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**Environment resilient -- we don’t need to worry about it**

**Kareiva et al 12 –** Chief Scientist and Vice President, The Nature Conservancy(Peter, Michelle Marvier **--**professor and department chair of Environment Studies and Sciences at Santa Clara University, Robert Lalasz **--** director of science communications for The Nature Conservancy, Winter, “Conservation in the Anthropocene,” http://thebreakthrough.org/index.php/journal/past-issues/issue-2/conservation-in-the-anthropocene/)

2. As conservation became a global enterprise in the 1970s and 1980s, the movement's justification for saving nature shifted from spiritual and aesthetic values to focus on biodiversity. Nature was described as primeval, fragile, and at risk of collapse from too much human use and abuse. And indeed, there are consequences when humans convert landscapes for mining, logging, intensive agriculture, and urban development and when key species or ecosystems are lost.¶ But ecologists and conservationists have **grossly overstated** the fragility of nature, frequently arguing that once an ecosystem is altered, it is gone forever. Some ecologists suggest that if a single species is lost, a whole ecosystem will be in danger of collapse, and that if too much biodiversity is lost, spaceship Earth will start to come apart. Everything, from the expansion of agriculture to rainforest destruction to changing waterways, has been painted as a threat to the delicate inner-workings of our planetary ecosystem.¶ The fragility trope dates back, at least, to Rachel Carson, who wrote plaintively in Silent Spring of the delicate web of life and warned that perturbing the intricate balance of nature could have disastrous consequences.22 Al Gore made a similar argument in his 1992 book, Earth in the Balance.23 And the 2005 Millennium Ecosystem Assessment warned darkly that, while the expansion of agriculture and other forms of development have been overwhelmingly positive for the world's poor, ecosystem degradation was simultaneously putting systems in jeopardy of collapse.24¶ The trouble for conservation is that the data simply do not support the idea of a fragile nature at risk of collapse. Ecologists now know that the disappearance of one species does not necessarily lead to the extinction of any others, much less all others in the same ecosystem. In many circumstances, the demise of formerly abundant species can be **inconsequential** to ecosystem function. The American chestnut, once a dominant tree in eastern North America, has been extinguished by a foreign disease, yet the forest ecosystem is surprisingly unaffected. The passenger pigeon, once so abundant that its flocks darkened the sky, went extinct, along with countless other species from the Steller's sea cow to the dodo, with **no catastrophic or even measurable effects**.¶ These stories of **resilience are not isolated** examples -- a **thorough review of** the scientific literature identified **240 studies** of ecosystems following **major disturbances** such as deforestation, mining, oil spills, and other types of pollution. The abundance of plant and animal species as well as other measures of ecosystem function recovered, at least partially, in 173 **(72 percent) of** these **studies**.25¶ While global forest cover is continuing to decline, it is rising in the Northern Hemisphere, where "nature" is returning to former agricultural lands.26 Something similar is likely to occur in the Southern Hemisphere, after poor countries achieve a similar level of economic development. A 2010 report concluded that rainforests that have grown back over abandoned agricultural land had 40 to 70 percent of the species of the original forests.27 Even Indonesian orangutans, which were widely thought to be able to survive only in pristine forests, have been found in surprising numbers in oil palm plantations and degraded lands.28¶ Nature is so **resilient** that it can **recover rapidly** from even the **most powerful** human disturbances. Around the Chernobyl nuclear facility, which melted down in 1986, wildlife is thriving, despite the high levels of radiation.29 In the Bikini Atoll, the site of multiple nuclear bomb tests, including the 1954 hydrogen bomb test that boiled the water in the area, the number of coral species has actually increased relative to before the explosions.30 More recently, the massive 2010 oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico was degraded and consumed by bacteria at a remarkably fast rate.31¶ Today, coyotes roam downtown Chicago, and peregrine falcons astonish San Franciscans as they sweep down skyscraper canyons to pick off pigeons for their next meal. As we destroy habitats, we create new ones: in the southwestern United States a rare and federally listed salamander species seems specialized to live in cattle tanks -- to date, it has been found in no other habitat.32 Books have been written about the collapse of cod in the Georges Bank, yet recent trawl data show the biomass of cod has recovered to precollapse levels.33 It's doubtful that books will be written about this cod recovery since it does not play well to an audience somehow addicted to stories of collapse and environmental apocalypse.¶ Even that classic symbol of fragility -- the polar bear, seemingly stranded on a melting ice block -- may have a good chance of surviving global warming if the changing environment continues to increase the populations and northern ranges of harbor seals and harp seals. Polar bears evolved from brown bears 200,000 years ago during a cooling period in Earth's history, developing a highly specialized carnivorous diet focused on seals. Thus, the fate of polar bears depends on two opposing trends -- the decline of sea ice and the potential increase of energy-rich prey. The history of life on Earth is of species evolving to take advantage of new environments only to be at risk when the environment changes again.¶ The wilderness ideal presupposes that there are parts of the world untouched by humankind, but today it is impossible to find a place on Earth that is unmarked by human activity. The truth is humans have been impacting their natural environment for centuries. The wilderness so beloved by conservationists -- places "untrammeled by man"34 -- never existed, at least not in the last thousand years, and arguably even longer.

#### No keystone species

Zeller 13 (Tom Zeller Jr., Senior Writer for The Huffington Post, Citing research by Barry Brook, Professor at the University of Adelaide, leading environmental scientist, holding the Sir Hubert Wilkins Chair of Climate Change at the School of Earth and Environmental Sciences, and is also Director of Climate Science at the University of Adelaide’s Environment Institute, author of 3 books and over 250 scholarly articles, Huffington Post, March 2, 2013, "Tipping Points: Can Humanity Break The Planet?", http://www.huffingtonpost.com/tom-zeller-jr/global-tipping-points\_b\_2793154.html)

As for Planet Earth, a paper published Thursday in the journal Trends in Ecology and Evolution suggests that while human society does a very thorough job of modifying and, often enough, permanently and abruptly changing the dynamics of local and regional ecosystems, the collective impact of all this on a planetary scale is too often overstated. Dire warnings that our localized impacts could trigger global-scale "tipping points," after which the spinning cogs and gears that underpin our entire terrestrial biosphere are thrown abruptly and permanently out of whack, have no scientific basis, the authors argue. Global-scale changes, such that they are, come about smoothly and slowly, they say. "This is good news because it says that we might avoid the doom-and-gloom scenario of abrupt, irreversible change," Professor Barry Brook, lead author of the paper and director of Climate Science at the University of Adelaide in Australia, said in a statement accompanying the study's release. "A focus on planetary tipping points may both distract from the vast ecological transformations that have already occurred, and lead to unjustified fatalism about the catastrophic effects of tipping points." "An emphasis on a point of no return is not particularly helpful for bringing about the conservation action we need," Brook added. "We must continue to seek to reduce our impacts on the global ecology without undue attention on trying to avoid arbitrary thresholds." This, of course, flies directly in the face of a growing body of research over the last several years -- much of it suggesting that there are very real planetary boundaries beyond which the entire terra machina starts to break down. This was the core of an extensive exploration published in the journal Nature in 2009. In an email message, James E. Hansen, who heads the NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies and is an adjunct professor at Columbia University's Earth Institute, said that tipping points may unfold more smoothly than people generally understand, but that they represent points of no return nonetheless. He also suggested that dismissing the notion of global tipping points out of hand was a mistake. "Tipping points are real, albeit misunderstood by some people," he said. Last June, in another paper published in Nature, a team of "biologists, ecologists, complex-systems theoreticians, geologists and paleontologists, from the United States, Canada, South America and Europe," according the University of California, Berkeley, which spearheaded the study, argued that "population growth, widespread destruction of natural ecosystems, and climate change may be driving Earth toward an irreversible change in the biosphere, a planet-wide tipping point that would have destructive consequences absent adequate preparation and mitigation." The authors of Thursday's study suggest this is nonsense. To prove their point, the team of Australian, American and British scientists looked at the impacts of four fundamental ecosystem influencers: Climate change; land-use changes (turning forest to agricultural land, for example, or native grasslands to pasture); the fragmentation of various habitats; and overall reductions in the richness and diversity of species. There is little doubt that humans have a hand in all of these, and there is also little doubt they contribute to fundamental and quite often permanent changes in the way local and regional ecosystems work. As a very simple example, think of the fast-growing and aggressive plant kudzu -- artificially introduced to the U.S. by way of Japan in the late 19th century and now, well, everywhere. Amid a fertile stand of trees and scrub and their dependent wildlife, kudzu can easily take over, strangling the local native vegetation, stripping resident critters of their accustomed food sources, and, at some juncture, causing the interdependent system that had grown up in that spot to collapse, with little practical ability to bounce back. Sure, a new system is in place, but the "regime" has been changed. The authors of Thursday's study, however, suggest that the local impacts of any stressor -- be it kudzu, or even rising temperatures due to human-driven global warming -- are vastly different in disparate parts of the globe. This heterogeneity of responses suggests that, on the whole, the planetary system would remain pretty stable -- or at the very least, global-scale changes will tend to be very gradual, rather than abrupt and catastrophic.

#### China already geared up to become Biotech lead.

CAS 20 [(CAS, a division of the American Chemical Society, partners with R&D organizations globally to provide actionable scientific insights that help them plan, innovate, protect their innovations, and predict how new markets and opportunities will evolve. Leverage our unparalleled content, specialized technology, and unmatched human expertise to customize solutions that will give your organization an information advantage.), “3 reasons biotech is booming in China: How can you capitalize on the growth?”, <https://www.cas.org/resources/blog/3-reasons-biotech-booming-china-how-can-you-capitalize-growth>, July 20, 2021] TDI

3 reasons biotech is booming in China: How can you capitalize on the growth?

This year marks the 40th anniversary of China's Reform and Opening Up policy, which was established in 1978. China’s embrace of economic reform and free-market principles has propelled unprecedented business and industry growth since that time, firmly securing its position as the world's second largest economy.

In light of the rise of China's economy, a number of global biotech companies—such as Denmark's Novo Nordisk—began to build an early presence there. Building on this foundation, within the past few years biotech has started to grow at an explosive rate in China. In fact, China's biotech industry is anticipated to exceed four percent of GDP by 2020.

Why is biotech betting big on China? Here, we explore three factors driving the country's recent biotech boom and what it means for those looking to capitalize on this growth

National innovation strategy attracting top talent

Ten years ago, a biotech specialist from China may have needed to look for international career opportunities. But today, thriving government programs and a surge of entrepreneurial investments have created more incentive than ever for top talent to establish careers in China.

The Chinese government has made it a priority to transform the country from a manufacturing to an innovation-driven economy by developing five-year national strategic plans that set economic and growth goals. The most recent plan, which put special focus on the biotech industry, outlines the development of 10 to 20 biomedicine life-science parks with an output surpassing $1.5 billion by 2020. This is in addition to the 100 life-science parks already established throughout the country, as well as $100 billion of government investments dedicated to innovation.

The government's Thousand Talents Plan—which encourages Chinese scientists, academics and entrepreneurs living abroad to return to China—has recruited 7,000 experts since 2008, with 1,400 of them recruited specifically by the life sciences committee for biotech.

The government has also heavily invested to enhance the intellectual property environment in China. The State Intellectual Property Office (SIPO), China's patent office, has received additional resources to address the growing volume of patent applications and has implemented an expedited examination process. In 2007, SIPO had 2,672 examiners dedicated to examining patents; by 2017, that number had grown to more than 11,500 (SIPO Annual Reports, 2007 and 2017). SIPO also offers attractive benefits to high-demand patent applications, such as covering filing fees and providing tax incentives and monetary rewards.

Beyond the government, Chinese venture capital and private equity funds raised $45 billion for life sciences in two and a half years, which contributed to the development of China's flourishing biotech start-up culture.

As a result of all of these factors driving innovation, patent applications have soared—more than 50,000 biotech patents were submitted in 2017, up from less than 20,000 in 2010. Some fields leading this growth are natural products, biologics and bioinformatics.

Chinese biotech patent applications

Chart, histogram

Description automatically generated

Growth in Chinese biotech patent application volume since 2000

Demand for new treatments creating an attractive market

According to the United Nations, China's population is ageing more rapidly than that of any other country. This fact, along with changing lifestyles and environmental concerns, is driving increasing rates of critical and chronic illness. For example, 36 percent of the world's lung cancer diagnoses come from China, yet the five-year lung cancer survival rate is currently 17 percent lower than the global average.

This market landscape creates surging demand for pioneering medical treatments, and investors are turning to Chinese scientists to develop solutions that could not only be sold in China, but enhance treatment worldwide.

Major pharmaceutical companies in the west are taking note as well and considering ways to bolster their presence in China as domestic investors gain market share, with many global leaders opening research centers in China and others coordinating research cooperation pacts with Chinese institutions.

Globalized approach to regulations easing market entry

In March 2018, the China Food and Drug Administration (CFDA) announced it will merge with other administrative bodies to form a national market supervision administration. As part of the restructuring, a new entity is being created that will focus primarily on medical technologies. This is expected to bring increased efficiency and consistency to regulation of pharmaceuticals and medical devices in China.

Further, in April 2018, the government launched initiatives to support generic drug research and development as a means to foster innovation and provide more accessible treatment options to Chinese patients. They include providing research grants, as well as expediting the review and approval process of generic drugs based on name-brand drugs with compulsory licenses.

These efforts are the latest in a series of reforms aimed at streamlining China's regulatory process to align with international standards. Last August, for example, the CFDA announced it had joined ICH, a global federation of medicines regulators that seeks to harmonize health technology regulations. It also announced it would allow data from clinical trials conducted outside of China to be admitted as part of regulatory filings, a move that fast-tracks new treatments from the lab to the clinic. Overall, these efforts to streamline China's regulatory processes and align them more closely with those outside of China eases entry into the Chinese market for domestic as well as foreign investors and also make it easier for Chinese firms to market their innovations internationally.

These developments, along with the impressive growth rate, clearly demonstrate that China is quickly establishing itself as the eastern hub for biotechnology innovation. Organizations looking for growth opportunities in biotech should certainly have China on their radar. However, a successful strategy for growth within any industry sector in China requires a deep understanding of the market and intellectual property landscape, as well as governmental and cultural factors.

#### Zero link – China already has access to MRNA technology. The DA is a big pharma ploy

PC 5-3. [(Public Citizen -- non-profit, progressive consumer rights advocacy group and think tank based in Washington, D.C., United States. “Don’t Buy Pharma’s Latest Distraction: A Temporary WTO IP Waiver for COVID Meds Would Not Hand “U.S. mRNA Technology” to China” <https://www.citizen.org/article/dont-buy-pharmas-latest-distraction-a-temporary-wto-ip-waiver-for-covid-meds-would-not-hand-u-s-mrna-technology-to-china/>)] TDI

New COVID-19 variants are emerging everywhere. An outbreak anywhere could hatch a vaccine-resistant or more deadly or infectious strain that spreads worldwide. Global vaccination to build global herd immunity is the only way to end the pandemic and ensure anyone is safe. But, under current production trends, with a few firms controlling if and how much vaccine is made, many people in developing countries will not have access until 2024. More than 100 nations believe an emergency COVID-19 waiver of certain World Trade Organization (WTO) intellectual property (IP) rules that give monopoly control over medicine production to a few pharmaceutical firms is necessary, so people worldwide get access to COVID-19 vaccines and treatments ASAP. Support for the waiver is growing. So, more than 100 Big Pharma lobbyists have descended on D.C. to pressure Congress and the administration to oppose it. That vaccine firms are blocking expanded vaccine production is not a winning story. So, **Big Pharma is trying to change the subject.** The latest absurd claim: A COVID-19 IP waiver would help China access “U.S. mRNA technology” to create medical innovations. Putting aside the shocking immorality of opposing development of more vaccines and therapeutics for cancer and heart disease, the claim is absurd. **Messenger RNA (mRNA) research has been underway collaboratively in numerous countries for decades**. **It is not a “U.S. technology**.” A Hungarian scientist launched the work in the 1970s. Turkish migrants heading the German firm BioNTech developed the mRNA innovations used in the “Pfizer” vaccine. Plus… **mRNA vaccines are already being developed in China**. **Chinese entities already have developed at least two mRNA-platform COVID-19 vaccines.** Guangzhou RiboBio’s is working on an mRNA vaccine that can be stored at refrigerator temperature. A 120 million dose annual capacity plant is being built to make an mRNA vaccine developed by Walvax Biotechnology, Suzhou Abogen Biosciences and the Academy of Military Science, which is in phase 3 trials, according to the World Health Organization (WHO). BioNTech already contracted with Chinese firm Fosun to make the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine. Pharma’s story is premised on the notion that a waiver of WTO “Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property” (TRIPS) rules will grant “China” new access to the technology underlying the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines. **Except that the technology behind the vaccines produced by Pfizer is owned by BioNTech, which already licensed it to a Chinese producer**. There are real China IP theft issues. The WTO IP waiver is not one of them. Messenger RNA Research Has Been Underway Collaboratively in Numerous Countries With Significant Government Funding for Decades, It’s Not a “U.S. Technology” Research on using synthetic messenger RNA, or mRNA, to treat or prevent diseases started in Hungary in 1978 with breakthrough research by Professor Katalin Karikó. Since then, researchers from around the world, including Turkey, Thailand, South Africa, India, Brazil, India, Argentina, Malaysia and Bangladesh, have been working on mRNA-based health technologies. While the U.S. firm Moderna has carried out research on this platform for more than a decade, with substantial support from the U.S. government, others in different parts of the world have also worked on it. BioNTech, a German firm founded by Turkish immigrants and where Prof. Karikó is now senior vice president, worked for years on mRNA-based treatments for cancer and a potential flu vaccine. The German government supported BioNTech’s research. BioNTech holds all patents and patent applications related to the BNT162 SARS-CoV-2 vaccine, known in the market as the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine. The bottom line is that the mRNA platform has been developed by scientists from all over the world. And people from around the world should reap its benefits. **By Hollering “CHINA!!!” Pharma Hopes to Distract from Focus on Its Monopoly Control and the Shortages It Is Causing** The vaccine makers stand to make a lot of money whether or not there is a waiver. Pfizer and Moderna projected COVID-19 vaccine revenue of $15 billion and $18.4 billion respectively in 2021 alone. A WTO waiver would not undermine those earning but could boost them. A WTO waiver would NOT free governments and firms from paying royalties or providing other compensation under national laws, as the WTO’s own explanation of its 2001 HIV-AIDS IP flexibilities decision underscores. Payments for compulsorily licensed technology usually are based on costs and a percentage of profit. Pharma’s real concern is losing its current monopoly control of production and thus the prospect of competitors in what it sees as lucrative future sales of COVID-19 boosters in wealthy countries. Yet absent more production in more locations, there simply won’t be sufficient capacity to make enough vaccines and other COVID-19 medicines needed to end the pandemic.

#### IP protection enables Chinese biotech advancement.

Kazmierczak et al. 19 [(Dr. Mark, a molecular biologist with a special interest in threats to food and agricultural safety. With a PhD in microbiology from Cornell’s Food Safety Laboratory, he pursued post-doctoral research at Harvard Medical School and served as an FDA Commissioner’s Fellow where he developed a novel test for Salmonella. Dr. Kazmierczak began his work at Gryphon in 2012, modeling food contamination events. He has since undertaken a range of assignments to use modeling to understand threats and vulnerabilities from any source.) “China’s Biotechnology Development: The Role of US and Other Foreign Engagement” Gryphon Scientific, 2/14/2019] TDI

The first important element of global interaction for Chinese companies is the outright purchase of IP from foreign firms. Patents and trademarks give their owners the right to exclusively use and profit from a technology, brand or trademark in a specified jurisdiction. Patent applications are generally made public after 18 months of filing, and granted patents are in force for a period of 20 years from invention. The purchase of IP from foreign firms is an important component of the catch-up process of Chinese pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies as they have relatively little self-developed IP in certain areas, which makes patent acquisitions a prerequisite for expanding into global markets. Most of the patent purchases we found, however, involved medical devices such as prosthetics or traditional (small molecule) pharmaceutical drugs and therefore do not fall under our definition of biotechnology.

#### Unipolarity is over

Mearsheimer 19 [John J. Professor of IR @ Uchicago, “Bound to Fail.” International Security, Vol. 43, No. 4]

There is an additional problem linked to hyperglobalization that has little to do with the growing political opposition to the international order in liberal countries, and everything to do with the global balance of power. Until Trump came to power in 2017, Western elites, in keeping with their post–Cold War policy of engaging, not containing, China, were deeply committed to integrating China into the world economy, including all of its key economic institutions. An increasingly prosperous and wealthy China, they assumed, would eventually become a liberal democracy and an upstanding member of the liberal international order. What the architects of that policy did not realize, however, is that by helping accelerate Chinese growth, they were actually helping undermine the liberal order, as China has rapidly grown into an economic powerhouse with significant military capability. In effect, they have helped China become a great power, thus undercutting unipolarity, which is essential for maintaining a liberal world order. This problem has been compounded by the resurgence of Russia, which is once again a great power, although clearly a weak one. With the rise of China and Russia’s comeback, the international system has become multipolar, which is a death knell for the liberal international order. To make matters worse, neither China nor Russia has become a liberal democracy. Even if China and Russia had not become great powers and the world remained unipolar, the liberal order would still be falling apart today because of its intrinsic flaws. The election of Donald Trump, who sharply and frequently criticized all the key elements of the post–Cold War order during his presidential campaign, is evidence of how much trouble it was in by 2016. Thus, if the international system had remained unipolar, the liberal world order would have devolved into an agnostic order under President Trump, as realist orders have no place in unipolarity. There is certainly no evidence that he is committed to refashioning the existing liberal order. Indeed, he appears bent on wrecking it. With or without China, the liberal international order was destined to fail, because it was fatally flawed at birth

summary

The various causal processes described above have all played an important role in subverting the liberal international order. Although each one has a distinct logic, they have often operated synergistically. For example, the negative effects of hyperglobalization on the lower and middle classes have combined with the nationalist resentment over immigration and the sense of lost sovereignty to fuel a strong populist backlash against the principles and practices of the liberal order. Indeed, that anger has often been directed at the liberal elites who have benefitted from the order and who vigorously defend it. That resentment, of course, has had significant political consequences. It has caused deep political divisions in the United States and other Western democracies, led to Brexit, helped put Trump in the White House, and fueled support for nationalist leaders around the world.

Where Are We Headed?

One might acknowledge that the liberal international order is in terminal decline, but argue that it can be replaced with a more pragmatic version, one that avoids the excesses of the post–Cold War order.85 This more modest liberal order would pursue a more nuanced, less aggressive approach to spreading liberal democracy, rein in hyperglobalization, and put some significant limits on the power of international institutions. The new order, according to this perspective, would look something like the Western order during the Cold War, although it would be global and liberal, not bounded and realist. This solution is not feasible, however, because the unipolar moment is over, which means there is no chance of maintaining any kind of liberal international order for the foreseeable future. Furthermore, President Trump has no intention of pursuing a “liberal-lite” world order, and without his support, that option is a nonstarter. But even if Trump were not an obstacle and the international system were to remain unipolar, the United States would fail if it lowered its sights and attempted to construct a less ambitious liberal order. Indeed, it would end up building an agnostic international order instead. It is impossible to build a meaningful liberal global order with modest or more passive policies. The enterprise requires too much social engineering in too many places. If it has any chance of succeeding (I think it has none), the liberal unipole and its allies must relentlessly pursue highly ambitious global policies, which is why the United States and its liberal partners acted the way they did in the wake of the Cold War. That approach, however, is now politically infeasible because of past failures. Consequently, the liberal democracies have no choice but to take small steps here and there to remake the world in their own image, while adopting a live and let live approach toward most countries in the world. That humble approach would effectively produce an agnostic order. But that is not going to happen, because the system is multipolar and great power politics are once again at play. Thus, the key question is: What kinds of realist orders will dominate the landscape in the new multipolar world?

#### Hegemony fuels escalation of low-level conflict and regional instability in hotspots in the Middle East, Europe, and Asia

Gunnar 17 – Ulson Gunnar is a New York-based geopolitical analyst and writer especially for the online magazine “New Eastern Outlook”. ("US Foreign Policy: Hegemony or Stability, Not Both," 4-2-2017, https://www.globalresearch.ca/us-foreign-policy-hegemony-or-stability-not-both/5582758)//usc-jk

US foreign policy has for decades been predicated on achieving and maintaining global peace, security and stability. In reality, it has for over a century constituted an overreaching desire to achieve and maintain global hegemony.

And where US efforts focus on achieving hegemony, division and destruction follow. From the Middle East to Eastern Europe, and from Southeast Asia to the Korean Peninsula, US intervention politically or militarily all but guarantee escalating tensions, uncertain futures, socioeconomic instability and even armed conflict.

The Middle East and North Africa

US efforts in the Middle East since the conclusion of the first World War have focused on dividing the region, cultivating sectarian animosity and pitting neighbors against one another in vicious, unending combat. During the 50s and 60s, the US pitted its regional proxy, Israel, against its Arab neighbors. In the 1980’s the US armed both the Iraqis and the Iranians amid a destructive 8 year long war.

Today, the US props up Persian Gulf states who in turn are fueling regional, even global terrorism that has destabilized or entirely dismembered entire nations. And from the Middle East and North Africa, waves of refugees have reverberated outward affecting adjacent regions who have so far been spared from the chaos directly.

In Syria, the United States poses as a central player in restoring stability to the conflict stricken nation. In reality, it was the US itself that trained activists years ahead of the so called Arab Spring, as well as funneled money into the Muslim Brotherhood and other extremist groups to serve as militant proxies after the protests were finally underway. Today, militant groups operating under the banners of Al Qaeda and its various affiliates are almost exclusively funded, armed and trained by the Persian Gulf states through which the US launders its own support to these groups through.

Thus, while the US poses as an agent of stability in Syria, it is the central player intentionally creating and perpetuating chaos.

Likewise, the North African state of Libya has been rendered all but destroyed, fractured into competing regions ruled by ineffective warlords, former generals, proxies of ever sort and Persian Gulf sponsored terrorist networks including the Islamic State. The instability in Libya has afforded the United States, its policymakers and the special interests who sponsor their work a safe haven for the vast infrastructure required to maintain regional proxy forces including training camps and weapon depots.

This infrastructure, since 2011, has been used as a springboard to invade Syria, destabilize neighboring North African states and to fuel a divisive refugee crisis in nearby Europe.

Eastern Europe

Since the conclusion of the Cold War and the collapse of the Soviet Union, NATO has continued to expand toward Russia’s borders. Far from a defensive alliance, NATO clearly serves as a multinational military conglomerate used as cover for expanding US hegemony worldwide. NATO operations in far-flung Afghanistan and Libya illustrate the shape-shifting nature of its alleged mission statement, revealing it to be but a pretext for an otherwise unjustified, aggressive front.

Its expansion into Eastern Europe and the ongoing military build-up along Russia’s borders mirrors similar tensions fostered by Nazi Germany during the 1930s. NATO’s sponsorship of the violent coup which overthrew the Ukrainian government between 2013-2014 likewise provides an example of how US “stability” often manifests itself instead as failed states, perpetual violence and the constant threat of further escalation.

Asia

Over the past 10 years, the United States has attempted to “pivot” itself back toward Asia. While claiming this “pivot” represented an American effort to maintain stability across Asia-Pacific, proclamations from the US State Department itself smacked of literal imperialism. An article published in Foreign Policy titled, “America’s Pacific Century,” was penned by then US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton all but admitting this.

The United States is not an Asian nation, yet despite this obvious fact, it declared its intent to reassert American primacy across Asia Pacific. In order to do this, the US found itself fueling political opposition across much of Asia and more specifically, in Southeast Asia.

Nations like Myanmar are now headed by regimes installed into power via decades of US political support, funding and training. And despite pro-democracy rhetoric accompanying these regimes as they ascend into power, their true nature is nothing short of despotic, with Myanmar’s current government overseeing systematic violence targeting ethnic minorities, the silencing of political critics and opponents, the curtailing of free press and other flagrant abuses the US now conveniently ignores.

In nations like Thailand, US efforts to co-opt regional political orders have failed. However, despite their failure, simmering conflicts remain, threatening sociopolitical and economic stability both currently and in the near future.

On the Korean Peninsula, America’s presence continues to drive instability. Joint military exercises with South Korea often and openly serve as rehearsals for “decapitation” strikes against the North Korean government, fueling North Korean paranoia and provoking continued posturing on both sides. In short, the US presence serves to intentionally keep the neighboring states pitted against one another, undermining, not bolstering regional stability.

A similar strategy of tension is being played in the South China Sea where the US has for two presidencies now attempted to provoke China both directly and through the use of Japanese, Vietnamese and Philippine tensions to contest and curtail Beijing’s growing military deterrence.

The endgame in the South China Sea for China is to eventually push the United States out of the region, reducing or eliminating its capacity to target China directly, and reduce America’s ability to destabilize China’s peripheries. It should be noted that destabilizing China’s peripheries (those nations bordering China) is a stated objective of US policymakers.

Hegemony or Stability, Not Both

Ultimately the US seeks hegemony, not stability. Hegemony by necessity requires the division and destruction of competitors, which in turn requires constant and ever-escalating sociopolitical and economic instability. While the US has all but declared its intent to establish global hegemony for decades, it uses the pretext of seeking global peace, security and stability as cover along the way.

Understanding that only through a multipolar global order in which state sovereignty holds primacy, not multinational alliances, institutions or openly hegemonic world powers, can a real balance of power be struck, and only through this balance of power can real global stability be achieved. Until then, as the US seeks hegemony over the planet, the world can expect an equal but opposite decline in stability.

# AFF – Vaccine Imperialism

## 1AC

### 1AC – Framing

#### Consequences are morally relevant

#### Prefer for actor specificity

#### A] Aggregation – every policy benefits some and harms others, which also means side constraints freeze action.

#### B] Pleasure and pain are intrinsically valuable. People consistently regard pleasure and pain as good reasons for action, despite the fact that pleasure doesn’t seem to be instrumentally valuable for anything.

#### Only consequentialism explains degrees of wrongness—if I break a promise to meet up for lunch, that is not as bad as breaking a promise to take a dying person to the hospital. Only the consequences of breaking the promise explain why the second one is much worse than the first.

#### Prioritize probability.

Kessler 08 (Oliver; April 2008; PhD in IR, professor of sociology at the University of Bielefeld, and professor of history and theory of IR at the Faculty of Arts; Alternatives, Vol. 33, “From Insecurity to Uncertainty: Risk and the Paradox of Security Politics” p. 211-232)

The problem of the second method is that it is very difficult to "calculate" politically unacceptable losses. If the risk of terrorism is defined in traditional terms by probability and potential loss, then the focus on dramatic terror attacks leads to the marginalization of probabilities. The reason is that even the highest degree of improbability becomes irrelevant as the measure of loss goes to infinity.^o The mathematical calculation of the risk of terrorism thus tends to overestimate and to dramatize the danger. This has consequences beyond the actual risk assessment for the formulation and execution of "risk policies": If one factor of the risk calculation approaches infinity (e.g., if a case of nuclear terrorism is envisaged), then there is no balanced measure for antiterrorist efforts, and risk management as a rational endeavor breaks down. Under the historical condition of bipolarity, the "ultimate" threat with nuclear weapons could be balanced by a similar counterthreat, and new equilibria could be achieved, albeit on higher levels of nuclear overkill. Under the new condition of uncertainty, no such rational balancing is possible since knowledge about actors, their motives and capabilities, is largely absent. The second form of security policy that emerges when the deterrence model collapses mirrors the "social probability" approach. It represents a logic of catastrophe. In contrast to risk management framed in line with logical probability theory, the logic of catastrophe does not attempt to provide means of absorbing uncertainty. Rather, it takes uncertainty as constitutive for the logic itself; uncertainty is a crucial precondition for catastrophes. In particular, catastrophes happen at once, without a warning, but with major implications for the world polity. In this category, we find the impact of meteorites. Mars attacks, the tsunami in South East Asia, and 9/11. To conceive of terrorism as catastrophe has consequences for the formulation of an adequate security policy. Since catastrophes hap-pen irrespectively of human activity or inactivity, no political action could possibly prevent them. Of course, there are precautions that can be taken, but the framing of terrorist attack as a catastrophe points to spatial and temporal characteristics that are beyond "rationality." Thus, political decision makers are exempted from the responsibility to provide security—as long as they at least try to preempt an attack. Interestingly enough, 9/11 was framed as catastrophe in various commissions dealing with the question of who was responsible and whether it could have been prevented. This makes clear that under the condition of uncertainty, there are no objective criteria that could serve as an anchor for measuring dangers and assessing the quality of political responses. For ex- ample, as much as one might object to certain measures by the US administration, it is almost impossible to "measure" the success of countermeasures. Of course, there might be a subjective assessment of specific shortcomings or failures, but there is no "common" currency to evaluate them. As a consequence, the framework of the security dilemma fails to capture the basic uncertainties. Pushing the door open for the security paradox, the main problem of security analysis then becomes the question how to integrate dangers in risk assessments and security policies about which simply nothing is known. In the mid 1990s, a Rand study entitled "New Challenges for Defense Planning" addressed this issue arguing that "most striking is the fact that we do not even know who or what will constitute the most serious future threat, "^i In order to cope with this challenge it would be essential, another Rand researcher wrote, to break free from the "tyranny" of plausible scenario planning. The decisive step would be to create "discontinuous scenarios ... in which there is no plausible audit trail or storyline from current events"52 These nonstandard scenarios were later called "wild cards" and became important in the current US strategic discourse. They justified the transformation from a threat-based toward a capability- based defense planning strategy.53 The problem with this kind of risk assessment is, however, that even the most absurd scenarios can gain plausibility. By constructing a chain of potentialities, improbable events are linked and brought into the realm of the possible, if not even the probable. "Although the likelihood of the scenario dwindles with each step, the residual impression is one of plausibility. "54 This so-called Othello effect has been effective in the dawn of the recent war in Iraq. The connection between Saddam Hussein and Al Qaeda that the US government tried to prove was disputed from the very beginning. False evidence was again and again presented and refuted, but this did not prevent the administration from presenting as the main rationale for war the improbable yet possible connection between Iraq and the terrorist network and the improbable yet possible proliferation of an improbable yet possible nuclear weapon into the hands of Bin Laden. As Donald Rumsfeld famously said: "Absence of evidence is not evidence of absence." This sentence indicates that under the condition of genuine uncertainty, different evidence criteria prevail than in situations where security problems can be assessed with relative certainty.

#### Structural violence is the most important impact – ignoring them actively exacerbates exclusion

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Direct violence is horrific, but its brutality usually gets our attention: we notice it, and∂ often respond to it. Structural violence, however, is almost always invisible, embedded in∂ubiquitous social structures, normalized by stable institutions and regular experience.∂ Structural violence occurs whenever people are disadvantaged by political, legal,∂ economic, or cultural traditions. Because they are longstanding, structural inequities∂usually seem ordinary—the way things are and always have been. But structural violence∂ produces suffering and death as often as direct violence does, though the damage is∂ slower, more subtle, more common, and more difficult to repair. The chapters in this∂ section teach us about some important but invisible forms of structural violence, and alert∂ us to the powerful cultural mechanisms that create and maintain them over generations.∂ Johan Galtung originally framed the term “structural violence” to mean any constraint∂ on human potential caused by economic and political structures (1969). Unequal accessto resources, to political power, to education, to health care, or to legal standing, are forms of structural violence. When inner-city children have inadequate schools while∂ others do not, when gays and lesbians are fired for their sexual orientation, when laborers∂ toil in inhumane conditions, when people of color endure environmental toxins in their∂ neighborhoods, structural violence exists. Unfortunately, even those who are victims of∂ structural violence often do not see the systematic ways in which their plight is∂ choreographed by unequal and unfair distribution of society’s resources. Such is the∂ insidiousness of structural violence.∂ Structural violence is problematic in and of itself, but it is also dangerous because it∂frequently leads to direct violence. The chronically oppressed are often, for logical∂ reasons, those who resort to direct violence. Organized armed conflict in various parts of∂ the world is easily traced to structured inequalities. Northern Ireland, for example, has∂ been marked by economic disparities between Northern Irish Catholics—who have∂ higher unemployment rates and less formal education—and Protestants (Cairns & Darby,∂ 1998). In Sri Lanka, youth unemployment and underemployment exacerbates ethnic∂ conflict (Rogers, Spencer, & Uyangoda, 1998). In Rwanda, huge disparities in both∂ income and social status between the Hutu and Tutsis eventually led to ethnic massacres.∂ While structural violence often leads to direct violence, the reverse is also true, as∂ brutality terrorizes bystanders, who then become unwilling or unable to confront social∂ injustice. Increasingly, civilians pay enormous costs of war, not only through death, but∂ through devastation of neighborhoods and ecosystems. Ruling elites rarely suffer from∂ armed conflict as much as civilian populations do, who endure decades of poverty and∂ disease in war-torn societies.ecognizing the operation of structural violence forces us to ask questions about how∂ and why we tolerate it, questions that often have painful answers. The first chapter in this∂ section, “Social Injustice,” by Susan Opotow, argues that our normal perceptual/cognitive∂ processes lead us to care about people inside our scope of justice, but rarely care about∂ those people outside. Injustice that would be instantaneously confronted if it occurred to∂ someone we love or know is barely noticed if it occurs to strangers or those who are∂ invisible or irrelevant to us. We do not seem to be able to open our minds and our hearts∂ to everyone; moral exclusion is a product of our normal cognitive processes. But Opotow∂ argues convincingly that we can reduce its nefarious effects by becoming aware of our distorted perceptions. Inclusionary thinking can be fostered by relationships,∂ communication, and appreciation of diversity.∂ One outcome of exclusionary thinking is the belief that victims of violence must in∂ some way deserve their plight. But certainly it is easy to see that young children do not∂ deserve to be victims. The next two chapters in this section address the violence∂ experienced by children. In the first, “The War Close to Home: Children and Violence in∂ the United States,” Kathleen Kostelny and James Garbarino describe the direct and∂ structural violence which children in Chicago and other urban areas of the United States∂ endure, paralleling that experienced by children who live in countries at war. Children∂ who endure these environments often become battle weary, numb, hopeless, and/or∂ morally impaired. But children not only suffer directly from violence, they also suffer∂ from the impaired parenting and communities which poverty inflicts. The authors∂ describe how community and family support mechanisms can mitigate these effects. For xample, home visitation and early childhood education programs provide crucial family∂ and community support.∂ While Kostelny and Garbarino focus on community intervention techniques, Milton∂ Schwebel and Daniel Christie, in their article “Children and Structural Violence,” extend∂ the analysis of structural violence by examining how economic and psychological∂ deprivation impairs at-risk children. Children living in poverty experience diminished∂ intellectual development because parents are too overwhelmed to be able to provide∂ crucial linguistic experiences. Schwebel and Christie’s discussion concludes that∂ economic structures must provide parents with living-wage employment, good prenatal∂ medical care, and high-quality child-care if we are to see the next generation develop into∂ the intelligent and caring citizens needed to create a peaceful world.∂ If children are the invisible victims of society’s structural violence, so are their∂ mothers. In the chapter “Women, Girls, and Structural Violence: A Global Analysis,”∂ Diane Mazurana and Susan McKay articulate the many ways in which global sexism∂ systematically denies females access to resources. From health care and food to legal∂ standing and political power, women and girls get less than males in every country on the∂ planet. Mazurana and McKay argue that patriarchy-based structural violence will not be∂ redressed until women are able to play more active roles making decisions about how∂ resources are distributed.∂ Patriarchal values also drive excessive militarism, as Deborah Winter, Marc Pilisuk,∂ Sara Houck, and Matthew Lee argue in their chapter “Understanding Militarism: Money,∂ Masculinism, and the Search for the Mystical.” The authors illuminate three motives ueling excessive military expenditures: money, which, because of modern market forces,∂ leads half the world’s countries to spend more on arms than on health and education∂ combined; masculinism, which leads societies to make soldiering a male rite of passage∂ and proof of manhood; and the search for the mystical, as men attempt to experience∂ profound human processes of selfsacrifice, honor, and transcendence through war. Like∂ William James, these authors argue that we will need to find a moral equivalent to war, in∂ order to build lasting peace.

#### Externally, the specific role of debate means you should vote for the debater who identifies the best strategy for resisting racist oppression.

Medina 11 Medina, J. (2011). Toward a Foucaultian Epistemology of Resistance: Counter-Memory, Epistemic Friction, and Guerrilla Pluralism. Foucault Studies, 1(12), 9–35.

The central goal of this paper is to show the emancipatory potential of the epistemological framework underlying Foucault’s work. More specifically, I will try to show that the Foucaultian approach places practices of remembering and forgetting in the context of power relations in such a way that possibilities of resistance and subversion are brought to the fore. When our cultural practices of remembering and forgetting are interrogated as loci where multiple power relations and power struggles converge, the first thing to notice is the heterogeneity of differently situated perspectives and the multiplicity of trajectories that converge in the epistemic negotiations in which memories are formed or de-formed, maintained alive or killed. The discursive practices in which memory and oblivion are manufactured are not uniform and harmonious, but heterogeneous and full of conflicts and tensions. Foucault invites us to pay attention to the past and ongoing epistemic battles among competing power/knowledge frameworks that try to control a given field. Different fields—or domains of discursive interaction—contain particular discursive regimes with their particular ways of producing knowledge. In the battle among power/ knowledge frameworks, some come on top and become dominant while others are displaced and become subjugated. Foucault’s methodology offers a way of exploiting that vibrant plurality of epistemic perspectives which always contains some bodies of experiences and memories that are erased or hidden in the mainstream frameworks that become hegemonic after prevailing in sustained epistemic battles. What Foucault calls subjugated knowledges3 are forms of experiencing and remembering that are pushed to the margins and rendered unqualified and unworthy of epistemic respect by prevailing and hegemonic discourses. Subjugated knowledges remain invisible to mainstream perspectives; they have a precarious subterranean existence that renders them unnoticed by most people and impossible to detect by those whose perspective has already internalized certain epistemic exclusions. And with the invisibility of subjugated knowledges, certain possibilities for resistance and subversion go unnoticed. The critical and emancipatory potential of Foucaultian genealogy resides in challenging established practices of remembering and forgetting by excavating subjugated bodies of experiences and memories, bringing to the fore the perspectives that culturally hegemonic practices have foreclosed. The critical task of the scholar and the activist is to resurrect subjugated knowledges—that is, to revive hidden or forgotten bodies of experiences and memories—and to help produce insurrections of subjugated knowledges. 4 In order to be critical and to have transformative effects, genealogical investigations should aim at these insurrections, which are critical interventions that disrupt and interrogate epistemic hegemonies and mainstream perspectives (e.g. official histories, standard interpretations, ossified exclusionary meanings, etc). Such insurrections involve the difficult labor of mobilizing scattered, marginalized publics and of tapping into the critical potential of their dejected experiences and memories. An epistemic insurrection requires a collaborative relation between genealogical scholars/activists and the subjects whose experiences and memories have been subjugated: those subjects by themselves may not be able to destabilize the epistemic status quo until they are given a voice at the epistemic table (i.e. in the production of knowledge), that is, until room is made for their marginalized perspective to exert resistance, until past epistemic battles are reopened and established frameworks become open to contestation. On the other hand, the scholars and activists aiming to produce insurrectionary interventions could not get their critical activity off the ground if they did not draw on past and ongoing contestations, and the lived experiences and memo- ries of those whose marginalized lives have become the silent scars of forgotten struggles.

#### Racism is the biggest impact – it makes all violence structurally inevitable and is the basis for all morality. Memmi 2k

Albert Memmi 2k, Professor Emeritus of Sociology @ U of Paris, Naiteire, Racism, Translated by Steve Martinot, p. 163-165

The struggle against racism will be long, difficult, without intermission, without remission, probably never achieved. Yet, for this very reason, it is a struggle to be undertaken withouturcease and without concessions. One cannot be indulgent toward racism; one must not even let the monster in the house, especially not in a mask. To give it merely a foothold means to augment the bestial part in us and in other people, which is to diminish what is human. To accept the racist universe to the slightest degree is to endorse fear, injustice, and violence. It is to accept the persistence of the dark history in which we still largely live. it is to agree that the outsider will always be a possible victim (and which man is not himself an outsider relative to someone else?. Racism illustrates, in sum, the inevitable negativity of the condition of the dominated that is, it illuminates in a certain sense the entire human condition. The anti-racist struggle, difficult though it is, and always in question, is nevertheless one of the prologues to the ultimate passage from animosity to humanity. In that sense, we cannot fail to rise to the racist challenge. However, it remains true that one’s moral conduit only emerges from a choice: one has to want it. It is a choice among other choices, and always debatable in its foundations and its consequences. Let us say, broadly speaking, that the choice to conduct oneself morally is the condition for the establishment of a human order, for which racism is the very negation. This is almost a redundancy. One cannot found a moral order, let alone a legislative order, on racism, because racism signifies the exclusion of the other, and his or her subjection to violence and domination. From an ethical point of view, if one can deploy a little religious language, racism is ‘the truly capital sin. It is not an accident that almost all of humanity’s spiritual traditions counsels respect for the weak, for orphans, widows, or strangers. It is not just a question of theoretical morality and disinterested commandments. Such unanimity in the safeguarding of the other suggests the real utility of such sentiments. All things considered, we have an interest in banishing injustice, because injustice engenders violence and death. Of course, this is debatable. There are those who think that if one is strong enough, the assault on and oppression of others is permissible. Bur no one is ever sure of remaining the strongest. One day, perhaps, the roles will be reversed. All unjust society contains within itself the seeds of its own death. It is probably smarter to treat others with respect so that they treat you with respect. “Recall.” says the Bible, “that you were once a stranger in Egypt,” which means both that you ought to respect the stranger because you were a stranger yourself and that you risk becoming one again someday. It is an ethical and a practical appeal—indeed, it is a contract, however implicit it might be. In short, the refusal of racism is the condition for all theoretical and practical morality because, in the end, the ethical choice commands the political choice, a just society must be a society accepted by all. If this contractual principle is not accepted, then only conflict, violence, and destruction will be our lot. If it is accepted, we can hope someday to live in peace. True, it is a wager, but the stakes are irresistible.

#### Large scale extinction impacts are impossible to predict or simulate and will almost always be wrong – prefer impacts we know are happening

Matheson 15 (Calum Matheson – This is his PhD dissertation at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, “Desired Ground Zeros: Nuclear Imagination and the Death Drive”, https://cdr.lib.unc.edu/indexablecontent/uuid:4bbcb13b-0b5f-43a1-884c-fcd6e6411fd6, pgs. 77 – 86, EmmieeM)

Herman Kahn and Bernard Brodie, perhaps the most prominent American strategists of the early Cold War, tried to make nuclear war “thinkable” in the sense that they tried to explain how such a war might start and what options would exist for national leaders. At the same time, both acknowledged that the outcome of a full-scale nuclear war was indescribable. In Brodie’s words, to “make an intellectual prediction of the likelihood of war is one thing, to project oneself imaginatively and seriously into an expected war situation is quite another” (Ghamari-Tabrizi 149). The unwillingness or inability to think “seriously” about a nuclear war—in other words, to understand it instrumentally rather than through dislocating language of the sublime—was met by organizations like the RAND Corporation with an attempt to systematize nuclear strategy and develop the intellectual and technical means to actually fight and control a nuclear war. Before RAND exercised its power through the “Whiz Kids” of the Kennedy Administration, the Strategic Air Command’s “Sunday punch” nuclear plan, enshrined in SIOP-62, was an all-out nuclear attack on the USSR, Eastern Europe, and the People’s Republic of China. It might have killed 285 million people in the initial attack (Kaplan 269). Despite its intricate planning and detailed execution strategies, SIOP was immensely inflexible. Asked whether the U.S. had any options to attack without striking China, which might not even be a combatant in the war, General Thomas Power replied “Well yeh [sic], we could do that, but I hope nobody thinks of it because it would really screw up the plan” (Kaplan 270, emphasis in original). Starting in the 1960s, a set of war games of various complexity was developed to test a broader range of nuclear theories and attack options at RAND and elsewhere (Arbella 35). Games like them continue to be used for strategic military planning today (Raatz). Most of these games—or at least their results—are classified, as they became the basis for US nuclear plans. In politicomilitary games, a number of military officers, civilians, and generally mid- to lowranking government officials would play various roles as US and/or foreign. decisionmakers. Another group, “control,” would feed them information about the actions of countries or groups not played by the participants or about world events that might influence the context of their actions. In more limited military simulations, extant or proposed war plans would be evaluated by computer or human players to identify possible flaws and improvements. The games themselves never had a guarantee of accuracy and were often quite obviously flawed. In one Navy game, American aircraft carriers were declared to be unsinkable. In others, the Soviet Union was assumed to have no effective airpower. Because factors like air pressure, prevailing winds, defense effectiveness, early warning, and missile failure rate were largely random or incalculable, a “fudge factor” simply declared estimated success. Even their designers sometimes admitted that the games were inaccurate, unprovable, or simply wishful thinking (Ghamari-Tabrizi 8; Allen 78). Especially in the case of nuclear war, these games cannot possibly be understood as accurate simulations of a real-world system, because there is no empirical data on the compound effects of many near-simultaneous nuclear explosions and no data on what factors cause states to cross the nuclear threshold against other similarly-armed states, a fact that bedevils nuclear planning in general and always has (Kaplan 87). By the admission of many of those who create and play them, they are “social science fiction” with no tangible effect other than that they are entertaining (Ghamari-Tabrizi 160-1). Some contemporary social science work supports this claim especially in the context of extinction-level events. Human beings simply aren’t wired to think at such a scale, and they perform very poorly assessing probability and calculating magnitude (Yudkowsky). Others have suggested that warfare is a stochastic system that we could never identify laws for, no matter how diligent we might be, because its initial conditions are simply too complex a model and they do not conform to linear causality (Beyerchen; Buchanan 62). Indeed, military planners tended to be far less willing to predict the conduct and outcome of a conventional war—despite an enormous data set spanning thousands of years—than a nuclear war fought between two superpowers, an event that has never occurred in recorded history. Fred Iklé, former RAND strategists who was at times head of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency and Undersecretary of Defense for Policy, criticized these semi-mathematical abstractions in harsh terms that deserve to be quoted at length: The prominence of the calculations continues because we know how to make them…we have tailored the problem to our capability to calculate. The seemingly rigorous models of nuclear deterrence are built on the rule: "What cannot be calculated, leave out’”…Such thoughts, especially those focusing on deterrence, lack real empirical referents or bases. No other field of human endeavor demands—absolutely compels—one to work out successful solutions without obtaining directly relevant experience, without experimenting. There can be no trial and error here, no real learning. Curiously, we are far more skeptical in accepting the calculations of traditional conventional military campaigns than the calculations of nuclear warfare. In fact, the more battle experience and information military analysts have, the more modest they become in predicting the course of conventional war. Such modesty is missing for nuclear war, where pretentious analyses and simplistic abstractions dominate and blot out the discrepancies existing between abstractions and possible reality—a reality that for so many reasons is hard even to imagine. (Iklé 246). Iklé is drawing attention to two unique aspects of nuclear war planning: first, that no empirical date (or at least very little) can be gathered for the species of war that planners concerned themselves with, and second, that unlike other military problems where little data exists, defense intellectuals were willing to display great confidence in untested (and untestable) theories. Despite this lack of empirical grounding, nuclear war simulations have been repeated again and again over the decades while nuclear doctrine has remained fundamentally the same (McKinzie et al. ix-xi). There has been some dispute in military circles about whether these exercises should be called simulations or games, with “simulations” becoming more popular by the 1980s (Allen 7). To call politico-military exercises “roleplaying games” conjures images of adolescent boys rolling dice and weaving fantasies about orcs and dragons. To call battle simulations “war games” might associate them with videogames produced for entertainment. Still, even military officers responsible for the creation of these artifacts had trouble distinguishing between game, model, and simulation and used them interchangeably. In his comprehensive history of U.S. wargaming, Thomas Allen writes that the three words “hover over imaginary battlefields like a mysterious, ever-shifting concept of the Trinity” (64, emphasis added). Berger, Boulay and Zisk, writing in the journal Simulation & Gaming acknowledge that “[d]efinitions of simulation are legion,” but center on representations of a system that allow users to model behavior (Berger et al. 416). Brewer and Shubik define games as a subset of simulation and simulation as a subset of modelling, the key defining feature of a game being the inclusion of human beings playing roles. Still, their extended attempt to define these terms results in the acronym MSG, grouping them all together (3-8). The difficulty in Brewer and Shubik’s definition is that all models and simulations require that human beings make decisions at least indirectly, at a minimum defining the independent variables and the parameters of the exercise. As a result, they all create some possibility for investment in the outcome. In common usage, the difference between simulations and models, on the one hand, and games, on the other appears to be a ludic dimension. Games are for play, with an agent making decisions within a set of prescribed rules to change the outcome, while simulations and models may simply represent the rules of a system. The least common denominator is that one rules-bound system—the game— stands in for another. Games, simulations, and models therefore have a metaphorical quality to them.10 In his work on videogames, Ian Bogost has identifies what he calls procedural rhetoric as “the practice of persuading through processes in general and computational processes in particular…a technique for making arguments with computational systems and for unpacking computational arguments others have created” (3). Whereas oral rhetoric attempts to persuade an audience to adopt a particular viewpoint through speech and written rhetoric does the same through writing, procedural rhetoric has its own unique goals and characteristics suited to the medium of games. Videogames create a digital process that simulates a real-world process, allowing the player to model something extant in the world of flesh, blood, steel and glass that exists outside of the game. Procedural rhetoric is the persuasive aspect of simulation. Bogost’s argument might be adapted to this understanding of metaphor. The replacement of the tenor (the thing represented) with the vehicle (the signifier standing in for it) makes an enthymematic argument that draws the audience to do the work of cathexis in connecting the two based on the shared principle that allows the substitution. This does not suggest that we read games as texts. Games require their players to invest in a specific way because they are called on to make choices that alter the outcome. Players identify with their characters in a powerful way: what is shared is not just a set of traits, but decisions over time that, to maintain the interest that keeps players playing, require at least some minimal attachment. One can identify deeply with Sauron, but no reading of Lord of the Rings can make him finally subjugate his haughty human and elven foes, let alone order the Scourging of the Shire and its disgustingly bourgeois hobbits when he still has a chance to succeed.11 This is the procedural element of Bogost’s theory: it is the procedure that links the system with its representation in the game, and the sense of control that binds us, something that differentiates this medium from others. One doesn’t have to decide that play matters and narrative doesn’t—it is the interaction between the two that channels the player’s investment in a game. In war games, attachments are formed even when a computerized Sam fights a computerized Ivan to test the SIOP and RSIOP.12 Allen’s book is full of examples of war game players becoming emotionally tied to their games, sometimes in perverse ways. Failing in a game that he was allowed to play, Allen himself described his team reacting with shock, real shock, not just a reaction to a bad break in a game. We were really feeling upset about what was happening in our imaginary world. ‘What is happening to our institutions?’ someone indignantly asked, as if real institutions were really going through what the situation paper had described. I had an unreasonable feeling of helplessness and failure. Some of us spoke softly to each other about having failed. (18). The prevalence of this reaction is confirmed in more recent scholarship by Paul Bracken, himself a war game participant. Bracken puts the case simply: “People get emotionally involved in games” (20).

### 1AC – Advantage

#### The status quo ensures vaccine imperialism. Intellectual property law is the lynchpin of North-South health inequality and has empirically resulted in disparate life outcomes, accelerating disease spread.

Vanni 21 – Dr. Amaka Vanni is Lecturer in Law at the University of Leeds. ("On Intellectual Property Rights, Access to Medicines and Vaccine Imperialism," 3-23-2021, <https://twailr.com/on-intellectual-property-rights-access-to-medicines-and-vaccine-imperialism/>) julian

While the response to COVID-19 has shown what can be accomplished when the world works together, it has also underscored three interrelated points. First, the neoliberal framework – including the critical role intellectual property (IP) law plays in constituting this form of civilisation – is an unsuitable model for delivering the goods needed to respond to global health emergencies. The current economic/market system does not allow for equitable responses to infectious diseases, particularly access to sufficient medical and health resources. This inequity was obvious in the early days of the pandemic when test kits, PPEs, and ventilation machines were being distributed on the basis of who could pay the most rather than who needed them the most. Second, the beggar-thy-neighbor response currently adopted by developed countries hurts everyone because failing to stop the spread of the virus globally allows more mutations, which makes existing vaccines less effective. As COVID-19 has shown, no one is safe until everyone is safe. Yet, despite this warning, the hoarding of vaccines by developed countries continues unabated and speaks to the wider racist capitalist system we live in. If anything, this crude accumulation of vaccines reinforces North-South economic and political dominance and marks, as Onur Ince observes, the conceptual locus of political violence operative in the global genealogy of capitalism.

Third, while COVID-19 may endanger us all, it is far more costly to some than others. Numerous reports have shown how black and brown people are most impacted by the pandemic. In the United States, for example, indigenous Americans have the highest COVID-19 mortality rates nationwide while African American communities have COVID-19 mortality that is 2.3 times higher than the rate for Asians and Latinxs, and 2.6 times higher than the rate for Whites. Similar data is also emerging in the UK where people from black and minority ethnic groups are at greater risk of dying from coronavirus. This means those groups suffer higher loss of life compared to other racial groups due to inequities in healthcare access as well as higher rate of pre-existing conditions. In other parts of the world, the most vulnerable and the economically marginalized such as those working in the informal sector and living in shanty towns are feeling the effects of the pandemic the most. In Latin America and the Caribbean, 70 per cent of domestic workers have been affected by the pandemic where most have stopped receiving income. In Ghana, residents of slums at Old Fadama – a suburb in Accra – were made homeless when the government demolished their homes. The ensuing homelessness means there is little to no space of observing social distancing rules, access to running water and access to other resources to practice basic hygiene. Meanwhile in India, the pandemic has unsurprisingly hit the country along caste lines where the Dalits are most impacted because many are poor and have limited access to healthcare.

As Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw reminds us, the high number of minority deaths is not new. Rather, this crisis simply amplified racism and other forms of structural inequality as a pre-existing condition – an intersectional issue – where those disproportionately hurt are those who are already structurally marginalized. Thus, while recognising a broken global IP regime that triggered the scramble for vaccines, the racialized impact of the pandemic cannot be ignored, and it points to the entangled roots of race and capitalism.

The rest of this analysis takes a close look at some of the legal, political and economic forces that have animated IP rights and access to COVID-19 vaccine. It will focus on how the entanglement of corporate capture of global IP regime, state complicity and vaccine imperialism have come together to shape public health responses to the pandemic. It underscores how the law, in this case international IP law, consistently shelters capital and operates as an expression to further corporate pharmaceutical interests. If there is a lesson to be gleaned from this pandemic, it is that intellectual property is not failing us but is functioning the way it is set up to do. As the history of IP globalization has shown, the World Trade Organization’s (WTO) Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS Agreement) is a transplant of the Euro-American model of property, driven by multinational corporations who used their respective national governments to underwrite and export their domestic IP claims. Therefore, it is unsurprising that this international legal regime employed to advance the interests of particular classes, nations and regions at the expense of others continues to reproduce extreme inequality with human costs.

#### The TRIPS IP regime is at the heart of that imbalance. It creates a privileged class of elites with access to medicine and locks in data exclusivity and evergreening practices that delay the entrance of generic medicines into the market, which would decrease prices.

Vanni 21 – Dr. Amaka Vanni is Lecturer in Law at the University of Leeds. ("On Intellectual Property Rights, Access to Medicines and Vaccine Imperialism," 3-23-2021, <https://twailr.com/on-intellectual-property-rights-access-to-medicines-and-vaccine-imperialism/>) julian

Intellectual property rights (IPRs) are time-limited legal rights granted to inventors and creators. IPRs include copyrights, trademarks, patents, trade secrets, and geographical indications, while protected subject-matters include, but are not limited to, brands, inventions, designs, and biological materials. Importantly, IPRs overlap as a product may be covered by a series of rights. For example, a pharmaceutical medicine, defined by Britannica as a ‘substance used in the diagnosis, treatment, or prevention of disease’, is protected by patents, trademarks, and trade secrets. Patents are the most common form of IPR used for the protection of innovation in pharmaceuticals. Patents grant inventors limited market exclusivity for their inventions, and, in exchange, the inventor must disclose sufficient information such that competitors will be able to step into the market. This disclosure allows a competitor to make preparation to enter the market at the end of the monopoly period. Due to this legally-mandated exclusivity, patent owners – usually multinational corporations – have the right to prevent others from making, using, or selling a patented invention. The TRIPS Agreement, concluded as part of the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiation and in force since 1995, provides a minimum of 20 years patent protection. The belief is that the duration allows corporations to recoup the expenses of developing, testing and upscaling an innovative pharmaceutical product.

From the onset, the TRIPS IP regime created imbalance between innovation, market monopoly, and medicines access, because it failed to take into consideration the health burden, development needs and local conditions of the various countries that make up the WTO. This has led to several issues. First, the market monopoly of IP rights, which allows the corporation to set the market for drugs, has created a privileged societal class with access to lifesaving medication distinguishing them from those excluded from access to available medications. This phenomenon is vividly illustrated in the HIV/AIDS crisis of the 1990s and early 2000s. While HIV/AIDS patients in developed countries were able to afford antiretroviral (ARVs) treatments, which had been developed, approved and patented as early as 1987, many patients in Africa and other parts of the developing world could not afford the approximately USD 12,000 per annum treatment at that time. By 2001, approximately 2.4 million people in the region had died of AIDS. The South African government intervened to reduce the cost of ARVs by amending its domestic patent laws to allow the authorization of parallel imports of patented pharmaceuticals and to encourage the use of generic drugs, but it was sued by the US industry group Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA). Though the lawsuit was eventually dropped, it highlights the measures pharmaceutical corporations, backed by some national governments, are willing to take to protect their profits at the cost of human lives. Significantly, we see how law (or the threat of legal action) is used not only to protect and expand the profitability of a certain kind of property but, as Anjali Vats and Deidré Keller have taught us, also reveals IP law’s racial investments in whiteness and its continuing implications for racial (in)equality, particularly in the way it informs systems of ownership, circulation, and distribution of knowledge. Similarly, Natsu Saito takes up the analysis of IP, race and capitalism by theorizing some of the ways in which ‘value’ in IP law concentrated in the hands of large corporations is calculated in terms of its profitability rather than what it contributes to the well-being of society. However, the proverbial chickens have come home to roost as even rich countries are beginning to feel the bite of the dysfunctional IP system.

The issue of excessive pricing for medicines is a growing problem in developed countries as well and has now become the single biggest category of healthcare spending in these states, particularly the US. An empirical report by I-MAK reveals how excessive pharmaceutical patenting is extending monopolies and driving up drug prices. The report, for example, notes that over half of the top twelve drugs in the US have more than 100 attempted patents per drug. Specifically, the report revealed that Humira® by AbbVie (used in the treatment of Crohn’s disease and the US’s highest grossing drug) has been issued 130 patents. The drug costs USD 44,000 annually and generated more than USD 19.2 billion for the company in 2019 alone. The Report also notes that the first patent filed for Herceptin® – used in the treatment for certain breast and stomach cancers – was in 1985 but currently has pending patent applications that could extend its market monopoly for 48 more years. Meanwhile, Celgene has over 105 patents for its oral cancer drug Revlimid® (used in the treatment of multiple myeloma) extending its monopoly until the end of 2036 – a patent lifespan of 40 years. In addition to excessive patenting and pricing, we have also come to understand the power of data in this context.

Second, regulatory agencies worldwide require drugs to undergo safety and efficacy testing to ensure they are harmless before approval. These tests, known as clinical trials, involve human subjects and are costly because they can run up to three separate phases. The data collected during these clinical trials are the proprietary materials of the company conducting the tests. Because it is expensive and time-consuming, generic drug companies usually rely on the safety and efficacy data of brand name companies to seek regulatory approval as long as they can prove their generic version is chemically and biologically equivalent to the original. Relying on the test data of brand name companies reduces the production cost for generic medicines and allows for quicker market entry. However, recent years have seen a promotion of time-limited, legally mandated protection against the non-proprietary use of such data by generic companies. This is known as data exclusivity. Put differently, data exclusivity is a period when a generic company cannot use the clinical trial data of an innovator pharmaceutical company to receive regulatory approval for a generic medicine. In so doing, data exclusivity provides a layer of protection in addition to patent protection to further delay market entry of generic medicines.

Data exclusivity periods vary depending on the jurisdiction. For example, it is twelve years in US and ten years in the EU. While the TRIPS Agreement does not create property rights over registration data, the US and the EU have continued to champion and export data exclusivity through free trade agreements, particularly for biologics. For example, the US Affordable Health Care for America Act in 2009 extended a 12-year exclusivity period for biologics. This US interpretation for registration data was also included in the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA), which sought a 10-year data exclusivity for new biologics. However, after intense negotiations, the data exclusivity protection was reduced to 5 years for new pharmaceuticals. In this instance, we see a crystallising of Euro-American ideas of property and a willingness to promote those property interests through the law, both domestic and international. In fact, certain scholars assert that this pursuit of higher TRIPS standards is driven, in part, by the US desire to achieve levels of protection it anticipated from the TRIPS Agreement but failed to secure. Given the influence of the industry and its representative group, PhRMA, in seeking stronger protection on a global scale, it is not surprising that the US’s post-TRIPS policies continue to rachet up standards in ways that undermine access to affordable medicines, and perpetuate social hierarchy and subordination.

Third, patent practices in recent decades have seen pharmaceutical companies engaging in trivial and cosmetic tweaking of a drug whilst still reaping the benefit of 20 years of patent protection. This tweaking sometimes involves making minor changes to patented drugs, such as changes in mode of administration, new dosages, extended release, or change in color of the drug. These changes normally do not offer any significant therapeutic advantage even though pharmaceutical companies argue they provide improved health outcomes to patients. These additional patents on small changes to existing drugs, known as evergreening or patent thickets, block the early entry of competitive, generic medicines that drive medicine prices down. For example, while not mandated by TRIPS, many US led TRIPS-plus free trade agreements have expanded the scope for evergreening. These include the US-Jordan FTA (2000), US-Australia FTA (2004) as well as the US-Korea FTA (2007), which allow for the patenting of new forms, uses, or methods of using existing products.

The cancer drug Gleevec®, owned by Novartis, is another example of how pharmaceutical companies often secure patents on new, more convenient versions with marginal therapeutic benefit to patients whilst blocking the entry of generic medicines. In 2013, Novartis’ patent application for Gleevec®– the β crystalline form of the salt imatinib mesylate – was rejected by the Indian Supreme Court because it lacked novelty. However, the company has secured patents for this product in other jurisdictions such as the US and has maintained a high price of Gleevec there. But in India the price of Gleevec® was reduced from approximately USD 2,200 to USD 88 for one month’s treatment in the generic drugs market as a result of the 2013 Indian Supreme Court judgement. Novartis is not the only culprit. The depression drug Effexor® by Pfizer was granted an evergreen patent when the company introduced an extended-release version, Efexor-XR®, even though there was no additional benefit to patients. Eventually, the patent was declared invalid, but by then it had already cost an estimated USD 209 million to Australian taxpayers and kept generic competition off the market for two and a half years. In another instance, Pfizer went on to secure an additional patent for the Pristiq®, which contained identical chemical compound as Efexor-XR®,and again with no added therapeutic benefit.

These evergreening practices, of course, have material effects. Apart from delaying the entry of generic versions, they give brand-name pharmaceutical companies free reign in the market, which allows them to set the market price. Recent years have seen monopoly prices rise exorbitantly causing significant financial strain to patients, domestic healthcare services and even insurance companies in developed countries. A notorious example is Martin Shkreli, who in 2015 bought the rights to an anti-malarial drug, then raised the price by 5,000 per cent from a cost of USD 13.50 to USD 750. Similarly, a white paper by I-MAK shows how excessive patenting and related strategies are driving families to overspend on lifesaving medicines. Celgene, the makers of Revlimid® raised the price of the drug by more than 50 per cent since 2012 to over USD 125,000 per year of treatment. Using the example of Solvadi® by Gilead, which costs USD 84,000 per treatment, Feldman notes the drug would cost the US Department of Defense more than USD 12 billion to treat all hepatitis-infected patients in US Veterans Affairs. But the US is not alone. In Europe, expensive drugs have prompted a growing backlash against pharmaceutical corporations. Reacting to these price hikes, Dutch pharmacies are bypassing these exorbitant prices by preparing medicines in-house for individual patients. The broken IP system ranging from an extraordinarily low standard for granting patents to permissions of patent thickets around a single molecule has not only severely distorted the system of innovation, but they have also skewed access to life-saving drugs. As a result, prices for new and existing medicines are constantly rising, making essential medicines inaccessible for millions of people around the world.

#### Vaccine imperialism inevitably commodifies medicine and results in vaccine nationalism that magnifies North-South health disparities.

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The development and dissemination of COVID-19 vaccines has highlighted how the international legal system pertaining to global health is driving global health inequalities instead of alleviating them. As a result, in part, of neocolonial ‘development’ models that promote inequitable IP laws, most of the vaccine supply has been manufactured in the Global North and purchased by governments in those countries to be stockpiled for their own populations—a practice sometimes described as ‘vaccine hoarding’ or ‘vaccine nationalism’.19 20

Even where countries in the Global South have produced vaccines themselves in significant quantities, they have sometimes been guilty of perpetuating inequity of other Global South countries through vaccine nationalism and vaccine diplomacy, in which vaccines are offered to poorer countries in order to achieve geopolitical objectives.21 22 A decolonised approach to global health enables us to conceptualise this behaviour as a reproduction of a neocolonial system which pits some formerly colonised countries against others.23 24 This has meant that some countries in the Global South also benefit from this uneven system, and they too contribute to the exploitation of poorer countries in the Global South.21

Although the WHO cocreated the COVAX Facility, a donor-funded mechanism that seeks to pool procurement to enhance access to vaccines for LMICs, the charitable funding scheme is facing a serious shortfall in meeting global needs. The WHO has estimated that most people in LMICs will not be vaccinated until the end of 2023,25 and even this estimate may be optimistic, given the delays in initial distributions through COVAX.26

This prompts the obvious question: How is it that existing legal mechanisms, or at least the prevailing interpretations and understandings of them, have permitted and even enabled this inequity? International IP law embedded in international trade agreements allows pharmaceutical companies time-limited rights to prevent others from making, using or selling their patented invention without permission. Under the 1995 Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), which was included in the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade negotiation, pharmaceutical companies have at least 20 years from filing a patent to profit from their investments in developing, testing and upscaling pharmaceutical products throughout the world.27 This protection is given to pharmaceutical companies to incentivise them to engage in greater research and development for new drugs. However, there is evidence that challenges previous assumptions about the linkages between Research and Development spending and innovation for essential medicines.28 The current COVID-19 crisis has brought this into sharp focus, with projections that the global public sector had spent at least €93 billion on the development of COVID-19 vaccines and therapeutics—€85.6 billion of this on vaccines.29

Global IP rights, whether adopted in accordance with TRIPS, or subsequent bilateral and multilateral agreements, are part of a wider legal system which facilitates global neocolonialism. For instance, powerful actors such as the European Union (EU) and the USA have included TRIPS-plus provisions in bilateral and multilateral agreements. These agreements often force countries of the Global South to concede to more stringent patent protections in order to gain trade advantages and also to escape trade sanctions.30

In so doing, IP law commodifies medicines that are essential to human survival and well-being, and sacrifices the lives and health of the poor and otherwise marginalised on the altar of corporate profitability.31 Common interpretations and understandings of the international IP system are that healthcare goods and services derive their value from their tradability.14 (‘We use the term “public good” as it is used in global health to mean a good that should be available universally because of its critical importance to health, and not as the term is used in economics to mean a good that is both non-excludable and non-rivalrous.’)14 32 However, many, including critical Global South scholars, have questioned the prioritisation of property rights (including IP rights) over other rights (especially the rights to health, life and equal benefit from scientific progress) in a manner that is inconsistent with international human rights law.31

Many low-income countries have long been active in resisting the IP system as an unjust extension of a colonial trade system. At the height of the HIV pandemic, in which millions of people in the Global South were denied lifesaving medicines, civil society treatment access campaigns galvanised states within the World Trade Organization (WTO) into agreeing to the Doha Declaration on TRIPS and Public Health.33 This WTO Declaration recognises human rights and allows states to use all of the ‘flexibilities’ within the TRIPS regime to protect public health, acknowledging the need for access to medicines in a public health emergency.34 However, this international consensus on IP has always been strongly contested by pharmaceutical companies and their host governments, predominantly in the Global North.

This remarkably strong resistance to employing TRIPS flexibilities has continued in the current COVID-19 crisis, as the attempts of countries largely from the Global South to try to obtain a TRIPS waiver to increase their supply of vaccines for COVID-19 have been unsuccessful. Although the USA has recently supported a watered-down version of a TRIPS waiver, it remains far from certain whether other states in the Global North will support this prioritisation of health over IP rights, or whether this would be sufficient, as we discuss in the section on flexibilities below.

Rather than allowing for equitable vaccine access as a human right for all people everywhere, states have instead turned to a charitable donation and market purchase scheme through the COVAX initiative. This type of model, which focuses on charity and not rights, is consistent with exactly the kind of understandings of human rights and public health that are in need of decolonisation. While there have been public consensus statements issued by the Human Rights Council, in which states have agreed that all states have the right to access vaccines and the right to use TRIPS flexibilities, this statement reflects a disappointing failure to acknowledge any corresponding state obligations to employ such flexibilities.35 This has allowed countries from the Global North, and their few Global South allies, to agree to this statement and support the right to vaccine access rhetorically, and in principle within the Human Rights Council, while resisting any calls for a TRIPS waiver within the WTO, and thus consolidating a denial of their obligations to employ TRIPS flexibilities.

#### Status quo distribution results in disparities between nations. That results in colonial hierarchies of health.

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The current global distribution of COVID-19 vaccines is largely dictated by power disparities and inequities in financial and other resources, with predominantly high-income countries contracting bilaterally with individual pharmaceutical companies (many in their own countries) for specific vaccines, leaving countries from the Global South facing inequitable vaccine access. Bilateral deals between states and pharmaceutical companies, whether completed by Global North or Global South states, significantly compromise the effectiveness and equity of the COVAX initiative, limited as it already is by the coercive influence, vested interests and participation of pharmaceutical companies and their host nations. The African Union, for example, endorsed the TRIPS waiver to relax WTO rules so that LMICs could create their own COVID-19 vaccines, but this collective effort across African countries faced resistance from Global North countries and pharmaceutical companies.

The IP system appears to have pushed countries in the Global South that may prefer not to be dependent on the charitable model of the COVAX scheme to join high-income countries in engaging directly with manufacturers to purchase COVID-19 vaccines. This has included African countries, despite the African Union’s criticism of the inequities resulting from IP law protections. This process has reproduced colonially entrenched power dynamics, in which poorer countries lack the bargaining power to obtain competitive rates and, consequently, typically end up paying far more than the wealthier, developed countries. More broadly, countries in the Global South are pressured into participating in global systems of trade that result in the exploitation of their own populations by unjust global economic systems and IP laws.39 The high cost of vaccines for countries from the Global South constitutes a large proportion of their health expenditure, and this comes at the expense of other health priorities.

In many cases, the only way in which Global South countries can purchase vaccines is to move themselves further into debt. Given the detrimental neocolonial implications of debt, with a long history of loan conditionalities through structural adjustment programmes, increasing debt to service health needs contributes to the worsening of inequalities between the Global North and Global South.40 These programmes may increase debt and undermine development in ways that limit the realisation of the right to health.41 The World Bank has set aside US$12 billion and has already disbursed loans of US$500 million for vaccines in low-income and middle-income nations;42 poorer nations, instead of servicing already depleted health systems, are forced to divert additional funds to servicing debt.

#### It also results in inequalities within nations. Politicians create a hierarchy of access, which feeds racism, classism, and corruption.

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The high costs of vaccines also propagate inequalities within nations, as desperate countries try to recoup some of the costs by charging their people for vaccine access or using complex arrangements that prioritise some people over others. Egypt, for instance, is charging for the COVID-19 vaccine, which is likely to exclude the poorest people, who have already been severely affected by the crisis.43 In reality, it also means that wealthier individuals are prioritised, as they usually find it easier to pay for access. Those able to access vaccines in these countries, very often a small economic and political elite, are often in positions of power precisely along the lines of existing global inequalities and often to the prejudice of groups marginalised on the basis of gender, race and other grounds of discrimination prohibited under international human rights law.

Facilitating vaccine access for more affluent members of society reinforces power structures at the expense of marginalised populations. In South Africa, conservative non-governmental organisations aligned closely with the interests of the white minority and elite corporate interests launched a court challenge in order to procure private supplies of vaccines, bypassing the nationwide mechanisms set up by the government to ensure equitable vaccine access. However, having faced opposition from human rights activists and the South African government, this litigation was ultimately withdrawn. (For more information on this litigation see ref 44 45.) Kenya has also prioritised diplomats for COVID-19 vaccination at the expense of health workers, and Indonesia has suggested that the ‘more productive’ members of society be vaccinated first.46 47 In other countries, such as Peru, political elites and their families and friends were secretly vaccinated before the broader populations. (See as examples ref 48 49.)

An important issue at the boundary of national and international concerns is the potential use of ‘vaccine passports’.50 Free movement of goods is integral to one of the core objectives of the IHR, and yet many governments are proposing the use of COVID-19 vaccination passports as a mechanism for reopening their economies, which would discriminate against those who have not been vaccinated. The EU introduced vaccine passports in the summer of 2021 for entry into the eurozone and excluded vaccines that were made from the Serum Institute in India which is responsible for the majority of vaccines provided in the Global South.51 Vaccination disparities both within and between countries mean that many people in LMICs are unlikely to be vaccinated until 2023; therefore, vaccine passports would only further exacerbate both national and global inequalities and disproportionately restrict the rights of large swathes of the global population from exercising their right to freedom of movement on an equal basis.

#### This means COVID and future pandemics will reproduce untenable working conditions and racialized and classed life outcomes.

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The COVID-19 pandemic has revealed the lethal consequences of the sharp rise in economic inequality, the concentration of wealth in fewer and fewer hands and the increasing precarity of labour. For example, as COVID-19 slammed Manhattan, members of the top 1% flocked to their beach retreats in the Hamptons to ride out the contagion (Sellinger 2020). Meanwhile, ‘essential workers’ at the bottom of the contemporary economic hierarchy had no options but to continue to show up for work and face exposure to the deadly virus. First responders, bus drivers, nursing home workers, janitors, postal workers, grocery stockers, agricultural workers, Wal-Mart employees, Amazon warehouse workers, delivery drivers, and meat packers—many earning minimum wage and most without employer-subsidized health insurance or other benefits—had to keep working. As Bertha Bradley, a food service worker in North Carolina stated, ‘I don’t get health benefits, I don’t get sick time, I don’t get paid vacations, I don’t get a living wage’ (Jaffe and Chen 2020: 126). Katie Pine and Kate Henne refer to them as ‘new risk workers’, many of whom are given mandates for minimizing risk but few resources to implement them (Pine and Henne 2020). For example, in the John H. Stroger Hospital in Chicago, nurses were being told to reuse N95 masks, ‘sometimes up to forty-five days’ (Jaffe and Chen 2020: 138). By contrast, knowledge workers could work from the safety of their own homes and reduce their risks of becoming infected.

COVID-19 has disproportionately attacked communities of colour, compounding economic inequality and systemic racism. It is clear that ‘race matters for the way that markets have been built historically and function today’ (McNamara and Newman 2020: 6). As Presidential candidate Joe Biden pointed out during the presidential debate in September 2020, 1 out of every one-thousand African Americans in the US has died from COVID-19. In Chicago about 70% of the COVID deaths were African Americans (Jaffe and Chen 2020: 140). The UN Secretary-General António Guterres pointed out that COVID-19 ‘is exposing fallacies and falsehoods everywhere … the delusion that we live in a post-racist world, the myth that we are all in the same boat’ (Guterres 2020). In September, Citigroup released a report that systemic racism, discrimination against African Americans, has cost the economy $16 trillion (Akala 2020).

Many of the precariat are people of colour, recent immigrants and undocumented workers. By May 2020 slaughterhouses around the world became virus hot spots and exposed multiple layers of dysfunction. The meat processing industry is highly consolidated, dominated by global multinational corporations including Cargill, JBS, Smithfield and Tyson. Since the 1980s this industry has pursued the financialized model of consolidation and vertical integration, ‘aimed at increasing profits through efficiency and low wages’ (van der Zee et al. 2020). Many migrant workers in these plants live in communal housing; crowded working conditions, large plants and cramped housing, and lack of paid sick leave all exacerbate the spread of coronavirus in these environments. Indeed, Tyson was even offering workers $500 bonuses to keep working in the midst of plant outbreaks (van der Zee et al. 2020). Workers are shouldering all of the risk as slaughterhouse companies get the rewards. Structures of the global economy, including financialization and monopoly capitalism have amplified the dangers of the pandemic and pushed people further ‘into unequal groups that are not only divided by money but by matters of life and death’ (McNamara and Newman 2020: 11; Sell and Williams 2019).

#### The plan reverse casually ensures the reduction of vaccine imperialism.

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This brings us to the present and how this dysfunction continues to be normalised in the current pandemic. Moderna, for example, has filed over 100 patents for the mRNA technology used in its vaccine, despite receiving funds from the US government with its IP partly owned by the US National Institutes of Health. Pfizer/BioNTech have also filed multiple patents on not only their COVID-19 vaccine product, but also on the manufacturing process, method of use and related technologies even though BioNtech was given $450 million by the German government to speed up vaccine work and expand production capacity in Germany. It has become increasingly plain that IP makes private rights out of public funds while benefitting particular corporate interests. In fact, reports show the US government under Operation Warp Speed led by the US Department of Health also funded other vaccines developed in 2020 by several pharmaceutical corporations including Johnson and Johnson, Regeneron, Novavax, Sanofi and GlaxoSmithKline, AstraZeneca, and others. In spite of this boost from public funds, and with many governments wholly taking on the risks for potential vaccine side effects, drug manufacturers fully own the patents and related IP rights and so can decide how and where the vaccines get manufactured and how much they cost. As a result, taxpayers are paying twice for the same shot: first for its development, then again for the finished product. Meanwhile, a New York Times report has revealed that in some of the agreements between pharmaceutical companies and states, governments are prohibited from donating or reselling doses. This prohibition helps explain the price disparity in vaccine purchases among countries where poor countries are paying more. For example, Uganda is paying USD 8.50 per dose of the AstraZeneca vaccine while the EU is paying only USD 3.50 per dose. By prioritizing monopoly rights of a few western corporations, IP dysfunction not only continues to reproduce old inequities and inequality in health access, but helps frame our understanding about the creation and management of knowledge. And perhaps we begin to see the refusal of drug makers to share knowledge needed to boost global vaccine supply for what it truly is: an extension in capitalist bifurcation of who is imagined as a legitimate intellectual property owner and who is envisioned as a threat to the (intellectual) propertied order.

Despite calls to make COVID-19 vaccines and related technologies a global public good, western pharmaceutical companies have declined to loosen or temporarily suspend IP protections and transfer technology to generic manufacturers. Such transfer would enable the scale-up of production and supply of lifesaving COVID-19 medical tools across the world. Furthermore, these countries are also blocking the TRIPS waiver proposal put forward by South Africa and India at the WTO despite being supported by 57 mostly developing countries. The waiver proposal seeks to temporarily postpone certain provisions of the TRIPS Agreement for treating, containing and preventing the coronavirus, but only until widespread vaccination and immunity are achieved. This means that countries will not be required to provide any form of IP protection on all COVID-19 related therapeutics, diagnostics and other technologies for the duration of the pandemic. It is important to reiterate the waiver proposal is time-limited and is different from TRIPS flexibilities, which are safeguards within the Agreement to mitigate the negative impact of patents such as high price of patented medicines. These safeguards include compulsory licenses and parallel importation. However, because of the onerous process of initiating these flexibilities as well as the threat of possible trade penalties by the US through the United States Trade Representative (USTR) “Special 301” Report targeting countries even in the absence of illegality, many developing countries are reluctant to invoke TRIPS flexibilities for public health purposes. For example, in the past, countries such as Colombia, India, Thailand and recently Malaysia have all featured in the Special 301 Report for using compulsory licenses to increase access to cancer medications. It is these challenges that the TRIPS waiver seeks to alleviate and, if approved, would also provide countries the space, without fear of retaliation from developed countries, to collaborate with competent developers in the R&D, manufacturing, scaling-up, and supply of COVID-19 tools. However, because this waiver is being opposed by a group of developed countries, we are grappling with the problem of artificially-created vaccine scarcity. The effect of this scarcity will further prolong and deepen the financial impact of this pandemic currently estimated to cost USD 9.2 trillion, half of which will be borne by advanced economies. Thus, in opposing the TRIPS waiver with the hopes of reaping huge financial rewards, developed countries are worsening pandemic woes in the long term.

Another kind of scarcity caused by vaccine nationalism has also reduced equitable access. Vaccine nationalism is a phenomenon where rich countries buy up global supply of vaccines through advance purchase agreements (APA) with pharmaceutical companies for their own populations at the expense of other countries. But perhaps it is time to reorient our sight and call the ongoing practices of buying up global supply of vaccine what it truly is – vaccine imperialism. If we take seriously the argument put forward by Antony Anghie on the colonial origins of international law, particularly how these origins create a set of structures that continually repeat themselves at various stages, we will begin to see COVID-19 vaccine accumulation not only as political, but also as imperial continuities manifesting in the present. Take, for instance, the report released by the Duke Global Health Innovation Center that shows that high-income countries have already purchased nearly 3.8 billion COVID-19 vaccine doses. Specifically, the United States has secured 400 million doses of the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccines, and has APAs for more than 1 billion doses from four other companies yet to secure US regulatory approval. The European Union has similarly negotiated nearly 2.3 billion doses under contract and is negotiating for about 300 million more. With these purchases, these countries will be able to vaccinate their populations twice over, while many developing states, especially in Africa, are left behind. In hoarding vaccines whilst protecting the IP interests of their pharmaceutical multinational corporations, the afterlife of imperialism is playing out in this pandemic.

Moreover, these bilateral deals are hampering initiatives such as the COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access Facility (COVAX) – a pooled procurement mechanism for COVID-19 vaccine – aimed at equitable and science-led global vaccine distribution. By engaging in bilateral deals, wealthy countries impede the possibility of effective mass-inoculation campaigns. While the usefulness of the COVAX initiative cannot be denied, it is not enough. It will cover only the most vulnerable 20 per cent of a country’s population, it is severely underfunded and there are lingering questions regarding the contractual obligations of pharmaceutical companies involved in the initiative. For instance, it is not clear whether the COVAX contract includes IP-related clauses such as sharing of technological know-how. Still, even with all its faults, without a global ramping-up of production, distribution and vaccination campaigns via COVAX, the world will not be able to combat the COVID-19 pandemic and its growing variants. Health inequity and inequalities in vaccine access are not unfortunate outcomes of the global IP regime; they are part of its central architecture. The system is functioning exactly as it is set up to do.

These events – the corporate capture of the global pharmaceutical IP regime, state complicity and vaccine imperialism – are not new. Recall Article 7 of TRIPS, which states that the objective of the Agreement is the ‘protection and enforcement of intellectual property rights [to] contribute to the promotion of technological innovation and to the transfer and dissemination of technology’. In similar vein, Article 66(2) of TRIPS further calls on developed countries to ‘provide incentives to enterprises and institutions within their territories to promote and encourage technology transfer to least-developed country’. While the language of ‘transfer of technology’ might seem beneficial or benign, in actuality it is not. As I discussed in my book, and as Carmen Gonzalez has also shown, when development objectives are incorporated into international legal instruments and institutions, they become embedded in structures that may constrain their transformative potential and reproduce North-South power imbalances. This is because these development objectives are circumscribed by capitalist imperialist structures, adapted to justify colonial practices and mobilized through racial differences. These structures are the essence of international law and its institutions even in the twenty-first century. They continue to animate broader socio-economic engagement with the global economy even in the present as well as in the legal and regulatory codes that support them. Thus, it is not surprising that even in current global health crisis, calls for this same transfer of technology in the form of a TRIPS waiver to scale up global vaccine production is being thwarted by the hegemony of developed states inevitably influenced by their respective pharmaceutical companies. The ‘emancipatory potential’ of TRIPS cannot be achieved if it was not created to be emancipatory in the first place. It also makes obvious the ways international IP law is not only unsuited to promote structural reform to enable the self-sufficiency and self-determination of the countries in the global south, but also produces asymmetries that perpetuate inequalities.

### 1AC – Plan

#### Plan: The member nations of the World Trade Organization ought to eliminate patent protections for medicines.

Adler 21 – Paul Adler is assistant professor of 20th Century U.S. in the World History at Colorado College and author of "No Globalization Without Representation: U.S. Activists and World Inequality," with University of Pennsylvania Press. (“Activism is the key to getting vaccines to the world," 4-23-2021, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2021/04/23/activism-is-key-getting-vaccines-world/>) julian

A major reason for the delay in rolling out vaccinations is that rules protecting intellectual property are slowing production. Vaccines such as those for the coronavirus typically require around 200 individual components, most of which are patented by various corporations. Globally, these patents and other intellectual property concerns fall under the protection of “TRIPS” — the Agreement on Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights — which is overseen by the World Trade Organization (WTO).

The need to make more vaccines faster is clear. That is why a wide coalition — from the South African and Indian governments to nonprofits such as Oxfam, Public Citizen and ActionAid to 170 Nobel laureates and former heads of state — are demanding that the WTO issue a “TRIPS waiver.” This action would temporarily suspend WTO intellectual property protections, allowing more companies and countries to produce coronavirus vaccine components. So far, the idea has been met with, at best, ambivalence by representatives from key economic powers, including the European Union, Canada, Brazil and the United States. Meanwhile, major pharmaceutical companies and lobbies largely oppose a TRIPS waiver.

This coronavirus is a newer virus. But debates around corporate power, intellectual property, pharmaceuticals and global inequalities have long histories. For over four decades, activists have worked for a fairer global regime of medicine production and distribution. Today’s campaign for a TRIPS waiver marks a crucial moment in the long struggle by globally minded activists to forge systems of international governance that serve the interests of the world’s most impoverished and marginalized.

#### Prioritize our impacts. Intellectual monopoly capitalism prioritizes profitability over health, which blurs the lines between life and death.

Sell 20 – Susan K. Sell is a Professor of Political Science and International Affairs at George Washington University. (“What COVID‑19 Reveals About Twenty‑First Century Capitalism: Adversity and Opportunity,” pg. 151-152) julian

In the late 1970s and early 1980s, US-based IP owners lobbied for regulatory and legislative reform to expand IP protection. Pharmaceutical, software, publishing and entertainment producers argued that their industries provided America with competitive advantages in global markets. They sought the incorporation of IP into the trade regime to ensure that their IP would be remunerated in global markets and that trading partners would respect and enforce their ‘rights’. By 1994 IP owners had succeed in globalizing their preferences through the Agreement on Trade-Related Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPs) in the World Trade Organization (Sell 2003). TRIPs is hard law; it is binding and enforceable. It mandates 20 years of patent protection for pharmaceutical products. Violations result in trade sanctions.

The institutionalization of intellectual property protection in the global trade regime cemented the shift from Reagan/ Thatcher neoliberalism to intellectual monopoly capitalism. When we talk about ‘trade’ these days, we are really discussing the role of intangibles such as IP and financial services. The main beneficiaries of contemporary trade agreements are those who control global value chains (GVCs), including international banks, Big Tech, Big Pharma, Big Food and Transnational Corporations. Lead firms in GVCs promote stricter IP requirements in trade agreements to ‘contain the risk of IP appropriation resulting from the international fragmentation of production’ (Durand and Milberg 2018: 21–22). Most of the post-TRIPs trade agreements in which IP-rich nations are involved feature IP provisions that extend well beyond the TRIPs obligations in the WTO. Today, ‘profitability is a function of a firm’s ability to extract monopoly rents from complex value chains using their control over IPRs’ (Schwartz 2017: 197). For example, Apple extracts the lion’s share of value from every iPad sold whereas the manufacturers in China receive only pennies on the dollar.

Big Pharma routinely blocks pro-health initiatives aimed at promoting the use of TRIPs’ flexibilities, such as compulsory licensing and parallel importation, that would make essential medicines affordable and accessible; these would threaten their profits and reduce shareholder value (Correa 2006). The profit imperative of financialized capitalism has meant that Big Pharma has invested far more in lifestyle diseases such as erectile dysfunction and baldness than in diseases of the Global South. As Feldman argues, ‘our incentive structure is badly misaligned with societal goals’ (Feldman 2018).

Patent protection increases prices and reduces access to medicines, diagnostics, vaccines, medical devices and PPE. Strategic behaviour aimed at blocking generic competition contributes to rising drug prices. Pharma firms routinely engage in ‘evergreening’ to extend patent protection terms. A firm may have a popular drug with an about-to-expire patent, and then offer a ‘new’ formulation—from a tablet to a gel cap—of the same drug and obtain another 20 years of protection. This strategic behaviour does not affect everyone equally. For example, during the HIV/AIDS pandemic of the late 1990s/early 2000s as deaths plummeted in affluent countries an estimated 12 million infected Africans were left to die, ‘waiting for enough life-saving drugs to reach the continent’ (Nkengasong et al. 2020: 198). India and South Africa have both asked the World Trade Organization to waive TRIPs provisions to allow them to engage in compulsory licensing and parallel importation of COVID-19 therapies (Reuters 2020). Their past experiences with HIV/AIDs and the swine and avian influenzas have bred understandable suspicion about the barriers to access that IP can create. As COVID-19 tests, therapies and vaccines are developed there is legitimate concern that ‘intellectual property rights and reluctance to share related know-how may act as barriers to the rapid scale up for timely supply at affordable prices in all countries’ (Tellez 2020).

The competitive scramble for COVID-19 vaccines is in full cry, with many affluent countries negotiating advance purchasing deals and raising concerns that the Global South will once again be ‘left to die’ (Torjesen 2020). The pandemic has exposed supply chain bottlenecks and overreliance on too-few suppliers that reduce the availability of needed inputs. Current collective efforts to develop COVID-19 vaccines, including the COVID-19 Vaccine Global Access (COVAX) initiative led by the World Health Organization (WHO), the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness and Innovation (CEPI), and GAVI (the Vaccine Alliance) are promising and 167 countries have already signed up to it. The aim is to produce and distribute heavily subsidized vaccines to protect health care workers and vulnerable populations even in poor nations. However, questions about intellectual property protection remain and competition for vaccines is evident. The U.S. has made its own deals with several private firms; high-income countries have signed contracts with individual companies to buy vaccines, and the partnership between Oxford University and AstraZeneca raises questions about the non-profit versus for-profit future of vaccines in development (Nkengasong et al. 2020: 197; Garrison 2020).

Microsoft founder Bill Gates’s generosity as a philanthropist has been remarkable, donating hundreds of millions of dollars to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to focus on health. However, the prominence of Bill Gates in the vaccine space also raises questions; he has been a major benefactor and ardent promoter of intellectual monopoly capitalism. The outsized role of global plutocrats such as Gates, whose personal wealth has increased by over $10 billion during the pandemic, raises questions about governance for equity and the public good (McNamara and Newman 2020: 10; Schwab 2020). The Gates Foundation has invested over $250 million in dozens of companies working on COVID-19 responses and stands to reap significant financial gains as a result. The financialization dynamic is evident in his $40 million investment in CureVac, a German company. Just two days after CureVac’s Initial Public Offering in August 2020, its stock value jumped 400%, allowing investors to extract value (Schwab 2020). Given the Gates Foundation’s outsized role in the pandemic response, its financial stakes should be accompanied by greater transparency and accountability. As a core beneficiary and supporter of both Wall Street and Monopoly capitalisms that have extravagantly enriched the few at the expense of the many, his role raises legitimate questions about the likelihood of further entrenching a badly skewed system during a global pandemic. Gates’ preference for exclusive licenses for intellectual property does not bode well for widespread access over time. South Africa and India recognize this, as reflected in their request for TRIPs waivers in COVID-19 time.

#### Status quo medical innovation results in inequality, which the aff corrects.

Parthasarathy 20 – Shobita Parthasarathy is Professor of Public Policy and Director of the Science, Technology, and Public Policy Program at University of Michigan. (“Innovation Policy, Structural Inequality, and COVID-19,” 2020, pg. 105-107) julian

The private sector then capitalizes on the results of this scientific curiosity to develop socially beneficial technologies, which are made available in the marketplace. Key to this is the modern patent system: the government incentivizes inventors by providing them with patent rights, to commercialize and profit from their new technologies exclusively and for a limited period of time (Parthasarathy 2017). The US Congress reinforced the links among government funding, university science, and the marketplace with the 1980 Bayh-Dole Act, which allowed universities to retain the rights to patents on inventions created through government-funded research (Popp Berman 2012). The more inventions were patented and made available to the private sector, the logic went, the more technology would be available to the public. Today, increasingly cash-strapped universities encourage their researchers to patent inventions, and license these patents to private companies who will develop and commercialize them (Kleinman 2003). As a result, there has been a sharp rise in US patents granted, and high-tech industries have blossomed. And countries across the world have adopted these innovation policies, seeking to replicate the US approach (Siepmann 2004).

But the COVID-19 crisis has shown us that these innovation policies do not serve citizens equally, in at least three ways:

(1) Minimal Funding for Health Disparities Research. The US approach to research funding has left us unprepared for and unable to manage the disproportionate health impacts of the virus among people of color, especially Black communities. The NIH, the world’s largest public funder of biomedical research, devotes little money to this subject. One analysis found that it spends 500 times more on genetics research as on structural racism and its impacts on health (Krieger 2005). This is not surprising in a system where scientists drive funding priorities, and where investigators from historically disadvantaged minority groups struggle to receive funding. The needs and concerns of disadvantaged minorities may seem less important or urgent to most scientists (Shavers et al. 2005). But this scarcity has left us without the evidence to understand why communities of color are disproportionately suffering and dying from COVID-19, or what steps to take to address this imbalance.

2) Uncoordinated Research and Development Creates Uneven Access to Diagnostic Testing. Absent the “rigid controls” that Bush dismissed, the US innovation system is highly decentralized and market-driven. So, diagnostic testing for SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19) has been essentially impossible to coordinate. Traditionally, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and public laboratories funded by state and local governments lead infectious disease surveillance, but they have limited capacity (Crawford et al. 2010). The COVID-19 pandemic created demand that far outstripped what these laboratories could provide, but there was no systematic way to expand capacity. A variety of laboratories, including at universities, stepped up, but it remains difficult to connect supply and demand (Maxmen 2020). Different electronic records platforms cannot communicate. Some hospitals have exclusive partnerships with big commercial laboratories. And, even as testing has become more available, white and higher income communities gain access more easily (McMinn et al. 2020).

By contrast, South Korea has been widely praised for its SAR-CoV-2 testing strategy (Thompson 2020). Three weeks after the Chinese government shared the virus’s genome sequence on January 12, the South Korean government approved multiple diagnostic tests developed by its biotechnology sector (The Government of the Republic of Korea 2020). The country’s National Health Insurance Corporation purchased and distributed them. Ultimately, testing was plentiful and widespread, and the government implemented a companion contact-tracing program that minimized the number of COVID-19 cases and deaths.

Certainly, South Korea has learned from its experiences with previous coronaviruses, and benefits from a nationally coordinated healthcare system. But the rapid and straightforward development and distribution of diagnostic testing is also the result of a different approach to innovation policy than what the United States has taken up. Since the 1960s, South Korea’s government has played a major role in shaping research and development including in the industrial sector, by building capacity and setting priorities (Yim and Kim 2005). Government and industry have close professional ties and a sense of shared goals. In the years before COVID-19, for example, the South Korean government funded multiple companies developing viral diagnostic testing (The Government of the Republic of Korea 2020). With these relationships, technologies, and coordination with the healthcare system established, the government was able to immediately ask the private sector to develop SARS-CoV-2 tests. Three of the first five companies to receive emergency regulatory approval had received government funding for their diagnostics research. This proactive capacity building ensured that there was no need to ration testing, and therefore no inequality in access.

(3) Patent Policies Limit Access to Essential Technologies. While patents provide an incentive to innovate, the exclusive rights of commercialization they carry can make the most valuable technologies the most expensive. There is growing concern that COVID-19 treatments and vaccines will be priced out of reach for many, despite their importance for public health and economic recovery. Consider the case of remdesivir, a promising COVID-19 treatment developed with the help of US government and university scientists but which biotechnology company Gilead Sciences has patented and commercialized (Ardizzone 2020). Gilead has a long history of charging high prices for its patented drugs, including hepatitis C drug Sovaldi which costs $84,000 for a 12-week course of treatment (Senior 2014). The company must now balance pressure from its investors against its interpretation of civic duty as it determines pricing for this promising COVID-19 drug.

#### Flexibilities are insufficient.

Seklala et al 21 – Sharifah Sekalala, Warwick Law School, University of Warwick, Coventry, UK; Lisa Forman, Dalla Lana School of Public Health, University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario, Canada; Timothy Hodgson, International Commission of Jurists, Johannesburg, South Africa,;Moses Mulumba, Center for Health, Human Rights and Development, Kampala, Uganda; Hadijah Namyalo-Ganafa, School of Law, Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda; Benjamin Mason Meier, Department of Public Policy, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, North Carolina, USA (“Decolonising human rights: how intellectual property laws result in unequal access to the COVID-19 vaccine,” 2021, pg. 4) julian

Although countries from the Global South have the option of engaging TRIPS flexibilities in the absence of a general waiver, they often do not do so because the process of using these flexibilities is often stacked against them, reproducing neocolonial dynamics. For instance, TRIPS allows states with limited manufacturing capacity to waive a patent for a limited duration so as to import essential medicines through a compulsory licence. However, in practice, this process is lengthy and complex, as it relies on ensuring that both the importing and exporting countries have enacted local laws that permit them to use TRIPS flexibilities. Further, the importing country needs to negotiate with the pharmaceutical company in order to establish a fair price, which is always tricky, but made significantly more difficult in a crisis. To date, this process has been used only once, when Rwanda obtained access to generic antiretrovirals through an importation agreement with the Canadian company Apotex. However, even in that context, although Rwanda notified the WTO Council of its intention to use the mechanism in July 2007, it took 15 months before it could import its first batch of antiretrovirals. Despite its strong support, the manufacturer Apotex felt that the process was too cumbersome to use again.36

This complexity has been heightened during the COVID-19 crisis due to the speed at which vaccines were manufactured, which has created a lack of transparency around the patent process.37 Thus, the Bolivian government, which is seeking to use TRIPS flexibilities through compulsory licences, recognises in their application that there is a lack of clarity around the exact extent of product and process patents for any of the existing COVID-19 vaccines due to inadequate information about manufacturing or regulatory processes in different countries.38 Additionally, many countries that have manufacturing capacity, such as those in the EU, have not sought to support countries in the Global South that want to use these flexibilities. In sum, cumbersome rules, political and economic pressures and a lack of transparency conspire to enable the Intellectual Property Regime (IPR) system to sustain and deepen global health inequities.

#### Particularity is the best standard

Price 98 [(RICHARD PRICE is a former prof in the Department of Anthropology at Yale University. Later, he moved to Johns Hopkins University to found the Department of Anthropology, where he served three terms as chair. A decade of freelance teaching (University of Minnesota, Stanford University, Princeton University, University of Florida, Universidade Federal da Bahia), ensued. This article is co-authored with CHRISTIAN REUS-SMIT – Monash University – European Journal of International Relations Copyright © 1998 via SAGE Publications – http://www.arts.ualberta.ca/~courses/PoliticalScience/661B1/documents/PriceReusSmithCriticalInternatlTheoryConstructivism.pdf)]

One of the central departures of critical international theory from positivism is the view that we cannot escape the interpretive moment. As George (1994: 24) argues, ‘the world is always an interpreted “thing”, and it is always interpreted in conditions of disagreement and conflict, to one degree or another’. For this reason, ‘there can be no common body of observational or tested data that we can turn to for a neutral, objective knowledge of the world. There can be no ultimate knowledge, for example, that actually corresponds to reality per se.’ This proposition has been endorsed wholeheartedly by constructivists, who are at pains to deny the possibility of making ‘Big-T’ Truth claims about the world and studiously avoid attributing such status to their findings. This having been said, after undertaking sustained empirical analyses of aspects of world politics constructivists do make ‘small-t’ truth claims about the subjects they have investigated. That is, they claim to have arrived at logical and empirically plausible interpretations of actions**,** events or processes**,** and they appeal to the weight of evidence to sustain such claims. While admittingthat their claims are always contingent and partial interpretations of a complex world, Price (1995, 1997) claims that his genealogy provides the best account to date to make sense of anomalies surrounding the use of chemical weapons, and Reus-Smit (1997) claims that a culturalist perspective offers the best explanation of institutional differences between historical societies of states. Do such claims contradict the interpretive ethos of critical international theory? For two reasons, we argue that they do not**.** First, the interpretive ethos of critical international theory is driven, in large measure, by a normative rejection of totalizing discourses, of general theoretical frameworks that privilege certain perspectives over others. One searches constructivist scholarship in vain, though, for such discourses. With the possible exception of Wendt’s problematic flirtation with general systemic theory and professed commitment to ‘science’, constructivist research is at its best when and because it is question driven, with self-consciously contingent claims made specifically in relation to particular phenomena, at a particular time, based on particular evidence, and always open to alternative interpretations. Second, the rejection of totalizing discourses based on ‘big-T’ Truth claims does not foreclose the possibility, or even the inevitability, of making ‘small-t’ truth claims. In fact, we would argue that as soon as one observes and interacts in the world such claims are unavoidable, either as a person engaged in everyday life or as a scholar. As Nietzsche pointed out long ago, we cannot help putting forth truth claims about the world. The individual who does not cannot act, and the genuinely unhypocritical relativist who cannot struggles for something to say and write. In short, if constructivists are not advancing totalizing discourses, and if making ‘small-t’ truth claims is inevitable if one is to talk about how the world works, then it is no more likely that constructivism per se violates the interpretive ethos of critical international theory than does critical theory itself.