#### I affirm resolved: A just government ought to recognize an unconditional right of workers to strike.

#### I value morality due to the resolution’s use of ought, which is defined as a moral obligation

**The value criterion is minimizing oppression, defined as promoting the material conditions necessary for inclusion.**

**Oppression is created by social systems so only a focus on material conditions can solve.  
Johnson** Allan Johnson (PhD in sociology, he joined the sociology department at Wesleyan University) <http://www.cabrillo.edu/~lroberts/AlanJohnsonWhatCanWeDO001.pdf>. RW

Privilege is a feature of social systems, not individuals. People have or don't have privilege depending on the system they're in and the social categories other people put them in. To say, then, that I have race privilege says less about me personally than it does about [how] the society we all live in and how it is organized to assign privilege on the basis of a socially defined set of racial categories that change historically and often overlap. The challenge facing me as an individual has more to do with how I participate in society as a recipient of race privilege and how those choices oppose or support the system itself. In dealing with the problem of privilege, we have to get used to being surrounded by paradox. Very often those who have privilege don't know it, for example, which is a key aspect of privilege. Also paradoxical is the fact that privilege doesn't necessarily lead to a "good life," which can prompt people in privileged groups to deny resentfully that they even have it. But privilege doesn't equate with being happy. It involves having what others don't have and the struggle to hang on to it at their expense, neither of which is a recipe for joy,personal fulfillment, or spiritual contentment.... To be an effective part of the solution, we have to realize that privilege and oppression are not a thing of the past. It's happening right now. It isn't just a collection of wounds inflicted long ago that now need to be healed. The wounding goes on as I write these words and as you read them, and unless people work to change the system that promotes it, personal healing by itself cannot be the answer. Healing wounds is no more a solution to the oppression that causes the wounding than military hospitals are a solution to war. Healing is a necessary process, but it isn't enough.... Since privilege is rooted primarily in systems—such as families, schools, and workplaces—change isn't simply *a* matter of changing people. People, of course, will have to change in order for systems to change, but the most important point is that changing people isn't enough. The solution also has to include entire systems, such as capitalism, whose paths of least resistance [that] shape how we feel, think, and behave as individuals, how we see ourselves and one another.

**The state is inevitable- speaking the language of power through policymaking is the only way to create social change in debate.  
Coverstone 5:** Alan Coverstone (masters in communication from Wake Forest, longtime debate coach) “Acting on Activism: Realizing the Vision of Debate with Pro-social Impact” Paper presented at the National Communication Association Annual Conference November 17th 2005 11/18/15. RW

An important concern emerges when Mitchell describes reflexive fiat as a contest strategy capable of “eschewing the power to directly control external actors” (1998b, p. 20). Describing debates about what our government should do as attempts to control outside actors is debilitating and disempowering. Control of the US government is exactly what an active, participatory citizenry is supposed to be all about. After all, if democracy means anything, it means that citizens not only have the right, they also bear the obligation to discuss and debate what the government should be doing. Absent that discussion and debate, much of the motivation for personal political activism is also lost. Those who have co-opted Mitchell’s argument for individual advocacy often quickly respond that nothing we do in a debate round can actually change government policy, and unfortunately, an entire generation of debaters has now swallowed this assertion as an article of faith. The best most will muster is, “Of course not, but you don’t either!” The assertion that nothing we do in debate has any impact on government policy is one that carries the potential to undermine Mitchell’s entire project. If there is nothing we can do in a debate round to change government policy, then we are left with precious little in the way of pro-social options for addressing problems we face. At best, we can pursue some Pilot-like hand washing that can purify us as individuals through quixotic activism but offer little to society as a whole. It is very important to note that Mitchell (1998b) tries carefully to limit and bound his notion of reflexive fiat by maintaining that because it “views fiat as a concrete course of action, it is bounded by the limits of pragmatism” (p. 20). Pursued properly, the debates that Mitchell would like to see are those in which the relative efficacy of concrete political strategies for pro-social change is debated. In a few noteworthy examples, this approach has been employed successfully, and I must say that I have thoroughly enjoyed judging and coaching those debates. The students in my program have learned to stretch their understanding of their role in the political process because of the experience. Therefore, those who say I am opposed to Mitchell’s goals here should take care at such a blanket assertion. However, contest debate teaches students to combine personal experience with the language of political power. Powerful personal narratives unconnected to political power are regularly co-opted by those who do learn the language of power. One need look no further than the annual state of the Union Address where personal story after personal story is used to support the political agenda of those in power. The so-called role-playing that public policy contest debates encourage promotes active learning of the vocabulary and levers of power in America. Imagining the ability to use our own arguments to influence government action is one of the great virtues of academic debate. Gerald Graff (2003) analyzed the decline of argumentation in academic discourse and found a source of student antipathy to public argument in an interesting place. I’m up against…their aversion to the role of public spokesperson that formal writing presupposes. It’s as if such students can’t imagine any rewards for being a public actor or even imagining themselves in such a role. This lack of interest in the public sphere may in turn reflect a loss of confidence in the possibility that the arguments we make in public will have an effect on the world. Today’s students’ lack of faith in the power of persuasion reflects the waning of the ideal of civic participation that led educators for centuries to place rhetorical and argumentative training at the center of the school and college curriculum. (Graff, 2003, p. 57) The power to imagine public advocacy that actually makes a difference is one of the great virtues of the traditional notion of fiat that critics deride as mere simulation. Simulation of success in the public realm is far more empowering to students than completely abandoning all notions of personal power in the face of governmental hegemony by teaching students that “nothing they can do in a contest debate can ever make any difference in public policy.” Contest debating is well suited to rewarding public activism if it stops accepting as an article of faith that personal agency is somehow undermined by the so-called role playing in debate. Debate is role-playing whether we imagine government action or imagine individual action. Imagining myself starting a socialist revolution in America is no less of a fantasy than imagining myself making a difference on Capitol Hill. Furthermore, both fantasies influenced my personal and political development virtually ensuring a life of active, pro-social, political participation. Neither fantasy reduced the likelihood that I would spend my life trying to make the difference I imagined. One fantasy actually does make a greater difference: the one that speaks the language of political power. The other fantasy disables action by making one a laughingstock to those who wield the language of power. Fantasy motivates and role-playing trains through visualization. Until we can imagine it, we cannot really do it. Role-playing without question teaches students to be comfortable with the language of power, and that language paves the way for genuine and effective political activism. Debates over the relative efficacy of political strategies for pro-social change must confront governmental power at some point. There is a fallacy in arguing that movements represent a better political strategy than voting and person-to-person advocacy. Sure, a full-scale movement would be better than the limited voice I have as a participating citizen going from door to door in a campaign, but so would full-scale government action. Unfortunately, the gap between my individual decision to pursue movement politics and the emergence of a full-scale movement is at least as great as the gap between my vote and democratic change. They both represent utopian fiat. Invocation of Mitchell to support utopian movement fiat is simply not supported by his work, and too often, such invocation discourages the concrete actions he argues for in favor of the personal rejectionism that under girds the political cynicism that is a fundamental cause of voter and participatory abstention in America today.

#### Debate is a space for real world change, but we have to consider tangible policy action above all else—ideal theory abstracts away from material consequences and legitimizes oppression

#### Curry 14: Dr. Tommy J. Curry 14, “The Cost of a Thing: A Kingian Reformulation of a Living Wage Argument in the 21st Century”, Victory Briefs, 2014

**Despite the pronouncement of debate is an activity** and intellectual exercise **pointing to the real world consequences** of dialogue, thinking, and (personal) politics when addressing issues of racism, sexism, economic disparity, global conflicts, and death, many of the discussions concerning these ongoing challenges to humanity are fixed to a paradigm which sees the adjudication of material disparities and sociological realities as the conquest of one ideal theory over the other. In “Ideal Theory as Ideology,” Charles Mills outlines the problem contemporary theoretical-performance styles in policy debate and value-weighing in Lincoln-Douglass are confronted with in their attempts to get at the concrete problems in our societies. At the outset, Mills concedes that “ideal theory applies to moral theory as a whole (at least to normative ethics as against metaethics); [s]ince ethics deals by definition with normative/prescriptive/evaluative issues, [it is set] against factual/descriptive issues.” At the most general level, the conceptual chasm between what emerges as actual problems in the world (e.g.: racism, sexism, poverty, disease, etc.) and how we frame such problems theoretically—the assumptions and shared ideologies we depend upon for our problems to be heard and accepted as a worthy “problem” by an audience—is the most obvious call for an anti-ethical paradigm, since such a paradigm insists on the actual as the basis of what can be considered normatively. Mills, however, describes this chasm as a problem of an ideal-as-descriptive model which argues that for any actual-empirical-observable social phenomenon (P), an ideal of (P) is necessarily a representation of that phenomenon. In the idealization of a social phenomenon (P), one “necessarily has to abstract away from certain features” of (P) that is observed before abstraction occurs. ¶ This gap between what is actual (in the world), and what is represented by theories and politics of debaters proposed in rounds threatens any real discussions about the concrete nature of oppression and the racist economic structures which necessitate tangible policies and reorienting changes in our value orientations. As Mills states: “What distinguishes ideal theory is the reliance on idealization to the exclusion, or at least marginalization, of the actual,” so what we are seeking to resolve on the basis of “thought” is in fact incomplete, incorrect, or ultimately irrelevant to the actual problems which our “theories” seek to address. Our attempts to situate social disparity cannot simply appeal to the ontologization of social phenomenon—meaning we cannot suggest that the various complexities of social problems (which are constantly emerging and undisclosed beyond the effects we observe) are totalizable by any one set of theories within an ideological frame be it our most cherished notions of Afro-pessimism, feminism, Marxism, or the like. At best, theoretical endorsements make us aware of sets of actions to address ever developing problems in our empirical world, but even this awareness does not command us to only do X, but rather do X and the other ideas which compliment the material conditions addressed by the action X. As a whole, debate (policy and LD) neglects the need to do X in order to remedy our cast-away-ness among our ideological tendencies and politics. How then do we pull ourselves from this seeming ir-recoverability of thought in general and in our endorsement of socially actualizable values like that of the living wage? It is my position that Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s thinking about the need for a living wage was a unique, and remains an underappreciated, resource in our attempts to impose value reorientation (be it through critique or normative gestures) upon the actual world. In other words, King aims to reformulate the values which deny the legitimacy of the living wage, and those values predicated on the flawed views of the worker, Blacks, and the colonized (dignity, justice, fairness, rights, etc.) used to currently justify the living wages in under our contemporary moral parameters.

**This outweighs – learning philosophy makes us immoral**

**Posner 98:** The Problematics of Moral and Legal Theory, Richard A. Posner ~Chief Judge, United States Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit; University of Chicago Law School.~, Harvard Law Review, Vol. 111, No. 7 (May, 1998), pp. 1637-1717

The better read you are in philosophy or literature, and the more imaginative and analytically supple you are, the easier you will find it to reweave your tapestry of moral beliefs so that your principles allow you to do what your id tells you to do. My point is not that it's costless to change one's moral stripes, but only that the cost is less for a highly educated person. Ignorance is the ally of morality, as the medieval Roman Catholic Church recognized when it instructed priests not to ask parishioners in the confessional about specific sexually deviant practices, lest they give them ideas. Moral education equips the student to argue against moral preceptors. So even if instruction in moral reasoning improves people's moral beliefs (which I greatly doubt), the effect may be completely offset by the reduction in the likelihood that people would conform their behavior to moral precepts. To be confident that moral instruction would not have this effect, you would have to agree with Socrates that people are naturally good and do bad things only out of ignorance.

**Trust your basic intuitions about oppression—otherwise debate is made unsafe**

**Teehan 14** ~Ryan Teehan, NSD staffer and competitor from the Delbarton School~ – NSD Update comment on the student protests at the TOC in 2014.

Honestly, I don't think that 99% of what has been said in this thread so far actually matters. It doesn't matter whether you think that these types of assumptions should be questioned. It doesn't matter what accepting this intuition could potentially do or not do. It doesn't matter if you see fit to make, incredibly trivializing and misplaced I might add, links between this and the Holocaust. All of the arguments that talk about how debate is a unique space for questioning assumptions make an assumption of safety . They say that this is a space where one is safe to question assumptions and try new perspectives. That is not true for everyone. When we allow arguments that question the wrong ness of racism, sexism, homophobia, rape, lynching, etc., we make debate unsafe for certain people. The idea that debate is a safe space to question all assumptions is the definition of privilege, it begins with an idea of a debater that can question every assumption. People who face the actual effects of the aforementioned things cannot question those assumptions, and making debate a space built around the idea that they can is hostile. So, you really have a choice. Either 1) say that you do not want these people to debate so that you can let people question the w rongness of everything I listed before, 2) say that you care more about letting debaters question those things than making debate safe for everyo ne, or 3) make it so that saying things that make debate u nsafe has actual repercussions. On "debate is not the real world". Only for people who ca n separate their existence in "the real world" from their existence in debate. That means privileged, white, heterosexual males like myself. I don't understand how you can make this sweeping claim whe n some people are clearly harmed by these arguments. At the end of the day, you have to figure out whether you care about debate being safe for everyone involved. I don't think anyone has contested that these arguments make debate unsafe for certain people . If you care at all about the people involved in debate then don't vote on these arguments . If you care about the safety and wellbeing of competi tors, then don't vote on these arguments. If you don't, then I honestly don't understand why you give up your time to coach and/or j udge . The pay can't be that good. I don't believe that you' re just in it for the money, which is why I ask you to ask yourselves whether you can justify making debate unsa fe for certain people.

### Contention – Class Domination

**The right to strike is the right to resist oppression – it allows workers to check the unilateral nature of the bargaining process**

**Lim ’19:** Woojin Lim. “The Right to Strike”. December 11th, 2019. The Harvard Crimson. <https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2019/12/11/lim-right-to-strike/>. FD

On April 9, 1969, roughly 500 student activists [took over](https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2019/04/event-commemorating-1969-harvard-strike-to-include-current-student-activists/) University Hall to protest Harvard’s role in the Vietnam War. City and state police armed with riot gear, clubs, and mace were [called](https://www.thecrimson.com/article/1994/4/22/police-raided-university-hall-pithe-following/) to remove all protesters who had vowed nonviolent resistance. In the early morning hours of April 10, over 400 police officers [stormed](https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2019/5/27/university-hall-1969/) University Hall, between 250 and 300 arrests were made, and 75 students were injured. In response, by April 11, thousands of Harvard students, teaching fellows, and faculty had gathered in Harvard Stadium to strike. Fifty years later, the Harvard Graduate Students Union-United Automobile Workers [declared](https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2019/12/3/grad-union-strikes/) a strike, fighting [for](https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2019/11/21/grad-student-strike-proposals/) increased compensation, health benefits, and neutral third-party arbitration for sexual harassment and discrimination. On December 3, over 500 demonstrators, wearing on their shoulders large blue-and-white “UAW on Strike” placards, [marched](https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2019/12/unionized-harvard-students-go-on-strike/) routes throughout the Yard. In the strike of 1969, strikers fought for social justice; in the HGSU-UAW strike of 2019, strikers press on the fight for fair wages and working conditions. The right to strike is a [right](https://jacobinmag.com/2018/07/right-to-strike-freedom-civil-liberties-oppression) to resist oppression. The strike (and the credible threat of a strike) is an indispensable part of the collective bargaining procedure. Collective bargaining (or “agreement-making”) provides workers and employees with the opportunity to influence the establishment of workplace rules that govern a large portion of their lives. The concerted withdrawal of labor allows workers to promote and defend their unprotected economic and social interests from employers’ unilateral decisions, and provide employers with pressure and incentives to make reasonable concessions. Functionally, strikes provide workers with the bargaining power to drive fair and meaningful negotiations, offsetting the inherent inequalities of bargaining power in the employer-employee relationship.

**Striking is a human right – it’s key to resisting the worst aspects of neoliberalism**

**Ewing ’10:** Keith Ewing. “Yes, Striking is a Human Right”. The Guardian. March 26th, 2010. <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/libertycentral/2010/mar/26/ba-strike-human-rights>. FD.

It begins with the International Labour Organisation's [convention on the right to organise and bargain collectively](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Freedom_of_Association_and_Protection_of_the_Right_to_Organise_Convention,_1948) of 1948, which a British Labour government was the first to ratify; followed by the [Council of Europe's social charter](http://www.coe.int/T/DGHL/Monitoring/SocialCharter/) of 1961, which a British Tory government was the first to ratify; followed, in turn, by the UN's [international covenant on economic, social and cultural rights](http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/cescr.htm) of 1966. The British government has been told by the international human rights community that it must relax the existing legal restrictions and stop treating a lawful strike as a breach (rather than a suspension) of the worker's contract of employment. If our law met our international obligations, it would not be possible for [bully boy Willie Walsh](https://www.theguardian.com/business/2010/mar/25/ba-strike-letter-academics-walsh) unilaterally to [withdraw the travel perks](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/finance/newsbysector/transport/7526928/BA-chief-Willie-Walsh-says-loss-of-strikers-travel-perks-not-negotiable.html)of BA crew, as announced this week. But more than that – international law requires us to allow workers and their unions to take solidarity and sympathy action to help fellow workers in dispute. It is, after all, one of the purposes of joining a union – mutual aid in times of need, though not in Britain. Just as Walsh is allowed to engage in [secondary action](https://www.theguardian.com/business/2010/mar/25/ba-strike-letter-academics-walsh) by using other companies to carry his passengers, so (says the international human rights community) the union should have the right to call on other unions to put real economic pressure on BA by refusing to handle its planes. Labour, of course, is paralysed by its neoliberal love of the free market, which it places above its weak commitment to the rule of law. But help may be at hand. The European court of human rights has recently ruled that the right to freedom of association in article 11 of that treaty must include the right to strike, and has suggested that the scope and content of that right must reflect as a minimum the standards set by the ILO. This opens the possibility of British unions recovering from the Strasbourg court the rights lost in the political process. So let us say it loudly, and let us say it clearly: the right to strike is a human right; **it should be better protected than it** is; and the British government should take steps now to comply with its international obligations. The exercise of the right to strike is the mark of free society, where discord is accepted as normal, and conflict regarded as healthy. The real question we should be asking is not why do people strike, but why they do not do so more often? To respond by saying that workers are all happy bunnies compared with their forebears would not be the right answer. Strikes may be inconvenient and they may be frustrating. So is the exercise of other human rights. But if you don't want strikes, it is up to you to provide a better answer to the problem of the bully employer who can tear up contracts and impose unilateral changes to working conditions knowing that workers have no option but to accept, and no meaningful legal redress in the courts. In the meantime, where is the Equality and Human Rights Commission, and where is the rest of the human rights brigade ([Liberty](http://www.liberty-human-rights.org.uk/) and [Justice](http://www.justice.org.uk/enterb/index1.html))? It's about time you [put your weight behind workers](https://www.theguardian.com/business/2010/mar/26/ba-strikers-deserve-public-support) who exercise their human rights, and do so against the ugly background of the rightwing press in full spate.

freedoms over property rights.

**Class domination results in myriad forms of oppression and causes poverty – this impact has uniqueness**

**Gourevitch ’12:** Alex Gourevitch. “A Radical Defense of the Right to Strike”. Jacobin. July 12th, 2018. <https://jacobinmag.com/2018/07/right-to-strike-freedom-civil-liberties-oppression>. FD.

[Class-based oppression](https://www.jacobinmag.com/2016/03/working-class-capitalism-socialists-strike-power/) is inextricable from liberal capitalism. While meaningful variation exists across capitalist societies, one of the fundamental unifying facts is this: the majority of able-bodied people are forced to work for members of a relatively small group, who dominate control over productive assets and who, thereby, enjoy control over the activities and products of those workers. There are [workers](https://www.jacobinmag.com/2018/07/turning-to-the-working-class), and then there are owners and their managers. Workers are pushed into the labor market because they have no reasonable alternative to looking for a job. They cannot produce the goods they need for themselves, nor can they rely on the charity of others, nor can they count on adequate state benefits. Depending on how we measure income and wealth, about 60 to 80 percent of Americans [fall into this category](https://thenewpress.com/books/after-new-economy) for most of their adult lives. This structural compulsion is not symmetric. A significant minority of the population has enough wealth — whether inherited or accumulated or both — that they can avoid entering the labor market. They might happen to work, but they are not forced to do so. The oppression, then, stems not from the fact that some are forced to work. After all, if socially necessary work were shared equally, then it might be fair to force each to do their share. The oppression stems from the fact that the forcing is unequal —that only some are made to work for others, producing whatever employers pay them to produce. This structural inequality feeds into a second, interpersonal dimension of oppression. Workers are forced to join workplaces typically characterized by large swathes of uncontrolled managerial power and authority. This oppression is interpersonal because it is power that specific individuals (employers and their managers) have to get other specific individuals (employees) to do what they want. We can distinguish between three overlapping forms that this interpersonal, workplace oppression takes: subordination, delegation, and dependence. Subordination: Employers have what are sometimes called “[managerial prerogatives](https://books.google.com/books/about/Managerial_Prerogative_and_the_Question.html?id=NQLEBAAAQBAJ)” — legislative and judicial grants of authority to owners and their managers to make decisions about investment, hiring and firing, plant location, work process, and the like. Managers may change working speeds and assigned tasks, the hours of work, or, as Amazon currently does, force employees to spend up to an hour going through security lines after work [without paying them](https://www.oyez.org/cases/2014/13-433). They can fire workers for [Facebook comments](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/10/17/facebook-firings_n_1003789.html), [their sexual orientation](https://www.sgvtribune.com/2011/10/08/fired-gay-water-polo-coach-and-supporters-protest-at-charter-oak-board-meeting/), [for being too sexually appealing](http://www.slate.com/blogs/xx_factor/2013/07/29/borgata_babes_lawsuit_new_legal_cases_assess_discrimination_based_on_sex.html), or for not being appealing enough. They can [give](https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/71431/the-big-squeeze-by-steven-greenhouse/9781400096527/) workers more tasks than can be performed in the allotted time, lock employees in the workplace overnight, [require employees to labor](http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/money_co/2011/09/amazon-warehouse-employees-overheated-ahead-of-holiday-season.html) in extreme heat and [other physically hazardous conditions](https://www.nytimes.com/2013/03/31/us/osha-emphasizes-safety-health-risks-fester.html), or [punitively isolate](https://www.dissentmagazine.org/article/caring-on-stolen-time-a-nursing-home-diary) workers from other coworkers. They can [pressure](https://www.jacobinmag.com/2018/03/labor-law-corporations-workers-political-influence)employees to take unwanted political action, or, in the case of nurses, force employees to [work for twenty-two different doctors](https://socialistworker.org/2018/07/03/nurses-are-set-to-strike-uvm). What unifies these seemingly disparate examples is that, in all cases, managers [are exercising](https://www.jacobinmag.com/2017/06/private-government-interview-elizabeth-anderson) legally permitted prerogatives. The law does not require that workers have any formal say in how those powers are exercised. In fact, in nearly every liberal capitalist country (including social democracies like Sweden), employees are defined, in law, as “subordinates.” This is subordination in the strict sense: workers are subject to the will of the employer. Delegation: There are additional discretionary legal powers that managers enjoy not by legal statute or precedent but because workers have delegated these powers in the contract. For instance, workers might sign a contract [that allows managers to require employees](https://www.aclu.org/issues/criminal-law-reform/drug-testing?redirect=workplace-drug-testing) to submit to random drug testing or unannounced searches. In the United States, 18 percent of current employees and 37 percent of workers in their lifetime [work under noncompete agreements](http://equitablegrowth.org/why-its-time-to-rethink-non-compete-agreements/). These clauses give managers the legal power to forbid employees from working for competitors, in some cases reducing these workers to near indentured service. The [contract](https://www.jacobinmag.com/2016/04/verizon-wireless-strike-bernie-sanders-cwa/) that the Communications Workers of America had with Verizon until 2015 included a right for managers to force employers to perform from ten to fifteen hours of overtime per week and to take some other day instead of Saturday as an off-day. While workers have granted these prerogatives to employers voluntarily, in many cases it’s only technically voluntary because of the compulsion to work. This is especially true if workers can only find jobs in sectors where these kinds of contracts proliferate. Which leads to the third face of oppression: the distributive effects of class inequality. The normal workings of liberal capitalism elevate a relatively small group of owners and highly paid managers to the pinnacle of society, where they accumulate most of the wealth and income. Meanwhile, most workers do not earn enough to both meet their needs and to save such that they can employ themselves or start their own businesses. The few that do rise displace others or take the structurally limited number of opportunities available. The rest remain workers. Dependence: Finally, managers might have the material power to force employees to submit to commands or even to accept violations of their rights because of the worker’s dependence on the employer. A [headline example](https://jacobinmag.com/2018/06/heres-how-much-money-americas-biggest-corporations-have-stolen-from-their-own-workers) is [wage theft](https://www.epi.org/blog/wage-theft-by-employers-is-costing-u-s-workers-billions-of-dollars-a-year/), which affects [American workers](https://www.nelp.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/WinningWageJusticeSummaryofResearchonWageTheft.pdf) to the tune of $8 to $14 billion per year. Employers [regularly break](http://www.jwj.org/free-and-fair-how-labor-law-fails-u-s-democratic-election-standards) labor law, by disciplining, threatening, or firing workers who wish to organize, strike, or otherwise exercise supposedly protected labor rights. In other cases, workers have been [refused bathroom breaks](https://www.oxfamamerica.org/livesontheline/) and resorted to wearing diapers, [denied legally required lunch breaks](https://www.sfgate.com/business/article/Employers-must-pay-if-they-deny-lunch-breaks-2474407.php)or [pressured to work through them](https://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/08/14/indiana-att-technicians-class-action-lawsuit-lunch-breaks_n_1777166.html), [forced to keep working](https://www.nytimes.com/2012/07/08/business/media/ads-for-mcdonalds-and-las-vegas-aimed-at-harried-workers.html) after their shift, or denied the right to read or turn on air conditioning during break. In [particularly egregious examples](https://www.buzzfeed.com/jessicagarrison/the-new-american-slavery-invited-to-the-us-foreign-workers-f#.nmJN7Yg27), employers have forced their workers to stay home rather than go out on weekends or to switch churches and alter religious practices on pain of being fired and deported. There are also the many cases of systematic [sexual harassment](https://www.jacobinmag.com/2018/03/metoo-workplace-discrimination-sexual-harassment-feminism), in those wide regions of the economy where something more than a public shaming is needed to control bosses. In all these instances, employers are not exercising legal powers to command. Instead they are taking advantage of the material power that comes with threatening to fire or otherwise discipline workers. This material power to get workers to do things that employers want is in part a function of the class structure of society, both in the broad sense of workers being unequally dependent on owners, and in the narrower sense of workers being legally subordinate to employers. The oppression lies not just in the existence of these powers, nor in some capitalist bad apples, but in how these powers are typically used. Managers tend to use these powers “rationally,” to exploit workers and extract profits. Each of these different faces of oppression — structural, interpersonal, and distributive — is a distinct injustice. Together they form the interrelated and mutually reinforcing elements of class domination that are typical of capitalist societies. Defenders of liberal capitalism insist that it provides the fairest way of distributing work and the rewards of social production. They often speak in the idiom of freedom. Yet liberal capitalism fundamentally constrains workers’ liberty, generating the exploitation of one class by another. It is this oppression that explains why workers have a right to strike and why that right is best understood as a right to resist oppression.

#### Poverty is the worst form of structural violence and kills as many people as a nuclear war

Abu Jamal ’98: Abu-Jamal, prominent social activist and author, ’98, [A Quiet and Deadly Violence, Sept 19, <http://www.flashpoints.net/mQuietDeadlyViolence.html>]. FD.

The deadliest form of violence is poverty. --Ghandi It has often been observed that America is a truly violent nation, as shown by the thousands of cases of social and communal violence that occurs daily in the nation. Every year, some 20,000 people are killed by others, and additional 20,000 folks kill themselves. Add to this the nonlethal violence that Americans daily inflict on each other, and we begin to see the tracings of a nation immersed in a fever of violence. But, as remarkable, and harrowing as this level and degree of violence is, it is, by far, not the most violent features of living in the midst of the American empire. We live, equally immersed, and to a deeper degree, in a nation that condones and ignores wide-ranging "structural' violence, of a kind that destroys human life with a breathtaking ruthlessness. Former Massachusetts prison official and writer, Dr. James Gilligan observes; By "structural violence" I mean the increased rates of death and disability suffered by those who occupy the bottom rungs of society, as contrasted by those who are above them. Those excess deaths (or at least a demonstrably large proportion of them) are a function of the class structure; and that structure is itself a product of society's collective human choices, concerning how to distribute the collective wealth of the society. These are not acts of God. I am contrasting "structural" with "behavioral violence" by which I mean the non-natural deaths and injuries that are caused by specific behavioral actions of individuals against individuals, such as the deaths we attribute to homicide, suicide, soldiers in warfare, capital punishment, and so on. --(Gilligan, J., MD, Violence: Reflections On a National Epidemic (New York: Vintage, 1996), 192.) This form of violence, not covered by any of the majoritarian, corporate, ruling-class protected media, is invisible to us and because of its invisibility, all the more insidious. How dangerous is it--really? Gilligan notes: [E]very fifteen years, on the average, as many people die because of relative poverty as would be killed in a nuclear war that caused 232 million deaths; and every single year, two to three times as many people die from poverty throughout the world as were killed by the Nazi genocide of the Jews over a six-year period. This is, in effect, the equivalent of an ongoing, unending, in fact accelerating, thermonuclear war, or genocide on the weak and poor every year of every decade, throughout the world. [Gilligan, p. 196] Worse still, in a thoroughly capitalist society, much of that violence bec[omes]ame internalized, turned back on the Self, because, in a society based on the priority of wealth, those who own nothing are taught to loathe themselves, as if something is inherently wrong with themselves, instead of the social order that promotes this self-loathing. This intense self-hatred was often manifested in familial violence as when the husband beats the wife, the wife smacks the son, and the kids fight each other.

### Contention – Democracy

#### Strikes increase democratic participation which reinvigorates democracy.

McElwee 15 [Sean; Research Associate at Demos; “How Unions Boost Democratic Participation,” The American Prospect; 9/16/15; https://prospect.org/labor/unions-boost-democratic-participation/]

Labor organizer Helen Marot once observed, "The labor unions are group efforts in the direction of democracy." What she meant is that more than simply vehicles for the economic interests of workers (which they certainly are), labor unions also foster civic participation for workers. And nowhere is this clearer than in voter turnout, which has suffered in recent years along with union membership. Indeed, new data from the Census Bureau and a new analysis of American National Election Studies data support the case that unions' declining influence has also deeply harmed democracy.

In 2014, voter turnout was abysmal, even for a midterm. Census data suggest that only 41.9 percent of the citizen population over 18 turned out to vote. However, as I note in my new Demos report Why Voting Matters, there are dispiriting gaps in turnout across class, race, and age. To examine how unions might affect policy, I performed a new analysis of both Census Bureau and American National Election Studies data. The data below, from the 2014 election, show the differences in voter turnout between union and non-union workers (the sample only includes individuals who were employed, and does not include self-employed workers). While only 39 percent of non-union workers voted in 2014, fully 52 percent of union workers did.

As part of ongoing research, James Feigenbaum, an economics PhD candidate at Harvard, ran a regression using American National Election Studies data suggesting that union members are about 4 percentage points more likely to vote and 3 points more likely to register (after controlling for demographic factors) and individuals living in a union household are 2.5 points more likely to vote and register. This is largely in line with the earlier estimates of Richard Freeman.

These numbers may appear modest, but in a close national election they could be enough to change the result.

Other research has found an even stronger turnout effect from unions. Daniel Stegmueller and Michael Becher find that after applying numerous demographic controls, union members are 10 points more likely to vote.

What's particularly important is that unions boost turnout among low- and middle-income individuals. In a 2006 study, political scientists Jan Leighley and Jonathan Nagler found that, "the decline in union membership since 1964 has affected the aggregate turnout of both low and middle-income individuals more than the aggregate turnout of high-income individuals." In 2014, the gap between unions and non-union workers shrunk at the highest rung of the income ladder. There was a 15-point gap among those earning less than $25,000 (40 percent turnout for union workers, and 25 percent turnout for non-union workers). Among those earning more than $100,000, the gap was far smaller (49 percent for non-union workers and 52 percent for union workers).

Individuals living in union households are also more progressive than those in non-union households. I examined 2012 ANES data and find that union households aren't largely different from non-union households on many issues regarding government spending, but they are more likely to have voted for Obama, identify as Democratic, and support a robust role for the government in reducing income inequality. When looking at union members specifically, the gaps become slightly larger.

More upscale union members are far more progressive than their non-union counterparts. Non-union households with an income above $60,000 oppose government intervention to reduce inequality by 11 points, with 32.2 percent in favor and 43.4 percent against. But richer union households support government intervention, with 42.5 percent in favor and 29.9 percent opposed. As Richard B. Freeman has pointed out, "union members are more likely to vote for a Democrat for the House or Presidency than demographically comparable nonunion voters." He similarly finds that "unionism moves members to the left of where they would be given their socioeconomic status," in line with the data I examined from 2012.

A 2013 study by Jasmine Kerrissey and Evan Schofer finds that union members are not only more likely to vote, but also more likely to belong to other associations, and to protest. They also find that these effects are strongest among people with lower levels of education, suggesting that unions may help mobilize the least politically active groups. A recent study of European countries finds union members vote more and identifies those aspects of union membership that contribute to the higher turnout.

The strongest factor is that workers who engage in democratic organizations in the workplace (via collective bargaining) are more likely to engage in democracy more broadly by, for instance, voting.

Other studies support the idea that civic participation creates a feedback loop that leads to higher voting rates. Another factor is that union members make more money, and higher income is correlated with voting behavior. Finally, union members are encouraged by peers and the union to engage in politics, which also contributes to higher levels of turnout.

It's not entirely surprising that politicians who savage unions often share a similar contempt for the right to vote. Democracy in the workplace leads to democracy more broadly throughout society. Workers with more democratic workplaces are more likely to democratically engage in in society. Further, when unions and progressives demonstrate that government can benefit them, Americans are more likely to want to participate in decision-making. For all these reasons, unions play a unique and indispensable role in the progressive project. As Larry Summers, certainly not a leftist, recently argued, "the weakness of unions leaves a broad swath of the middle class largely unrepresented in the political process."

#### Second, corruption reduction – the right to strike fights concentration of power while reducing inequality.

IER 17 [Institute of Employment Rights. The IER exists to inform the debate around trade union rights and labour law by providing information, critical analysis, and policy ideas through our network of academics, researchers and lawyers. “UN Rights Expert: Right to strike is essential to democracy”. 3-10-2017. . https://www.ier.org.uk/news/un-rights-expert-right-strike-essential-democracy/.]

The United Nations’ Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association, Maina Kiai, has reminded member states of the International Labour Organization (ILO) – including the UK – that they have a positive obligation to uphold the right to strike. Speaking at an ILO meeting on Monday 06 March 2017 in Geneva, Kiai argued that the right to strike is fundamental to the preservation of democracy. “The concentration of power in one sector – whether in the hands of government or business – inevitably leads to the erosion of democracy, and an increase in inequalities and marginalization with all their attendant consequences. The right to strike is a check on this concentration of power,” he explained. The right to strike has been established in international law as a corollary to the right of freedom of association for decades, and is enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights as Article 11. As a member state of the ILO and of the EU, the UK is legally obliged to uphold the right to strike, although through the Trades Union Act 2016 and the anti-trade union laws that preceded it, the government is making it harder and harder for trade unions to take industrial action. Kiai criticised such actions, saying government’s have a duty not to impede workers’ ability to take industrial action. “I deplore the various attempts made to erode the right to strike at national and multilateral levels,” the expert said, reminding delegates: “Protest action in relation to government social and economic policy, and against negative corporate practices, forms part of the basic civil liberties whose respect is essential for the meaningful exercise of trade union rights. This right enables them to engage with companies and governments on a more equal footing, and Member States have a positive obligation to protect this right, and a negative obligation not to interfere with its exercise.”

#### Independently, our coordinated civic engagement is key to comprehensive climate action globally.

Fisher and Nasrin 20 [Dana R; Professor of Sociology and the Director of the Program for Society and the Environment at the University of Maryland. Her research focuses on questions related to democracy, activism, and environmentalism — most recently studying climate activism, protests, and the American Resistance. Her research employs a mixed-methods approach that integrates data collected through open-ended semi-structured interviews and participant observation with various forms of survey data; Sohana; University of Maryland, College Park, UMD, UMCP, University of Maryland College Park · Philip Merrill College of Journalism Master of Arts; “Climate activism and its effects,” Wiley Interdisciplinary Review; October 2020; https://www.researchgate.net/publication/345455893\_Climate\_activism\_and\_its\_effects]

As coordinated school strikes have taken place around the world to draw attention to the climate crisis, they have mobi-lized an increasing number of participants in a growing number of locations. This type of activism involves particularforms of civic engagement that specifically aim to and pressures governments to take action that addresses the issue of cli-mate change. Civic engagement is the term used to describe the manifold ways that citizens participate in their societieswith the intention of influencing communities, politics, and the economy. Forms of engagement range from tactics thatinvolve citizens working directly to change their individual behaviors, along with those that involve indirect efforts tobring about change through the political and economic systems (like school strikes). Tactics run the gamut and rangefrom those that work within these systems to those that work outside of them (Meyer & Tarrow, 1997). Collectiveefforts are mediated by various organizational forms (Anheier & Themudo, 2002), which can either create or remove obstacles to participation (Fisher & Green, 2004; for more general discussion, see Gamson, 1975; McAdam, 1983). Ashas been noted by numerous studies, civic engagement is much higher in democratic countries where citizens areafforded rights to participate and to voice their opinions (DeBardeleben & Pammett, 2009; see also Putnam, Leonardi, &Nanetti, 1994; Schofer & Longhofer, 2011; Skocpol & Fiorina, 1999; de Tocqueville, 2002; see particularly Verba,Schlozman, & Brady, 1995). At the same time, digital technologies have been found to facilitate the spread of variousforms of activism while they connect countries and cultures (Bennett, 2013; Theocharis, Vitoratou, & Sajuria, 2017)

This paper reviews the specific ways that citizens have engaged civically around the issue of climate change, paying particular attention to the documented effects of these efforts on climate change itself. Our discussion provides a review of the range of direct and indirect forms of climate activism (for a general overview of the direct and indirect effects of social movements, see Snow & Soule, 2010). After this review, we present the case of school strikes as a specific tactic that has gained attention in recent years. In this section, we review the limited research that presents data collected from participants of climate strikes in 2019 to understand trends in the expansion of this popular tactic. As the world responds to the COVID-19 outbreak and activism (including climate strikes) move increasingly online, we discuss the potential implications of the pandemic on climate activism and engagement. The conclusion of this paper emphasizes that future research must pay more attention to the relationship between climate-related civic engagement and measurable environmental outcomes. It highlights the methodological challenges facing scholars who take on the difficult analytical task of assessing the outcomes of climate activism in a way that is scalable for a global movement aiming to stop a global crisis. 2 | ACTIVISM WITH DIRECT EFFECTS ON CLIMATE CHANGE There are limited forms of civic engagement that involve efforts to have a direct effect on individual greenhouse gas emissions. For example, some environmental movements and environmental groups encourage their members to make lifestyle changes that reduce their individual carbon footprints. These efforts focus on changing consumer behaviors, such as reducing car-use, flying, shifting to nonfossil fuel-based sources of electricity, and eating less dairy or meat (Büchs, Saunders, Wallbridge, Smith, & Bardsley, 2015; Cherry, 2006; Cronin, McCarthy, & Collins, 2014; Ergas, 2010; Haenfler, Johnson, & Jones, 2012; Middlemiss, 2011; Salt & Layzell, 1985; Saunders, Büchs, Papafragkou, Wallbridge, & Smith, 2014; Stuart, Thomas, Donaghue, & Russell, 2013; Wynes, Nicholas, Zhao, & Donner, 2018; for an overview on these measures, see Wynes & Nicholas, 2017). So far, there are only a limited number of case studies that measure the direct effect of participation in these types of movements as it relates to climate outcomes. In their study of the electricity use of 72 households in southern England, for example, Saunders and colleagues find an association between low levels of electricity use and contact with environmental organizations (Saunders et al., 2014). Similarly, in a longitudinal ethnographic study of a small number of participants in an environmental campaign in Sweden, Vestergren and colleagues conclude that participants in an environmental campaign sustained reductions in plastic use and meat consumption over the period of their study (Vestergren, Drury, & Chiriac, 2018, 2019). There is a clear need for research on the material outcomes of these movements that aim to have direct effects on consumption patterns that goes beyond single case studies. At the same time, measuring direct effects of these efforts in a way that scales up is extremely challenging, especially when crossing cultural and institutional contexts. 3 | ACTIVISM WITH INDIRECT EFFECTS ON CLIMATE CHANGE Most types of activism, however, do not aim to have direct effects on greenhouse gas emissions. Instead, they work to pressure economic and political actors to change policies and behaviors in a way that will lead to reductions in emissions. In other words, their goals are indirect: these forms of engagement target nodes of power—policymakers, regulators, and businesses—to change their behaviors and/or accelerate their efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. These forms of civic engagement involve providing the labor and political will needed to pressure political and economic actors to enact the kinds of emission-reducing policies recommended by scientists working with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change & Edenhofer, 2014, pt. IV). Much of the research in this area looks at the role of internationally focused environmental Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), which tend to target international environmental negotiation processes (Betsill & Corell, 2008; Boli & Thomas, 1999; Fox & Brown, 1998). Within this research area, there are numerous studies that analyze 2 of 11 FISHER AND NASRIN quantitative data sets to understand the relationship between NGOs and a country's environmental impact comparatively (see also Frank, Hironaka, & Schofer, 2000; Grant, Jorgenson, & Longhofer, 2018; Jorgenson, Dick, & Shandra, 2011; Longhofer & Jorgenson, 2017; Schofer & Hironaka, 2005). Other studies focus specifically on the relationship between NGOs and environmental impact within nations (Dietz, Frank, Whitley, Kelly, & Kelly, 2015; Grant & Vasi, 2017; Shwom, 2011). In their quantitative analysis of the effects of world society on environmental protection outcomes in countries around the world, Schofer and Hironaka find clear evidence that the rise of an “international environmental regime,” which includes environmental NGOs, is associated with lower levels of environmental degradation, including reduced carbon dioxide emissions (Schofer & Hironaka, 2005). More recently, scholars have worked to understand this relationship within the context of development. For example, Longhofer and Jorgenson conclude that nations with the highest levels of membership in international environmental NGOs experience a moderate “decoupling” in the assocaition between economic development and carbon emissions (Grant et al., 2018; see also Jorgenson et al., 2011; Longhofer & Jorgenson, 2017) Although these studies provide a good first step in understanding this connection, more research is needed about how exactly the existence of NGOs bring about lower emissions. Beyond these studies that explicitly analyze the relationship between NGOs and carbon emissions, there is a small but growing literature that assesses the broader consequences of activism, which aims to pressure policymakers to take action across a range of issues (Amenta, Caren, Chiarello, & Su, 2010; Giugni, McAdam, & Tilly, 1999; Soule & Olzak, 2004). This research focuses specifically on the outcome of specific forms of engagement, or tactics (for an overview, see Caren, Ghoshal, & Ribas, 2011). Some of the most common tactics that activists are employing to reduce greenhouse gas emissions indirectly are summarized in the sections that follow. 3.1 | Activism through litigation Litigation is one of the tactics that citizens, local governments, NGOs, and even corporations are using to pressure governments. This tactic aims to work through the judicial system to take action or enforce existing legislation (McCormick et al., 2017; Peel & Lin, 2019; Peel & Osofsky, 2015; Setzer & Vanhala, 2019; see also Pfrommer et al., 2019). In May 2017, UN Environment reported that climate change-related cases had been filed in 24 countries plus the European Union (UN Environment, 2017). In some cases, this tactic is being used to pressure businesses and governments to meet their policy commitments (Setzer & Vanhala, 2019; UN Environment, 2017). So far, however, there remains insufficient evidence regarding what effect these judicial efforts are having on greenhouse gas emissions. 3.2 | Activism targeting business actors At the same time, some groups focus their attention on targeting the economic sector and specific businesses. These efforts employ shareholder activism and cooperative board stewardship, as well as protest (King & Soule, 2007; M.-D. P. Lee & Lounsbury, 2011; McDonnell, King, & Soule, 2015; Szulecki, 2018; Yildiz et al., 2015). Shareholder activism focuses on investors' response to corporate activities and performances (Gillan & Starks, 2007). It involves investors who are dissatisfied with the company's management or operation taking advantage of their role as shareholders to pressure the company to change (Bratton & Mccahery, 2015; Gillan & Starks, 2007). Cooperative board stewardship, in contrast, involves “jointly owned and democratically controlled businesses” that support renewable energy (Viardot, 2013, p. 757; see also Yildiz et al., 2015). Some of this business-focused activism involves working through transnational advocacy networks, which have been documented to target governments and corporations (Hadden & Jasny, 2017; Keck & Sikkink, 2014; McAteer & Pulver, 2009). In their comparative study of shareholder activism in the Amazon region, McAteer and Pulver come to mixed conclusions, finding that one of the shareholder advocacy networks in Ecuador was successful in limiting oil development, while the other was not (McAteer & Pulver, 2009). Other types of activism that target business practices involve environmental groups working as part of a campaign to pressure institutional investors and universities to divest from fossil fuels. Groups employ “a range of strategies to shame, pressure, facilitate, and encourage investors in general, and large institutional investors in particular, to relinquish their holdings of fossil fuel stocks in favour of climate-friendly alternatives” (Ayling & Gunningham, 2017, p. 131; Franta, 2017; Grady-Benson & Sarathy, 2016; Hestres & Hopke, 2019). Although research has yet to conclude FISHER AND NASRIN 3 of 11 that these efforts have a substantial effect on fossil fuel funding or greenhouse gas emissions (Tollefson, 2015; but see Bergman, 2018), a recent study of fossil fuel divestment and green bonds provides some evidence of success. In it, Glomsrød and Wei model green investment scenarios that include funding allocation constraints due to divestment around the world. The authors find that these efforts yield notable emissions reductions (Glomsrød & Wei, 2018, p. 7). 3.3 | Activism working within the political system Activism also frequently involves citizens working individually or in groups to take advantage of opportunities to pressure governmental actors from within the political system. These tactics involve lobbying elected officials or working to change political representation through democratic elections of candidates (for an overview, see Clemens, 1997; Schlozman, Verba, & Brady, 2012). Turning first to lobbying, there is some evidence that these efforts by civic groups have a positive effect on environmental outcomes. In their 2016 study, Olzak and colleagues find that the number of environmental lobbyist organizations has a positive effect on the enactment of environmental legislation (Olzak, Soule, Coddou, & Muñoz, 2016). Although the authors do not specifically document the effects of the legislation on material outcomes, more recent research has found climate laws to reduce carbon emissions (Eskander & Fankhauser, 2020). Even though groups representing both the general public and businesses engage in lobbying, research has found business groups have (and spend) more financial and human resources, which affords them “privileged access” to policymakers and policymaking (Freudenburg, 2005). In his study of the “climate lobby,” Brulle compares the amounts spent by different groups for lobbying around the climate issue in the U.S. Congress. He finds that the “major sectors involved in lobbying were fossil fuel and transportation corporations, utilities, and affiliated trade associations. Expenditures by these sectors dwarf those of environmental organizations and renewable energy corporations” (Brulle, 2018, p. 289; see also Farrell, 2016). In some cases, representatives from business interests that have been lobbying against environmental policies are given opportunities to join the government. This process leads to “Regulatory Capture” by the specific business interest and is found to be associated with substantial negative public and environmental health consequences (for a recent example, see Dillon et al., 2018). Activism within the political system also involves citizens working through the electoral process to affect all sorts of social change (for a discussion of engagement in electoral politics as activism, see Fisher, 2012, 2019a). In some cases, elections focus on the differences between candidates who are supportive of policies that include more aggressive climate change mitigation strategies. Although research has yet to analyze extensively the relationship between this type of election-related civic engagement and climate outcomes, there is already some evidence. For example, a 2019 study finds that individuals in the United States who installed solar panels participate more in elections (Mildenberger, Howe, & Miljanich, 2019). At the same time, other research has documented various forms of electoral backlash against climate policies, both individually (Stokes, 2016, 2020), as well as in combination with other progressive agenda items (Muradian & Pascual, 2020). In their study of the success of “far-right movements” around the world and the concurrent election of “far-right” candidates, Muradian and Pascual note that far-right-leaning elected officials tend to have low concern for environmental issues and to deny climate change and disregard scientific evidence (Muradian & Pascual, 2020). Although they do not specifically look at the environmental outcomes of these officials holding office, given their common values and the empirical evidence coming out of the early years of the Trump Administration (Bomberg, 2017; Fisher & Jorgenson, 2019), it is likely that these officials will contribute to the passage of policies that limit the effectiveness of climate-related plans, reduce enforcement of these plans, or block them outright. 3.4 | Activism outside the economic and political system At the same time, there is expansive research on the ways citizens with less access to resources and power participate by challenging the economic and political system from outside it (for an overview, see Meyer & Tarrow, 1997). These efforts include a range of more confrontational tactics, such as boycotting, striking, protesting, and direct action that target politics, policymakers, and businesses. Many studies have explained this type of activism using climate change as a case (Fisher, 2010; Hadden, 2015; Saunders, Grasso, Olcese, Rainsford, & Rootes, 2012; Swim, Geiger, & Lengieza, 2019; Wahlström, Wennerhag, & Rootes, 2013; see also Fisher, Stanley, Berman, & Neff, 2005; Walgrave, 4 of 11 FISHER AND NASRIN Wouters, Van Laer, Verhulst, & Ketelaars, 2012). So far, however, only a handful of studies have explored the effect of these tactics on climate-related outcomes (but see Muñoz, Olzak, & Soule, 2018; Olzak et al., 2016). In their research on the success of environmental legislation in the U.S. Congress, Olzak and colleagues find that some civic tactics have a more positive effect than others: while they conclude that the number of environmental lobbyist organizations is positively associated with the enactment of environmental legislation, which can lead to carbon emissions reductions, they also find that protest by constituents has no effect (Olzak et al., 2016; see also Olzak & Soule, 2009). In a 2018 piece, which uses more recent data to analyze the relationship between protest, policy, and greenhouse gas emissions across states in the United States, the authors come to different conclusions. They find that emissions in states decline when there is more pro-environmental protest (Muñoz et al., 2018).

A good deal of research has concluded that activism, including tactics such as protests or strikes played a large role in pressuring governments to create environmental laws and environmental agencies tasked with enforcing those laws around the world (Brulle, 2000; see also Longhofer, Schofer, Miric, & Frank, 2016; McCloskey, 1991; Rucht, 1999; Schreurs, 1997; Steinhardt & Wu, 2016; Wong, 2018). Moreover, research has documented how coalitions of activists achieved a degree of success when they protested environmentally damaging projects, including the Narmada Dam development in India (Khagram, 2004), and environmentally harmful nuclear power plants, dams, and airports in Japan (Aldrich, 2010). In her study of the campaign against coal mining and burning in South Africa, Cock finds that the campaign challenged inequality and generated solidarity (Cock, 2019).

4 | CLIMATE STRIKES AS A GROWING TACTIC

Climate strikes are a particular outsider tactic that aims to pressure both the political and economic system. On August 20, 2018, Greta Thunberg decided not to attend school and sit on the steps of the Swedish parliament to demand that the government take steps to address climate change (Gessen, 2018). Inspired by the national school walkout against gun violence in the United States that was organized after the Parkland School Shooting in Florida, the 15-year-old has spent her Fridays sitting with a hand-written sign protesting ever since. Fridays for Future—the name of the group coordinating this tactic of skipping school on Fridays to protest inaction on climate change—flourished due to its usage of digital technologies to engage young people and the tactic has spread.

In March 2019, the first global climate strike took place, turning out more than 1 million people around the world. Six months later in September 2019, young people and adults responded to a call by young activists to participate in climate strikes as part of the “Global Week for Future” surrounding the UN Climate Action Summit.1 The number of participants in this event globally jumped to an estimated 7.6 million people (Rosane, 2019). Figure 1 presents the growth in the tactic of climate strikes in terms of the numbers of nations where strikes have taken place and the total number of participants involved.

Even before this movement had mobilized millions to strike, a narrative synthesis of studies that focused on youth perceptions of climate change from 1993 to 2018 documented how youth voices on climate change had become much more prominent and more widely publicized (K. Lee, Gjersoe, O'Neill, & Barnett, 2020). Specific research on this movement and its consequences has yet to be published in peer-reviewed publications (but see Evensen, 2019; Fisher, 2019b; Wahlström et al., 2013). However, in a series of pieces published in the Washington Post, Fisher presents analyses of data collected from participants in climate strikes during 2019 to understand how this tactic and the movement have grown in the United States (Fisher, 2019c, 2019d).

As an striking is an outsider tactic by school-aged children that aims to pressure governments to implement more radical climate policies that will lead to emissions reductions, school strikes are a popular example of activism with the goal of having an indirect effect on climate change. Measuring the outcomes of these efforts, in terms of political outcomes and emissions reductions is extremely challenging given the indirect nature of this activism. Such calculations are made even more challenging given the scale and scope of the activism, which has mobilized millions of people to act locally to pressure governments at the local, national, and international levels. Although the overall numbers are large, most of these strikes involve relatively small proportions of overall populations.

#### Climate change is a major threat to marginalized communities and causes extinction.

Specktor 19 [Brandon; writes about the science of everyday life for Live Science, and previously for Reader's Digest magazine, where he served as an editor for five years; "Human Civilization Will Crumble by 2050 If We Don't Stop Climate Change Now, New Paper Claims," livescience, 6/4/19; <https://www.livescience.com/65633-climate-change-dooms-humans-by-2050.html>]

The current climate crisis, they say, is larger and more complex than any humans have ever dealt with before. General climate models — like the one that the [United Nations' Panel on Climate Change](https://www.ipcc.ch/sr15/) (IPCC) used in 2018 to predict that a global temperature increase of 3.6 degrees Fahrenheit (2 degrees Celsius) could put hundreds of millions of people at risk — fail to account for the **sheer complexity of Earth's many interlinked geological processes**; as such, they fail to adequately predict the scale of the potential consequences. The truth, the authors wrote, is probably far worse than any models can fathom. How the world ends What might an accurate worst-case picture of the planet's climate-addled future actually look like, then? The authors provide one particularly grim scenario that begins with world governments "politely ignoring" the advice of scientists and the will of the public to decarbonize the economy (finding alternative energy sources), resulting in a global temperature increase 5.4 F (3 C) by the year 2050. At this point, the world's ice sheets vanish; brutal droughts kill many of the trees in the [Amazon rainforest](https://www.livescience.com/57266-amazon-river.html) (removing one of the world's largest carbon offsets); and the planet plunges into a feedback loop of ever-hotter, ever-deadlier conditions. "Thirty-five percent of the global land area, and **55 percent of the global population, are subject to more than 20 days a year of** [**lethal heat conditions**](https://www.livescience.com/55129-how-heat-waves-kill-so-quickly.html), beyond the threshold of human survivability," the authors hypothesized. Meanwhile, droughts, floods and wildfires regularly ravage the land. Nearly **one-third of the world's land surface turns to desert**. Entire **ecosystems collapse**, beginning with the **planet's coral reefs**, the **rainforest and the Arctic ice sheets.** The world's tropics are hit hardest by these new climate extremes, destroying the region's agriculture and turning more than 1 billion people into refugees. This mass movement of refugees — coupled with [shrinking coastlines](https://www.livescience.com/51990-sea-level-rise-unknowns.html) and severe drops in food and water availability — begin to **stress the fabric of the world's largest nations**, including the United States. Armed conflicts over resources, perhaps culminating in [making] **nuclear war, are likely**. The result, according to the new paper, is "outright chaos" and perhaps "the end of human global civilization as we know it."