an offending car radio listener to turn the radio down so that we wouldn’t have to hear the unwanted music, but we would not experience the mere exhibition of alien enjoyment through the playing of that music as an affront. The very fact that the other’s enjoyment captures our attention demonstrates our intimate — or extimate — relation to it. This relation becomes even clearer when we consider the epistemo- logical status of the enjoying other. Because the real or enjoying other is irreducible to any observable identity, we have no way of knowing whether or not the other really is enjoying. A stream of profanity may be the result of someone hurting a toe. The person playing the car radio too loud while sitting at the traffic light may have simply forgotten to turn down the radio after driving on the highway. Or the person may have difficulty hearing. The couple’s amorous behavior in public may reflect an absence of enjoyment in their relationship that they are trying to hide from both themselves and the public.¶ Considering the enjoyment of the other, we never know whether it is there or not. If we experience it, we do so through the lens of our own fantasy. We fantasize that the person blasting the radio is caught up in the enjoyment of the music to the exclusion of everything else; we fantasize that the public kisses of the couple suggest an enjoyment that has no concern for the outside world. Without the fantasy frame, the enjoying other would never appear within our experience.¶ The role of the fantasy frame for accessing the enjoying other becomes apparent within Fascist ideology. Fascism posits an internal enemy — the figure of the Jew or some analogue — that enjoys illicitly at the expense of the social body as a whole. By attempting to eliminate the enjoying other, Fascism hopes to create a pure social body bereft of any stain of enjoy- ment. This purity would allow for the ultimate enjoyment, but it would be completely licit. This hope for a future society free of any stain is not where Fascism’s true enjoyment lies, however. Fascists experience their own enjoyment through the enjoying other that they persecute. The enjoy- ment that the figure of the Jew embodies is the Fascists’ own enjoyment, though they cannot avow it as their own. More than any other social form, Fascism is founded on the disavowal of enjoyment — the attempt to enjoy while keeping enjoyment at arm’s length. But this effort is not confined to Fascism; it predominates everywhere, because no subjects anywhere can simply feel comfortable with their own mode of enjoying.¶ The very structure of enjoyment is such that we cannot experience it directly: when we experience enjoyment, we don’t have it; it has us. We experience our own enjoyment as an assault coming from the outside that dominates our conscious intentions. This is why we must fantasize our own enjoyment through the enjoying other. Compelled by our enjoyment, we can’t do otherwise; we act against our self-interest and against our own good. Enjoyment overwhelms the subject, even though the subject’s mode of enjoying marks what is most singular about the subject.¶ Even though the encounter with the enjoying other apprehends the real other through the apparatus of fantasy, this encounter is nonetheless genuine and has an ethical status. Unlike the experience of the nonexistent symbolic identity, which closes down the space in which the real other might appear, the fantasized encounter with the enjoying other leaves this space open. By allowing itself to be disturbed by the other on the level of fantasy, the subject acknowledges the singularity of the real other — its mode of enjoying — without confining this singularity to a prescribed identity.¶ The implications of privileging the encounter with the disturbing enjoy- ment of the real other over the assimilable symbolic identity are themselves disturbing. The tolerant attitude that never allows itself to be jarred by the enjoying other becomes, according to this way of seeing things, further from really encountering the real other than the attitude of hate and mis- trust. The liberal subject who welcomes illegal immigrants as fellow citizens completely shuts down the space for the other in the real. The immigrant as fellow citizen is not the real other. The xenophobic conservative, on the other hand, constructs a fantasy that envisions the illegal immigrant awash in a linguistic and cultural enjoyment that excludes natives. This fantasy, paradoxically, permits an encounter with the real other that liberal tolerance forecloses. Of course, xenophobes retreat from this encounter and from their own enjoyment, but they do have an experience of it that liberals do not. The tolerant liberal is open to the other but eliminates the otherness, while the xenophobic conservative is closed to the other but allows for the otherness. The ethical position thus involves sustaining the liberal’s toler- ance within the conservative’s encounter with the real other.

## DA

#### South Africa is on the verge of economic and political collapse

**Rakowski 20’** (“South Africa’s leaders are facing impending disaster”, Stephen Rakowski, <https://www.thenationalnews.com/opinion/comment/south-africa-s-leaders-are-facing-impending-disaster-1.963586>, 1/26/2020, Stephen Rakowski is a sub-Saharan Africa Analyst at geopolitical risk consultancy Stratfor, focused on security, political and economic trends across the continent.)

**South Africa is on the brink of collapse. After years of corruption, mismanagement and poor investment, the fruits of the once-promising country have turned rancid.** As the country’s leaders grapple with the impending disaster on their hands, **tensions are boiling over**. On January 10, Tito Mboweni, the finance minister, launched a series of tweets underscoring the gravity of the situation: “If you cannot effect deep structural economic reforms, then game over! Stay as you are and you are downgraded to Junck [sic] Status!! The consequences are dire. Your choice.” While his direct audience was unclear, the message was clear. **More than a decade of worsening economic indicators has wreaked havoc on the African giant**. From eye-popping unemployment of over 29 per cent to stupefying levels of violent crime, **South Africa is sinking ever further into the muck.** To complicate matters, the country’s once-reliable and cheap electricity has become the single biggest threat to the economy. Eskom, **the state power utility, has struggled to keep the lights on** for many months, as one plant breakdown after another have made the electrical grid woefully expensive and unstable. Eskom authorities have turned to enacting forced blackouts to prevent total system collapse, hitting the economy as businesses and households alike have scrambled for more expensive back-up options like diesel generators – or risk staying in the dark. In December, Eskom was forced to shed so much power from the grid that even vital mining operations in the country were temporarily halted, impacting the country’s most critical sector. Amid the blackouts, Pretoria has thrown billions of dollars at the problem, but to little avail. This is because constructing new plants and improving the existing decrepit infrastructure will take several years, meaning that South Africa’s fight to keep the lights on will continue to harm the economy for the foreseeable future. The consequences will be felt well beyond the electrical sector as Moody’s Financial Services, the last of the big three credit agencies to not downgrade South Africa to junk status, will review its position in November. It is likely that Moody’s will downgrade. This will force fund managers with investment-grade mandates to dump their South African assets and make others rethink their own positions in the country, worsening already high investment outflows from the country. Eskom’s electricity woes have sucked up several billions of dollars and significant government attention. Much of this money has been financed by debt, which will increase the burden on the country’s taxpayers in the years ahead as the true costs of debt repayment come due. Indeed, significant resources that could have helped address the myriad systemic problems afflicting the country have gone to the putting out of the massive fire that is Eskom. Yet **South Africa’s infrastructure is eroding across the board**, from roads and bridges to rail and the water system. In fact, **historic level droughts in 2019 have been exacerbated by the crumbling water infrastructure**, meaning that deadly future water crises will be ever more likely. But as Rome burns, [**South Africa's long ruling African National Congress is as divided as ever**](https://www.thenational.ae/opinion/comment/the-anc-might-have-liberated-south-africa-but-it-doesn-t-have-a-free-pass-to-govern-forever-1.860308). The party's deep factions are largely split between the reform wing headed by President Cyril Ramaphosa and the populist wing once led by his predecessor, Jacob Zuma. The problem for Mr Ramaphosa and his allies is that they hold only a tenuous grip over the party, despite being the reason why the ANC avoided historic defeat in the 2019 general elections after years of disastrous Zuma rule. Indeed, the Zuma wing is much to blame for the appalling situation South Africa finds itself in, having spent much of the past decade looting instead of leading. Nevertheless, they have retained key positions in the current government and devote much of their time toward undermining economic reform and finding ways to unseat Mr Ramaphosa. The ANC’s bruising internal battles have stymied critical reforms to jumpstart the economy, prompting outbursts of frustration from officials like the finance minister Mr Mboweni. Yet while the short-term consequences are readily obvious to many, the long-term reckoning that South Africa will face is less clear. First and foremost, **the country’s lacklustre economy, wracked by recession in recent quarters, is set for only tepid grow for the foreseeable future.** This will make it ever harder for Pretoria to rid itself of a potential debt trap it has gotten itself into, as ever more money will need to service ballooning debt instead of new roads, the health or education sectors, law enforcement, etc. To make matters worse, the terrible and stubborn unemployment situation will underscore for millions of impoverished South Africans operating in the dangerous black-market economy that the country is one of "haves" and "have nots". [Violent crime will only worsen](https://www.thenational.ae/opinion/comment/xenophobic-violence-in-south-africa-is-undermining-promise-of-the-african-century-1.909062) as millions more are obligated to eke out a bleak existence despite seeing wealth around them. Consequently, the ever-worsening crime, **weak economic growth and collapsing infrastructure will drive up the costs of living and doing business in South Africa.** For the country’s high-net worth and skilled individuals, this will prove intolerable. In fact, signs already suggest that emigration of the country’s most productive members has jumped in recent years and data suggests most will never return. This will rob South Africa of its best and brightest, likely disproportionately hurting key sectors of the future like high tech, science and medicine. It will also mean ever-greater budgetary shortfalls as the richest and most mobile of South African society departs for sunnier – and safer – shores. For a country that started with such promise following the end of the apartheid in 1994, **South Africa finds itself in a sorry mess**. But as political infighting and Eskom’s woes continue, **the chances of South Africa halting its rot will become ever more difficult in the years ahead.**

#### Strikes decimate South Africa’s economy

**Tenza 20’**, Tenza Mlungisi. The effects of violent strikes on the economy of a developing country: a case of South Africa.*Obiter* [online]. 2020, vol.41, n.3 [cited  2021-11-04], pp.519-537. Available from: <http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci\_arttext&pid=S1682-58532020000300004&lng=en&nrm=iso>. ISSN 2709-555X.

Economic growth is one of the most important pillars of a state. Most developing states put in place measures that enhance or speed-up the economic growth of their countries. It is believed that if the economy of a country is stable, the lives of the people improve with available resources being shared among the country's inhabitants or citizens. However, **it becomes difficult when the growth of the economy is hampered by the exercise of one or more of the constitutionally entrenched rights such as the right to strike.****[1](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1682-58532020000300004" \l "back_fn1) Strikes in South Africa are becoming more common,** and this affects businesses, employees and their families, and eventually, the economy. **It becomes more dangerous for the economy and society at large if strikes are accompanied by violence causing damage to property and injury to people. The duration of strikes poses a problem for the economy of a developing country like South Africa.** **South Africa** is rich in mineral resources, the world's largest producer of platinum and chrome, the second-largest producer of zirconium and the third-largest exporter of coal. It also **has the largest economy in Africa**, both in terms of industrial capacity and gross domestic product (GDP).[2](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1682-58532020000300004" \l "back_fn2) However, **these** economic **advantages have been affected by protracted and violent strikes.****[3](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1682-58532020000300004" \l "back_fn3)** For example, **in the platinum industries**, **labour stoppages** since 2012 have **cost the sector** approximately **R18 billion lost in revenue and 900 000 oz in lost output**. The five-month-long strike in early 2014 at Impala Platinum Mine amounted to a loss of about R400 million a day in revenue.[4](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1682-58532020000300004" \l "back_fn4) The question that this article attempts to address is how violent strikes and their duration affect the growth of the economy in a developing country like South Africa. It also addresses the question of whether there is a need to change the policies regulating industrial action in South Africa to make them more favourable to economic growth. When South Africa obtained democracy in 1994, there was a dream of a better country with a new vision for industrial relations.[5](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1682-58532020000300004" \l "back_fn5) However, **the number of violent strikes that have bedevilled this country in recent years seems to have shattered-down the aspirations of a better South Africa.** South Africa recorded 114 strikes in 2013 and 88 strikes in 2014, which cost the country about R6.1 billion according to the Department of Labour.[6](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1682-58532020000300004" \l "back_fn6) The impact of these strikes has been hugely felt by the mining sector, particularly the platinum industry. The biggest strike took place in the platinum sector where about 70 000 mineworkers' downed tools for better wages. Three major platinum producers (Impala, Anglo American and Lonmin Platinum Mines) were affected. The strike started on 23 January 2014 and ended on 25 June 2014. Business Day reported that "**the five-month-long strike in the platinum sector pushed the economy to the brink of recession**".[7](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1682-58532020000300004" \l "back_fn7) This strike was closely followed by a four-week strike in the metal and engineering sector. **All these strikes (and those not mentioned here) were characterised with violence accompanied by damage to property, intimidation, assault and sometimes the killing of people.** Statistics from the metal and engineering sector showed that about 246 cases of intimidation were reported, 50 violent incidents occurred, and 85 cases of vandalism were recorded.[8](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1682-58532020000300004" \l "back_fn8) Large-scale unemployment, soaring poverty levels and the dramatic income inequality that characterise the South African labour market provide a broad explanation for strike violence.[9](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1682-58532020000300004" \l "back_fn9) **While participating in a strike,** **workers' stress levels leave them feeling frustrated at their seeming powerlessness, which in turn provokes further violent behaviour.****[10](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1682-58532020000300004" \l "back_fn10) These strikes are not only violent but take long to resolve.** Generally, **a lengthy strike has a negative effect on employment, reduces business confidence and increases the risk of economic stagflation.** In addition, **such strikes have a major setback on the growth of the economy and investment opportunities.** It is common knowledge that consumer spending is directly linked to economic growth. At the same time, if the economy is not showing signs of growth, employment opportunities are shed, and poverty becomes the end result. The economy of South Africa is in need of rapid growth to enable it to deal with the high levels of unemployment and resultant poverty. One of the measures that may boost the country's economic growth is by attracting potential investors to invest in the country. However, this might be difficult as investors would want to invest in a country where there is a likelihood of getting returns for their investments. The wish of getting returns for investment may not materialise if the labour environment is not fertile for such investments as a result of, for example, unstable labour relations. Therefore, investors may be reluctant to invest where there is an unstable or fragile labour relations environment. The Constitution guarantees every worker the right to join a trade union, participate in the activities and programmes of a trade union, and to strike.[11](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1682-58532020000300004" \l "back_fn11)The Constitution grants these rights to a "worker" as an individual.[12](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1682-58532020000300004" \l "back_fn12)However, the right to strike and any other conduct in contemplation or furtherance of a strike such as a picket[13](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1682-58532020000300004" \l "back_fn13) can only be exercised by workers acting collectively.[14](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1682-58532020000300004" \l "back_fn14) The right to strike and participation in the activities of a trade union were given more effect through the enactment of the Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995[15](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1682-58532020000300004" \l "back_fn15) (LRA). The main purpose of the LRA is to "advance economic development, social justice, labour peace and the democratisation of the workplace".[16](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1682-58532020000300004" \l "back_fn16) The advancement of social justice means that the exercise of the right to strike must advance the interests of workers and at the same time workers must refrain from any conduct that can affect those who are not on strike as well members of society. Even though the right to strike and the right to participate in the activities of a trade union that often flow from a strike [17](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1682-58532020000300004" \l "back_fn17) are guaranteed in the Constitution and specifically regulated by the LRA, it sometimes happens that the right to strike is exercised for purposes not intended by the Constitution and the LRA, generally.[18](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1682-58532020000300004" \l "back_fn18) For example, it was not the intention of the Constitutional Assembly and the legislature that violence should be used during strikes or pickets. As the Constitution provides, pickets are meant to be peaceful.[19](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1682-58532020000300004" \l "back_fn19) Contrary to section 17 of the Constitution, the conduct of workers participating in a strike or picket has changed in recent years with workers trying to emphasise their grievances by causing disharmony and chaos in public. A media report by the South African Institute of Race Relations pointed out that between the years 1999 and 2012 there were 181 strike-related deaths, 313 injuries and 3,058 people were arrested for public violence associated with strikes.[20](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1682-58532020000300004" \l "back_fn20) The question is whether employers succumb easily to workers' demands if a strike is accompanied by violence? In response to this question, one worker remarked as follows: "[T]here is no sweet strike, there is no Christian strike ... A strike is a strike. [Y]ou want to get back what belongs to you ... you won't win a strike with a Bible. You do not wear high heels and carry an umbrella and say '1992 was under apartheid, 2007 is under ANC'. You won't win a strike like that."[21](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1682-58532020000300004" \l "back_fn21) **The use of violence** during industrial action affects not only the strikers or picketers, the employer and his or her business but it **also affects innocent members of the public, non-striking employees, the environment and the economy at large.** In addition, striking workers visit non-striking workers' homes, often at night, threaten them and in some cases, assault or even murder workers who are acting as replacement labour.[22](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1682-58532020000300004" \l "back_fn22) This points to the fact that for many workers and their families' living conditions remain unsafe and vulnerable to damage due to violence. In *Security Services Employers Organisation v SA Transport & Allied Workers Union (SATAWU),**[23](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1682-58532020000300004" \l "back_fn23)* it was reported that about 20 people were thrown out of moving trains in the Gauteng province; most of them were security guards who were not on strike and who were believed to be targeted by their striking colleagues. Two of them died, while others were admitted to hospitals with serious injuries.[24](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1682-58532020000300004" \l "back_fn24)In *SA Chemical Catering & Allied Workers Union v Check One (Pty) Ltd,**[25](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1682-58532020000300004" \l "back_fn25)*striking employees were carrying various weapons ranging from sticks, pipes, planks and bottles. One of the strikers Mr Nqoko was alleged to have threatened to cut the throats of those employees who had been brought from other branches of the employer's business to help in the branch where employees were on strike. Such conduct was held not to be in line with good conduct of striking.[26](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1682-58532020000300004" \l "back_fn26) **These examples from case law show that South Africa is facing a problem that is affecting not only the industrial relations' sector but also the economy at large.** For example, in 2012, during a strike by workers employed by Lonmin in Marikana, the then-new union Association of Mine & Construction Workers Union (AMCU) wanted to exert its presence after it appeared that many workers were not happy with the way the majority union, National Union of Mine Workers (NUM), handled negotiations with the employer (Lonmin Mine). **AMCU went on an unprotected strike which was violent and resulted in the loss of lives, damage to property and negative economic consequences including a weakened currency, reduced global investmen2t7, declining productivity, and increase unemployment in the affected sectors.****[27](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1682-58532020000300004" \l "back_fn27)Further, the unreasonably long time it takes for strikes to get resolved in the Republic has a negative effect on the business of the employer, the economy and employment.** Generally, South Africa's economy is on a downward scale. First, it fails to create employment opportunities for its people. The recent statistics on unemployment levels indicate that unemployment has increased from 26.5% to 27.2%.[28](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1682-58532020000300004" \l "back_fn28) The most prominent strike which nearly brought the platinum industries to its knees was the strike convened by AMCU in 2014. The strike started on 23 January 2014 and ended on 24 June 2014. It affected the three big platinum producers in the Republic, which are the Anglo American Platinum, Lonmin Plc and Impala Platinum. It was the longest strike since the dawn of democracy in 1994. As a result of this strike, the platinum industries lost billions of rands.[29](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1682-58532020000300004" \l "back_fn29) According to the report by Economic Research Southern Africa, the platinum group metals industry is South Africa's second-largest export earner behind gold and contributes just over 2% of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP).[30](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1682-58532020000300004" \l "back_fn30) The overall metal ores in the mining industry which include platinum sells about 70% of its output to the export market while sales to local manufacturers of basic metals, fabricated metal products and various other metal equipment and machinery make up to 20%.[31](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1682-58532020000300004" \l "back_fn31) The research indicates that the overall impact of the strike in 2014 was driven by a reduction in productive capital in the mining sector, accompanied by a decrease in labour available to the economy. This resulted in a sharp increase in the price of the output by 5.8% with a GDP declined by 0.72 and 0.78%.[32](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1682-58532020000300004" \l "back_fn32) South Africa's primary source of income is through employment; the state relies heavily on the income taxes it collects from employed people. The implication is that unemployment has a negative effect on the state while if more people are employed, their income tax will add to the government's coffers. Unemployment means that people are unable to support themselves and their families, conversely the state has an obligation of ensuring that such people sustainable means in the form of social assistance.[33](http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S1682-58532020000300004" \l "back_fn33) The state, together with the private sector, bears the responsibility of alleviating poverty in society. Unemployment is a real contributor to poverty. Other factors that contribute to poverty include a general lack of education, lack of relevant skills in certain areas such as science, inequality, inherited past practices and structural problems such as low wages supporting big families, low domestic savings, the ongoing electricity shortage from 2013 to 2015 threatening investors, low levels of business confidence, severe drought, reduced fiscal capacity, and the growing risk of stagflation. In addition, **a lengthy strike comes with a threat of job losses in vulnerable sectors such as mining, metals and agriculture. It is also believed that protracted strikes contribute towards weakening the country's local currency (the South African rand). All these factors put a strain on the already struggling economy of South Africa.**

#### Economic decline causes political instability

**Spence 16** (William R. Berkley Professor in Economics and Business, NYU Stern School of Business, A . Michael Spence 1966, BA (Hons), Princeton University; 1968, BA and MA, Oxford University; 1972, PhD in Economics, Harvard University. Economist. 1973-75, Associate Professor of Economics, Stanford University; 1975-90, Professor, Economics and Business Administration, Harvard University; 1977-79, Member, Economics Advisory Panel, National Science Foundation; 1984-90, Dean, Faculty of Arts and Sciences, Harvard University; 1990-99, Phillip H Knight Professor and Dean, Graduate School of Business, Stanford University. Currently, Chairman, Independent Commission on Growth and Development; Senior Fellow, Hoover Institution, “Economic decline is leading to political instability. What's the solution?”, 3/24/16, https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/03/economic-decline-is-leading-to-political-instability-whats-the-solution)

Over the last 35 years, Western democracies have seen a rapid rise in political instability, characterized by frequent shifts in governing parties and their programs and philosophies, driven at least partly by economic transformation and hardship. The question now is how to improve economic performance at a time when political instability is impeding effective policymaking. In a recent article, one of us (David Brady) shows the correlation between rising political instability and declining economic performance, pointing out that countries with below-average economic performance have experienced the most electoral volatility. More specifically, such instability corresponds with a decline in the share of industrial or manufacturing employment in advanced countries. Though the extent of the decline varies somewhat across countries – it has been less sharp in Germany than in the United States, for example – the pattern is fairly ubiquitous. Over the last 15 years, in particular, increasingly powerful digital technologies enabled the automation and disintermediation of “routine” white- and blue-collar jobs. With advances in robotics, materials, 3D printing, and artificial intelligence, one can reasonably expect the scope of “routine” jobs that can be automated to continue expanding. The rise of digital technologies also boosted companies’ ability to manage complex multi-source global supply chains efficiently, and thus take advantage of global economic integration. As services became increasingly tradable, manufacturing declined steadily as a share of employment, from 40% in 1960 to about 20% today. But, in most advanced countries, the tradable sector did not generate much employment, at least not enough to offset declines in manufacturing. In the United States, for example, net employment generation in the third of the economy that produces tradable goods and services was essentially zero over the last two decades. Partly driven by these trends, the share of national income going to labor, which rose in the early post-war period, began falling in the 1970s. While globalization and digital technologies have produced broad-based benefits, in the form of lower costs for goods and an expanded array of services, they have also fueled job and income polarization, with a declining share of middle-income jobs and a rising share of lower- and higher-income jobs splitting the income distribution. The magnitude of this polarization varies by country, owing to disparate social-security systems and policy responses. Until 2008, when economic crisis roiled much of the world, the concerns associated with rising inequality were at least partly masked by higher leverage, with government expenditures and wealth effects from rising asset prices supporting household consumption and propping up growth and employment. When that growth pattern broke down, economic and political conditions deteriorated rapidly. Most obvious, the drop in growth and employment has amplified the adverse effects of job and income polarization. Beyond the obvious practical problems this has raised, it has impinged on many citizens’ sense of identity. In the post-war industrial era, one could reasonably expect to earn a decent living, support a family, and contribute in a visible way to the country’s overall prosperity. Being shunted into the non-tradable service sector, with lower income and less job security, caused many to lose self-esteem, as well as fostering resentment toward the system that brought about the shift. (It did not help matters that the same system bailed out the main driver of the economic crisis, the financial sector – a move that exposed a stark disparity between exigency and fairness.) While technology-driven economic transformation is not new, it has never occurred as rapidly or on as large a scale as it has over the last 35 years, when it has been turbocharged by globalization. With their experiences and fortunes changing fast, many citizens now believe that powerful forces are operating outside the control of existing governance structures, insulated from policy intervention. And, to some extent, they are right. The result is a widespread loss of confidence in government’s motivations, capabilities, and competence. This sentiment does not appear to be mitigated much by a recognition of the complexity of the challenge of maintaining incentives and dynamism while addressing rising inequality (which, at its most extreme, undermines equality of opportunity and intergenerational mobility). As Brady points out, during the more stable period immediately following World War II, growth patterns were largely benign from a distributional perspective, and political parties were largely organized around the interests of labor and capital, with an overlay of common interests created by the Cold War. As outcomes have become increasingly unequal, there has been a fragmentation of interests across the electoral spectrum, leading to instability in electoral outcomes, political paralysis, and frequent changes in policy frameworks and direction. This has several economic consequences. One is policy-induced uncertainty, which, by most accounts, amounts to a major impediment to investment. Another is the distinct lack of consensus on an agenda to restore growth, reduce unemployment, reestablish a pattern of inclusiveness, and retain the benefits of global interconnectedness. On one level, it is hard not to see this as a self-reinforcing destructive cycle. Political instability reduces the likelihood of defining and implementing a reasonably comprehensive, coherent, and sustained economic-policy agenda. The resulting persistence of low growth, high unemployment, and rising inequality fuels continued political instability and fragmentation, which further undermines officials’ capacity to implement effective economic policies. But on another level, these trends may actually be healthy, as they bring concerns about globalization, structural transformation, and governance – which have so far been expressed mainly in the streets – into the political process. This kind of direct connection between citizens’ concerns and governance is, after all, a core strength of democracy. When a developing country gets stuck in a no-growth equilibrium, building a consensus on a forward-looking vision for inclusive growth is always the critical first step toward achieving better economic performance and the policies that support it. That is what the most effective leaders have done. The principle is the same for developed countries. Our best hope is that today’s leaders understand it and will adhere to it, thereby putting their creative energies to work on a new vision that places their countries on a path to greater prosperity and equity.

**Africa instability goes nuclear.**

**Mead** **13**. [(Walter Mead is a James Clarke Chace Professor of Foreign Affairs and Humanities, Bard College) “Peace in The Congo? Why the World Should Care,” The American Interest, December 15, 2013. <https://www.the-american-interest.com/2013/12/15/peace-in-the-congo-why-the-world-should-care/>

One of the **biggest questions of the 21st century** is whether this **destructive dynamic** can be contained, or whether the demand for ethnic, cultural and/or religious homogeneity will continue to **convulse world politics**, **drive new generations of conflict**, and **create millions more victims**. The **Congo conflict** is a disturbing piece of evidence **suggest**ing that, in Africa at least, there is potential for this kind of conflict. The Congo war (and the long Hutu-Tutsi conflict in neighboring countries) is not, unfortunately alone. The secession of South Sudan from Sudan proper, the wars in what remains of that unhappy country, the secession of Eritrea from Ethiopia and the rise of Christian-Muslim tension right across Africa (where religious conflict often is fed by and intensifies “tribal”—in Europe we would say “ethnic” or “national”—conflicts) are strong indications that the potential for **huge and destructive conflict** across Africa is very real. But one must look beyond Africa. The Middle East of course is aflame in religious and ethnic conflict. The old British Raj including India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Burma and Sri Lanka offers countless examples of ethnic and religious conflict that sometimes is contained, and sometimes boils to the surface in horrendous acts of violence. Beyond that, rival nationalisms in East and Southeast Asia are keeping the world awake at night. The Congo war should be a reminder to us all that the **foundations of our world are dynamite**, and that the potential for new conflicts on the **scale of the horrific wars of the 20th century** is very much with us today. The second lesson from this conflict stems from the realization of how much patience and commitment from the international community (which in this case included the Atlantic democracies and a coalition of African states working as individual countries and through various international institutions) it has taken to get this far towards peace. Particularly at a time when many Americans want the US to turn inwards, there are people who make the argument that it is really none of America’s business to invest time and energy in the often thankless task of solving these conflicts. That might be an ugly but defensible position if we didn’t live in such a tinderbox world. Someone could rationally say, yes, it’s terrible that a million plus people are being killed overseas in a horrific conflict, but the war is really very far away and America has urgent needs at home and we should husband the resources we have available for foreign policy on things that have more power to affect us directly. The problem is that these wars **spread**. They may start in places that we don’t care much about (most Americans didn’t give a rat’s patootie about whether Germany controlled the Sudetenland in 1938 or Danzig in 1939) but they tend to spread to places that we do care very much about. This can be because a revisionist great power like Germany in 1938-39 needs to overturn the balance of power in Europe to achieve its goals, or it can be because instability in a very remote place triggers problems in places that we care about very much. Out of Afghanistan in 2001 came both 9/11 and the waves of insurgency and instability that threaten to **rip nuclear-armed Pakistan apart** or **with trigger wider conflict India**. Out of the mess in Syria a witches’ brew of terrorism and religious conflict looks set to complicate the security of our allies in Europe and the Middle East and even the security of the oil supply on which the world economy so profoundly depends. **Africa**, and the potential for upheaval there, is of **more importance to American security** than many people may understand. The line **between Africa and the Middle East** is a soft one. The **weak states** that straddle the southern approaches of the Sahara are **ideal petri dishes** for **Al Qaeda type groups** to form and attract local support. There are **networks** of funding and religious contact that give groups in these countries potential access to **funds**, **fighters**, **training** and **weapons** from the Middle East. A **war in the eastern Congo** might not directly trigger these other conflicts, but it helps to create the **swirling underworld** of arms trading, money transfers, illegal commerce and the rise of a generation of young men who become **experienced fighters**—and know no other way to make a living. It **destabilizes** the environment for neighboring states (like Uganda and Kenya) that play much more direct role in potential crises of greater concern to us.

#### Extinction

**Germanos 13** [senior editor staff writer Common Dreams on IPPNW and PSR][“Nuclear War Could Mean ‘Extinction of the Human Race.’” Common Dreams, 10 Dec. 2013, www.commondreams.org/news/2013/12/10/nuclear-war-could-mean-extinction-human-race#:%7E:text=A%20war%20using%20even%20a,people%2C%20a%20new%20report%20warns.&text=The%20updated%20report%20adds%20that,such%20a%20war%20broke%20out.]

A war using even a small percentage of the world's nuclear weapons threatens the lives of two billion people, a new report warns. The findings in the report issued by International Physicians for Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) and Physicians for Social Responsibility (PSR) are based on studies by climate scientists that show how nuclear war would alter the climate and agriculture, thereby threatening one quarter of the world's population with famine. "A nuclear war using only a fraction of existing arsenals would produce massive casualties on a global scale—far more than we had previously believed," Dr. Ira Helfand, the report’s author and IPPNW co-president, said in a statement. As their previous report showed, years after even a limited nuclear war, production of corn in the U.S. and China's middle season rice production would severely decline, and fears over dwindling food supplies would lead to hoarding and increases in food prices, creating further food insecurity for those already reliant on food imports. The updated report adds that Chinese winter wheat production would plummet if such a war broke out. Based on information from new studies combining reductions in wheat, corn and rice, this new edition doubles the number of people they expect to be threatened by nuclear-war induced famine to over two billion. "The prospect of a decade of widespread hunger and intense social and economic instability in the world’s largest country has immense implications for the entire global community, as does the possibility that the huge declines in Chinese wheat production will be matched by similar declines in other wheat producing countries," Helfand stated. The crops would be impacted, the report explains, citing previous studies, because of the black carbon particles that would be released, causing widespread changes like cooling temperatures, decreased precipitation and decline in solar radiation. In this scenario of famine, epidemics of infectious diseases would be likely, the report states, and could lead to armed conflict. From the report: Within nations where famine is widespread, there would almost certainly be food riots, and competition for limited food resources might well exacerbate ethnic and regional animosities. Among nations, armed conflict would be a very real possibility as states dependent on imports attempted to maintain access to food supplies. While a limited nuclear war would bring dire circumstances, the impacts if the world's biggest nuclear arms holders were involved would be even worse. "With a large war between the United States and Russia, we are talking about the possible —not certain, but possible—extinction of the human race," Helfand told Agence-France Presse. "In this kind of war, biologically there are going to be people surviving somewhere on the planet but the chaos that would result from this will dwarf anything we've ever seen," Helfand told the news agency. As Helfand writes, the data cited in the report "raises a giant red flag about the threat to humanity posed." Yet, as Dr. Peter Wilk, former national executive director of PSR writes in an op-ed today, the "threat is of our own creation." As a joint statement by 124 states delivered to the United Nations General Assembly in October stated: "It is in the interest of the very survival of humanity that nuclear weapons are never used again, under any circumstances." "Countries around the world—those who are nuclear-armed and those who are not—must work together to eliminate the threat and consequences of nuclear war," Helfand said. “In order to eliminate this threat, we must eliminate nuclear weapons.”

# Case