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#### Capitalism causes massive violence and inevitable extinction – the role of the ballot is to endorse the best organizational tactics.

Escalante 19 [Alyson Escalante, M.A., Department of Philosophy @ University of Oregon, “Truth and Practice: The Marxist Theory of Knowledge,” 09/08/19, tinyurl.com/8jksnexs] pat

The world we live in today is in a dire state. Climate destruction continues at a fast pace, and every with every passing day, capitalism proves itself to be incapable of addressing this. Capitalist production and its endless drive for resources to match artificial market demands has created a climate crisis that leaves us on the brink of potential extinction.

Governments around the world are turning to far right and fascist leaders to assuage their fears of an uncertain future, and the most marginalized and oppressed suffer because of it. Fascism is on the rise, and history tells us very clearly what that can result in without opposition.

The decaying US empire continues to lash out in violence across the globe in a desperate attempt to re-assert its power and hegemony. Whole countries are destroyed in its desperate bids for more fossil fuels. The world burns from America’s white phosphorus weaponry.

The need for a revolutionary movement capable of replacing capitalism with something better has never been so clear. The choice between socialism or barbarism has never been so stark. More and more people are starting to realize that reform cannot save us, that capitalism and imperialism themselves are the problem, and that we must unite and band together to fight for a better world.

The question then is: how will we know what strategies, what tactics, and what ideas to unite around? If the skeptics and postmodernists are correct that knowledge is always relative and localized, then we cannot built a global and universal strategy to unite around. If they are correct then we are doomed to small acts of localized or individual resistance in the face of apocalypse. To embrace such a vision of the world (with its accompanying epistemological skepticism) is to embrace defeat.

The masses do not want to embrace defeat, they want to know how to fight back. Marxism can provide the tools necessary to engage in that fight.

Marxism, with its self criticism and its insistence on incorporating the valuable ideas of its critics has created a means for unifying workers across the globe with anti-colonial and anti-imperialist struggles. The Marxist belief in the possibility of true ideas, tested and verified in practice, creates the possibility for unity on a global scale. The scientific status of Marxism means that as our climate changes, as our world looks more and more grim, Marxism will adapt through struggle and practice; it will provide us with the ideas and tools we need to fight and win.

There will be no victory for the workers of the world without the ability to wield a revolutionary science. What is at stake in questions of Marxist epistemology is the very possibility of creating a philosophical and scientific basis for revolution. We must defend this possibility. We must defend the scientific status of Marxism, and must insist on the possibility of victory.

#### The aff’s positioning of competition as intrinsic good acts to maintain the stability of capital accumulation.

* AT: Capitalism is when monopoly

Christophers 16 [Brett Christophers, Professor in the Department of Social and Economic Geography at Uppsala University, “The Great Leveler: Capitalism and Competition in the Court of Law,” 2016, Harvard University Press, pp. 8-15, EA]

The aforementioned argument that capitalism has historically migrated from a state of competitiveness to a state of monopoly or oligopoly is deficient in four primary respects, both empirical and conceptual in nature.

First, there is something deeply misleading about the either/or nature of this historical narrative. One of the most important—although rarely acknowledged—of Marx’s insights was that capitalism always, everywhere, requires both. It needs competition, assuredly, not least to drive technological innovation and the reinvestment of profits, and thus growth. But it also needs monopoly—not merely to enhance visibility within and control over otherwise potentially chaotic business environments, but also to underwrite capitalist, market-based trade per se. Not for nothing does David Harvey argue, after Marx, that the “monopoly power of private property” is “both the beginning point and the end point of all capitalist activity.”20 For the legal institution of private property does confer monopoly: the exclusive power to dispose of said property as the owner alone sees fit.

Capital’s seemingly paradoxical need for both competition and monopoly is explored in Chapter 1, which extracts from Marx a conceptualization of capitalism that critically informs the remainder of the book: that of capitalism always, necessarily, teetering on a knife edge, balanced precariously between the contradictory forces of competition and monopoly, and perennially in danger of lapsing too far to one side or the other. “The problem,” Harvey shrewdly observes, “is to keep economic relations competitive enough while sustaining the individual and class monopoly privileges of private property that are the foundation of capitalism as a political-economic system.”21

And it is here that our economic laws crucially enter the picture. In metaphorical terms, the law acts as a powerful leveler: a pincer of sorts on the critical, combustible nexus of monopoly and competition, applicable from one side of the knife edge, the other, or both. Antitrust (competition) law, meaningfully enforced, serves to constrain monopoly power where it coheres too readily, thus boosting competition; IP law acts from the other side, allowing a degree of monopoly power where none “naturally” coheres, and limiting competition in the process. This conceptualization of economic law is sketched out in Chapter 3. Together, such laws help to ensure that over the long term, market-based capitalism is not too competitive (driving down prices and profits) but, in Harvey’s terms, remains competitive enough (avoiding stagnation and rent-seeking). In the process, the laws in question historically have contributed substantially to keeping capitalist accumulation regimes broadly in balance.

At the pivot of this overall mechanism sits the phenomenon of profit. Following the lead of scholars such as Robert Brenner, this book places front and center the relationship between profitability and the interrelated dynamics of competition and monopoly.22 As, indeed, did the classicals: Profit rates were, as Chapter 1 will show, fundamental to their theorization of competition. But it is vital to recognize, as writers such as Keith Cowling have done, that this relationship does not assume a simplistic less-competition-means-more-profit form, isolated as it were from other contributory factors.23 Indeed, the book shows that excesses neither of competitive intensity nor of monopoly power support long-term stability of profit-making and accumulation.

Instead, it leans more toward the type of argument proffered by Gérard Duménil and Dominique Lévy, which is that the dynamics of profitability strongly influence the state’s attempts to regularize regimes of accumulation, and that stabilizing capitalism is thus in no small part a question, ultimately, of stabilizing profitability.24 Or, as David Gordon and coauthors have written, the reproduction of capitalism is “fundamentally conditioned by the level and stability of capitalist profitability. As profits go, in short, so goes the economy.”25 The book’s particular slant on such conceptions is to consider corporate profits more in relative than absolute terms—and relative to, especially, labor and wages. While a comparable focus has recently been adopted by Thomas Piketty in his much discussed Capital in the Twenty-First Century, the inspiration underlying the approach taken here lies much further back in time, in the work in particular of Michal Kalecki.26 For as Kalecki showed both historically and conceptually, the relation of capital with labor, and profit with wages, is centrally implicated in the monopoly-competition relation and the balance that capitalism requires of it. Kalecki, it is fair to say, would have had some very interesting things to say about the Apple wage-suppression antitrust lawsuit.

A second and related problem with the linear historical narrative of from-competition-to-monopoly is its positing of monopoly and competition not only as mutually exclusive alternatives, but as separable ones. Once more, we can turn to Marx for an effective disabusal of this figuring. Monopoly and competition, he argued, are much more closely related, and much more closely connected, than is typically recognized. “Monopoly produces competition, competition produces monopoly,” he maintained, somewhat aphoristically, in a letter he wrote to Pavel Annenkov in 1846.27 Capital not only requires both but is in fact the expression, inter alia, of their synthesis—a synthesis that Marx, in trademark dialectical fashion, described not as a “formula” but as a “movement,” specifically “the movement whereby a true balance is maintained between competition and monopoly.”28 Such movement comprises opposing but connected economic dynamics of centralization and decentralization. When one or the other dynamic becomes disproportionately powerful, Marx argues, the “counteracting tendency” kicks in to return capital to a balanced configuration of monopoly and competition.

This balanced organization of productive forces—always inherently unstable and always prone to knife-edge slippages—is very close to what Edward Chamberlin would later call “monopolistic competition.”29 Such monopolistic competition internalizes monopoly and competition in dialectical relation with one another and is the capitalist norm—and always has been. “The notion of a bygone ‘competitive’ stage of capitalism where firms were price-takers is,” as Duménil and Lévy insist, “a fiction derived from the neoclassical analytical apparatus.”30 Equally fictional, albeit a fiction usually emanating from a very different analytical source, is the notion of a contemporary “monopoly” stage of capitalism absent meaningful competition.31

The historical, U.S.- and U.K.-based narrative related in this book therefore turns on precisely this dialectical, restless synthesis of monopoly and competition, and its ever-evolving, historically and geographically specific forms. In recent years, it is Harvey who has provided the most provocative reading of this dialectic and of its centrality to capitalism. It is, Harvey argues, one of numerous “moving” contradictions that plague the capital form, and with which capital constantly wrestles as it enters into and out of crisis.32 Harvey repeats Marx’s observation that capital requires a balance of competitive and monopolistic forces. He then derives from this postulate the propositions that crisis occurs when such forces become imbalanced—although this is not the only cause of crisis—and that such crisis can only be “fixed” once balance is restored. The result is that capital historically “oscillates” between relative excesses of monopoly and competition, always finding balance hard to achieve, let alone sustain.33 Understanding capital and its historical development in this particular regard, Harvey insists, requires us to recognize “how successful capital has generally been in managing the contradictions between monopoly and competition” and that “it uses crises to do so.”34

Such success, and the role played by crises or by threats thereof, are two of this book’s central, recurring themes. However, Harvey’s framing raises two vital questions that he fails, in his admittedly brief account of monopoly and competition, to answer.

First, how has this success been achieved? “Capital,” Harvey writes, “has organically arrived at a way to balance and rebalance the tendencies towards a monopolistic centralisation and decentralised competition through the crises that arise out of its imbalances.”35 Again, there is no objection here, except to press: “organically,” how? This book fashions an answer. This answer rests on the role of the law. When capital has become sufficiently overcentralized and monopolistic to threaten its own successful, profitable reproduction, antitrust law has been called upon to help restore the necessary degree of balance. This balance will never be perfect and at rest; in a dialectical relation, such as that between monopoly and competition, it never can be. When the dangerous excess has been of competition, by contrast, IP law has come to the rescue. Such laws, needless to say, have not effected this work of rebalancing by themselves, and this book documents their interaction with other pertinent dynamics; but their role has been paramount.

The other problematic question raised by Harvey’s framing brings us directly to our third point of divergence with the Baran and Sweezy or Foster and McChesney reading of capitalist development. Consider here the agency behind the successful, crisis-based management and rebalancing of monopolistic and competitive forces envisioned by Harvey: “capital has been successful . . .”; “capital has arrived at . . .” But what, or who, is this capital, and has its form remained constant? For Harvey, clearly, capital is the capitalist class: those that own the means of production. Yet this singularization of responsibility for regulating and reregulating the core dynamics of the capitalist economy raises all manner of questions that Harvey fails to address. Is this capitalist class homogeneous? Does it share consistent objectives in terms of economic development and management? And even if it does (and of course, it does not), what is its relation with the state and with the different tools of economic regulation, the law among them, that the state uses to govern and shape economic conduct?

If Harvey’s stimulating propositions call for circumspection on account of their simplifying structural abstractions, the connection to the “monopoly capital” thesis is that it too tends to rely upon just such totalizing, even reified, concepts. “Monopoly capital” is itself one such. One of the consistent themes of the tradition renewed by The Endless Crisis—one extending back through Baran and Sweezy’s Monopoly Capital to Rudolf Hilferding’s Finance Capital (1910) and even Lenin’s Imperialism (1917)—is its tendency not only to associate potent monopoly powers with a new stage or phase of capitalism but to depict the latter in terms of a consciously regulated and (centrally) planned system in which market-based competition largely disappears from view.36 For Lenin, this system fused the interests of capital and state (state monopoly capitalism); for Hilferding the fusion was tripartite, with finance capital also integral. But Marx, for all the stereotypes to the contrary, never saw capitalism as such. It was a totality, to be sure, but one that needs to be continually reproduced and reconstituted. This process occurs in and through the disparate actions of government, workers, consumers, businesses, and so on; when such reconstitution occurs in ways that imperil accumulation, crisis looms.

The point of saying all this is not simply to oppugn a totalizing view of “monopoly capital,” but to contrast with it the approach taken in this book, particularly to the law and its mobilization. There is not, and has not been, a single hand on the tiller, for all the obvious importance of the state as the law’s formal originator; there is no single, homogeneous entity pulling the levers, so to speak, of political-economic regulation— no consistent regime of conscious, systematic control. As with other modalities of economic regulation or governance, the law, in practice, does not “work” like that.

For one thing, there is an important difference between the written law and its interpretation. Two courts can interpret and apply the same law or laws in markedly different ways and with very different consequences. Perhaps the clearest example of this, at least in this book (Chapter 6), concerns U.S. antitrust law in the second half of the twentieth century: The nature and degree of enforcement of this law underwent a dramatic transformation in the late 1970s and early 1980s, but the law itself did not materially change. Intellectual training, social and political context, even judicial personality: These variables, and more, all matter to the law’s practical materialization. As such, we must remain constantly alive to the simple fact that, as Peter Carstensen has put it, “court doctrine is not the whole of the law in practice.”37 Relatedly, much of the enforcement of IP rights occurs at a significant remove from courts—specifically in, as argued by William T. Gallagher, the everyday practices of IP owners and their lawyers, whose “negotiations” with alleged infringers take place largely in the “shadow” of IP law.38

For another thing, just as the state never enacts new economic laws in total isolation from the influence and interests of capital, so both capital(s) and state—and indeed other economic agents—use the law to their own ends, and these ends are far from necessarily commensurate. Think, once again, about our two Apple cases. Who, in each case, instigated the legal action? Who put the law to work in their own interests? In the IP case it was Apple itself. In the class-action suit it was labor. But the latter suit was in fact itself based upon a prior government investigation launched by the Department of Justice’s Antitrust Division in 2010.39 Three legal cases, then, all driven by different actors with different motivations, but all revolving around the same political-economic locus: the knotty complex of profit generation and accumulation constituted by Apple Inc. And if the law, together with its agents, is so palpably nonsingular at the scale of the political economy of just one company, on what reasonable grounds could we ever envision it thus—as a vehicle of conscious, unified control—in relation to the political economy of capitalism more widely? The “great leveler” indicated in the book’s title, in short, is not some omnipotent regulator in charge of the law; it is the law per se.

How, then, might we more accurately characterize the human and institutional agency analyzed in the following pages in relation to the law, its mobilization, and its political-economic effects? At a general level, the conclusion reached by Paul David in his examination of the history of IP law fits particularly well: “The complex body of law, judicial interpretation, and administrative practice that one has to grapple with in this field was not created by some rational, consistent, social welfare-maximizing public agency. What one is faced with, instead, is a mixture of the intended and unintended consequences of an undirected historical process on which the varied interests of many parties, acting at different points (some widely separated in time and space), have left an enduring mark.”40 More specifically, however, we will see that although IP and competition laws have indeed performed their work under the influence of varied individuals and groups, the vast majority of the latter are ultimately committed to, and institutionally invested in, the reproduction, in as smooth a fashion as possible, of capitalism in more or less its existing form. And even more specifically, the “smoothness” here alluded to means the reproduction of capitalism especially without the kinds of problems—identified in Chapter 3—that tend to emerge when the necessary balance between monopoly and competition is substantially disrupted.

On all the above grounds, therefore, this book’s argument diverges from that which we find in the all-too-common narrative of competitive capitalism historically segueing into monopoly capitalism. Of course, none of this is to suggest that nothing has changed historically in the capitalist constellation of monopoly-competition structures and dynamics. Far from it. But the book’s fourth and final quarrel with the conventional narrative is that what has substantively, perhaps irrevocably, changed is not the relative levels of competitive intensity and monopoly power—as in, that era had more competition, this one has more monopoly—so much as the source of monopoly powers and the degree of defensibility thereof.

Capitalism, this argument runs, is always characterized by competitive undercurrents; were it not, it would not be capitalism. Meanwhile, and arising partly out of these competitive dynamics (the Marxian argument), there is an endemic drive to fashion monopoly powers. Yet the means of assembly of such powers do not remain constant, and neither does the ability of monopolistic capitalists to defend the powers thus amassed. Capitalists—and indeed the states committed to stabilizing capitalism, with the law one obvious apparatus at their disposal—must constantly find new ways of putting monopoly in place and keeping it there. “As monopoly privileges from one source diminish,” Harvey observes, “so we witness a variety of attempts to preserve and assemble them by other means.”41 Mindful, thus, of Marx’s dictum that the monopoly-versus-competition dualism is a red herring that confuses a dialectical relation for an oppositional one, this book focuses instead on the ways in which the unstable balance between the two forces is maintained—and it posits the law as the primary, necessarily mutable, instrument of such maintenance.

#### The aff is co-opted by an agenda of “health diplomacy” that only further expands capitalist imperialism -- 1AC Meyer proves the link because they recognize the connection between vaccines and perceptions

Andrea Patanè 21. Marxist, Published: 15 May 2021. “COVID-19 pandemic: patents and profits” <https://www.marxist.com/covid-19-pandemic-patents-and-profits.htm> brett

Far from an act of ‘international solidarity', this latest move from the US government is a calculated political risk, and will be implemented in the interests of US imperialism. A section of the more serious wing of the bourgeoisie understands that a proper economic recovery can happen only if the pandemic is suppressed worldwide. As we have explained elsewhere, wealthy countries risk losing billions of dollars if the pandemic is brought under control only within their own borders, because new variants (like those in India and Brazil) can always mutate elsewhere and reinfect their populations, causing further economic disruption. Therefore, even on a capitalist basis, it is expedient in the long-term for the rich countries to facilitate a global vaccination campaign. Even Pope Francis anointed the demand from his seat in Rome! Biden’s announcement is also an act of vaccine diplomacy. America’s main rivals, China and Russia, have been shoring up their spheres of influence by distributing their Sinopharm and Sputnik V vaccines to poor countries left out by the vaccine nationalism of the US and Europe. Chinese and Russian vaccines have been exported into countries traditionally under western spheres of influence, including Brazil and Hungary. Pushing to waive IP protections on COVID-19 vaccines is therefore partly an effort to push back against the encroachment of rival imperialist powers, which have so far outcompeted Washington in the global vaccination drive. Biden’s announcement is also an attempt to restore the standing and authority of US imperialism on the world stage, which has been bruised by the ‘America First’ vaccine nationalist policy started by Donald Trump, and continued by Biden. According to the FT, Katherine Tai (top US trade envoy) and Jake Sullivan (national security adviser) made the case to Biden that pushing for the waiver “was a low-risk way to secure a diplomatic victory”, after coming under fire for not “respond[ing] quickly enough to the unfolding COVID-19 crisis in India”. Here you have it, straight from the horse’s mouth. Under capitalism, vaccines – rather than providing a way out of the pandemic – are tools for ‘low-risk diplomatic victories’. As if this was some sort of football match between world leaders! In short, Biden is stepping in to prioritise the interests of US imperialism as a whole over the immediate interests of the Big Pharma capitalists. But we should say clearly: this cynical attempt to claim the moral high ground came only after the US used its massive economic clout to secure enough vaccines to inoculate its own population several times over. And in fact, the wartime Defense Production Act is still in effect, which forces US manufacturers to fulfil domestic demands for medical equipment before exports are permitted. This de facto export ban has created bottlenecks in the supply chain that have already undermined the WHO-led COVAX programme to vaccinate poor countries. Rest assured, Biden’s policy remains ‘America First’, just by somewhat more calculated means than his predecessor.

#### Capitalism is unsustainable and causes extinction -- multiple intertwined crises make collapse inevitable which means its try-or-die -- we got charts.

von Weizsäcker and Wijkman ‘17

Ernest Ulrich von Weizsäcker, Professor and Director of the United Nation Centre for Science and Technology for Development, Founder and President of the Wuppertal Institute, Member of the German Bundestag, chairing the Committees on Globalization and the Environment, Dean of the graduate School of Environmental Science and Management at the University of California, appointed Co-Chair of UNEP’s International Resource Panel, Anders Wijkman, chairman of the Swedish Association of Recycling Industries, member of the Board of the Swedish Development Authority (SIDA), appointed chair of the Swedish Cross-Party Committee on Environmental Objectives, member of the European Parliament, Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations and Policy Director of UNDP, Secretary General of the Swedish Red Cross and Director General of the Swedish Agency for Research Cooperation with Developing Countries, Member of the Swedish Royal Academy of Sciences, the World Future Council and the International Resource Panel, 2017 (“Come On! Capitalism, Short-termism, Population and the Destruction of the Planet – A Report to the Club”, November 11th, Available Online via Subscription to Springer, Accessed 03-20-2018)

1.1 Introduction: The World in Disarray We all know that the world is in crisis. Science tells us that almost half of the top soils on earth have been depleted in the last 150 years1 ; nearly 90% of fish stocks are either overfished or fully fished.2 Climate stability is in real danger (Sects. 1.5 and 3.7); and the earth is now in the sixth mass extinction period in history.3 Perhaps the most accurate account of the ecological situation is the 2012 ‘Imperative to act’,4 launched by all the 18 recipients (till 2012) of the Blue Planet Prize, including Gro Harlem Brundtland, James Hansen, Amory Lovins, James Lovelock and Susan Solomon. Its key message reads, ‘The human ability to do has vastly outstripped the ability to understand. As a result, civilization is faced with a perfect storm of problems, driven by overpopulation, overconsumption by the rich, the use of environmentally malign technologies and gross inequalities’. And further, ‘The rapidly deteriorating biophysical situation is barely recognized by a global society infected by the irrational belief that physical economies can grow forever’. 1.1.1 Different Types of Crisis and a Feeling of Helplessness The crisis is not cyclical but growing. And it is not limited to the nature around us. There are also a social crisis, a political and a cultural crisis, a moral crisis, as well as a crisis of democracy, of ideologies and of the capitalist system. The crisis also consists of deepened poverty in many countries and the loss of jobs for a considerable part of the population worldwide. Billions of people have reached a state of mind where they don’t trust their government anymore.5 Seen from a geographic point of view, symptoms of crisis are found nearly everywhere. The ‘Arab Spring’ was followed by a series of wars and civil wars, serious human rights violations and many millions of refugees. The internal situation is not better in Eritrea, South Sudan, Somalia, Yemen or Honduras. Venezuela and Argentina, once among the richer states of the world, face huge economic challenges, and neighbouring Brazil has gone through many years of recession and political turmoil. Russia and several East European countries are struggling with major economic and political problems in their post-communist phase. Japan finds it difficult to overcome decadelong stagnation, and to deal with the 2011 tsunami and ensuing nuclear disaster. And the temporary economic upswing several African countries have enjoyed lost its dynamism as soon as the prices of mineral resources collapsed, and partly due to very unusual droughts. Land grabbing is plaguing much of Africa, but also other parts of the world, leading to involuntary dislocations of millions of people and the related problems with refugees both within countries and abroad.6 The response of governments has been concentrated, at worst, on managing their own political image, and at best to treat the symptoms of the crisis, not the cause. The problem is that the political class in the whole world is strongly influenced by investors and by powerful private companies. This indicates that the current crisis is also a crisis of global capitalism. Since the 1980s, capitalism has moved from furthering the economic development of countries, regions and the world towards maximizing profits, and then to a large extent profits from speculation. In addition, the capitalism unleashed since 1980 in the Anglo-Saxon world, and since 1990 worldwide, is mainly financial. This trend was supported by excessive deregulation and liberalization of the economy (see Sect. 2.4). The term ‘shareholder value’ popped up in the business pages of the media worldwide, as if that was now the new epiphany and guardrail for all economic action. In reality, it served to narrow business down to short-term gains, often at the expense of social and ecological values. The myth of shareholder value has been effectively debunked in a recent book by Lynn Stout.7 A different, if related, feature of ‘disarray’ is the rise of aggressive, mostly rightwing movements against globalization in OECD countries, often referred to as populism. These have become overt through Brexit and the Trump victory in the United States. As Fareed Zakaria observes, ‘Trump is part of a broad populist

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upsurge running through the Western world. … In most (countries), populism remains an opposition movement, although one that is growing in strength; in others, such as Hungary, it is now the reigning ideology’.8 This phenomenon of right-wing populism can be explained to an extent by the ‘trunk valley of the elephant curve’ (Fig. 1.1) 9 showing the decline of developed world middle classes, during a 20-year period. While more than half of the world’s population was enjoying over 60% income rises, OECD’s middle classes suffered losses caused mainly by the deindustrialization and job losses in major parts of the United States, Britain and other countries. In the United States, the median income increased by a meagre 1.2% since 1979. The stunning income growth on the left-hand side of the curve, the ‘back of the elephant’, lifting some two billion people out of poverty, was caused mainly by China’s and some other countries’ economic success. What remains invisible on the picture is the far end of ‘the trunk of the elephant’: The richest 1% of the world and, more revolting, the richest eight persons of the world now own as much wealth as the poorest half of the world population combined, a figure publicized by Oxfam during the 2017 World Economic Forum.10 The ‘elephant curve’ gives an incomplete picture for a second reason. The Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) has proposed a Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) going beyond just income and including ten indicators around health, education and living standards. Using that MPI, OPHI counts 1.6 billion people living in ‘multidimensional poverty’ in 2016 – nearly twice as many as the number of people living in extreme poverty measured by income alone.11 Thirdly, the interpretation of the curve requires an analysis of the people in each percentile group. In fact, they tend to move. And the curve does not distinguish those in Russia and East European countries who lost much of their income after 1990 from those in Detroit or middle England who, for very different reasons, also were among the losers.12 Another fact cannot be seen in the picture: the massive shift of money and income from the manufacturing and trade sectors to the financial sector.13 Bruce Bartlett, a senior policy advisor to both the Reagan and Bush administrations, argues that this ‘financialization’ of the economy is the cause of income inequality, falling wages and the poor performance. David Stockman, Reagan’s director of the Office of Management and Budget, agrees, describing our current situation as ‘corrosive financialization that has turned the economy into a giant casino since the 1970s’.14 Populist politicians in the OECD countries see themselves as speaking for the forgotten ‘ordinary’ people and for genuine patriotism, but they tend to fight and antagonize the people representing democratic institutions – what an irony! For the European Union (EU), the strongest trigger for populism has been the millions of refugees who came or would like to come to Europe from the Near East, from Afghanistan and from Africa. Even the most generous European countries have reached their own assumed limits for receiving these masses of refugees. The EU institutions were too weak (not too powerful, as they are depicted by the new nationalists) to deal with the ‘refugee crisis’, resulting eventually in an identity crisis in the EU. Once a success story of an entity ensuring peace and economic development, the EU has lost some of its unifying narrative. The populist right-wing movements or parties see and criticize the EU as the culprit for all kinds of undesired events. The irony is that continuing the success story would require more, not less, powers for the Union. The Union should be entrusted with border protection, a well-funded common asylum and refugee policy to deal with the refugee crisis and maintain the advantages of the Schengen agreement. And for the re-stabilization of the Euro, the EU or at least the Euro zone needs a common fiscal policy, as the new French President Emmanuel Macron is proposing. But it is these very measures of which nationalist populists are most afraid. The EU in its present form is not without shortcomings. Free market principles have come to dominate EU policymaking, leading to a subordination of other policies, like environment. Notably the UK wanted that priority, as it preferred to see the EU chiefly as a union for mutual trade. And the austerity policies pursued have blocked many benign investments and led to unnecessary suffering among tens of millions of Europeans. Such shortcomings, however, should never be used to put in question the overall objectives of the EU – a union of peace, the rule of law, human rights, cultural understanding and sustainability. Addressing the global crisis of democracy, the German Bertelsmann Foundation has published a 3000-page empirical report on progress (or lack thereof) on democracy and a social market economy, as measured by the Bertelsmann Transformation Index (BTI).15 Over the last few years, the report sees a consistent decay of such parameters as civil rights, free and fair elections, freedom of opinion and of press, freedom of assembly and separation of powers. Within the same time frame, the number of countries in which authoritarian, mostly religious, dogmas influence political decision making rose from 22% to 33%. That report was published before the assaults on democracy and civil rights that occurred in summer 2016 in Turkey or the Philippines. Symptoms of tyranny are spreading, including in some of the countries with a solid tradition of freedom and democracy.16 Let us briefly turn to a different kind of crisis. Well, not exactly a crisis but an unpleasant feature in an otherwise fruitful communication tool, the ‘social media’. Aside from being practical and useful for everyday arrangements and exchange of news and reasonable opinions, social media also have become vehicles for enhancing conflicts and vilification of mostly innocent individuals, and for spreading ‘post truth’ nonsense. Much of the contents of social media political conversation is selfenhancing political rubbish, as those media serve as ‘echo chambers’ for networks of like-minded frustrated citizens.17 An empirical study from China found that anger and indignation are the emotions that are most likely to get viral in the social media, meaning they are multiplied faster and stronger than other emotions.18 The Internet and the social media are also vehicles for ‘bots’ (short for robots) that can disrupt or destroy messages, multiply nonsense and create all kinds of mischief. There are dozens of types of malicious bots (and botnets) to harvest email addresses, to grab content of websites and reuse it without permission, to spread viruses and worms, to buy up good seats for entertainment events, to increase views for YouTube videos or to increase traffic counts in order to extract money from advertisers. A more frightening cause of disarray relates to terrorism. In earlier times, humanity’s violent conflicts occurred mostly between different countries. In recent times, systemic and at least partly religious conflicts prevail, using terror attacks with the explicit intention of making people feel insecure. During much of the twentieth century, religions remained quiet, non-aggressive and geographically confined to rather stable territories. This no longer is true. Partly because of globalized populations moving or being forced to leave their home territories, some factions of Islam have expanded geographically and are claiming strong influence over national states, for example, attacking countries like France with its tradition of laicism that does not permit religion to dominate politics. What tends to be underrepresented in the media is the positive role of religions. In Christian-dominated Europe, liberal and tolerant religion became part of the European identity a century after the Enlightenment successfully discredited the earlier doctrinaire, authoritarian and colonialist-missionary manifestations of the faith. During the Cold War, Christian goals of social cohesion helped build the system of ‘Western values’, often described as the social welfare state, or the ‘social market economy’ (for its partial demise, see Sect. 2.4). With a view towards leading Islam into an equally benign and co-operative social role, some Islamic scholars, such as Syrian born Bassam Tibi, call on Muslims in Europe to integrate into democratic society.19 Tibi, however, is not popular among radical Muslims, to put it mildly. But to understand the radicalization of Islam, one must not underestimate the role played by the West, in particular the United States, in interfering with Near Eastern states. Some would say that the troublesome situations mentioned so far, the recurring topics of media headlines, are only the surface of our world’s ‘disarray’. Deeper and more systemic problems include the breath-taking speed of technological development that may very easily run out of control. One trend is digitization that potentially threatens millions of jobs (see Sect. 1.11.4). Another trend or development can be observed in the biological sciences and technologies. The enormous acceleration of genetic engineering through the CRISPR-Cas9 technology20 is causing fears of monster creation or the extinction of species or varieties not seen as valuable under human utilitarian criteria. Generally, a non-specific feeling is spreading that ‘progress’ has scary sides and that the genie may already have left the bottle (see Sect. 1.11.3). No doubt there is a need to analyse and understand the symptoms and roots of the variety of crises, political, economic, social, technological and environmental. It is also important to recognize the extent to which people perceive the various phenomena of disarray and feel disoriented, and to recognize that the reality and the feelings of disarray have a moral and even religious dimension. 1.1.2 Financialization: A Phenomenon of Disarray An important part of the disorientation relates to financial markets. Historians will look back at the last 30 years with concern, when looking at the explosion in bank balance sheets, backed up by declining levels of equity and massive borrowing. One of the results was a temporary private-sector-led boom. The other was a massive increase in the world’s financial sector (finance, insurance, real estate – FIRE), often called financialization, and subsequently the financial crisis of 2008–2009. Excessive risk-taking developed into a crisis that was close to bringing the whole financial system to a halt. When the bubble burst, many governments were forced to step in with broad support programmes. Governments caught by the new mind-set (see Sect. 2.4) were intimately involved in all of this. True, there are many examples of serious malpractices within the private financial sector. But had it not been for the systematic deregulation of the banks by governments, with the purpose of stimulating economic growth by issuing more debt, the situation would have been radically different. The causes behind the crisis were many and varied: – Excessive lending by the banking industry – Lack of action on the part of regulators and central banks to stop (i) excessive lending, (ii) the spread of exotic financial instruments (synthetic assets and bonds, collateralized mortgage obligations/CMOs, structured debt issues, etc.) and (iii) pure speculative transactions – Opaque tax havens, and the absence of a binding legal framework that is accepted and implemented by the international community, in general, and the major jurisdictions and financial centres – Securitization and distribution by investment banks and other financial actors of mortgage-related assets and investment vehicles transferring the credit risk from the original lender to the ultimate bondholders – Failure by some rating agencies and auditing firms to properly assess and report the inherent risks posed by many of the financial products A deeper analysis is presented by economists Anat Admati and Martin Hellwig21 about the main causes behind the financial crisis. Western banks borrowed far too much with far too little equity in their balance sheets to act as a buffer if things went wrong in their business – from trading in the multitrillion-dollar derivatives markets to often reckless lending on real estate. In the decades following the Second World War, banks operated with between 20% and 30% of their liabilities as equity. By 2008, that had shrunk to just 3%. Banks obviously believed that they had invented instruments that removed the risk, allowing them to run their banks with a tenth of the buffer they had before. It proved to be very unrealistic. But they counted with the state to underwrite their risks. Bankers have enriched themselves spectacularly in the process. They made themselves ‘too big to fail’ – and too big to jail. The 2008 financial crisis was mostly caused by that irresponsible greed.22 Yet, in 2009, not only did bankers avoid criminal prosecutions and receive hundreds of billions in government bailouts, but some still paid themselves record bonuses. At the same time, almost nine million households in the United States had to abandon their homes when the value of their houses plummeted and they could no longer service the adjustable-rate mortgages – the so-called foreclosure crisis.23 Financialization refers to the dominance of the financial sector in the global economy and the tendency for accumulated profits (and leverage) to flow into real estate and other speculative investment. Debt is an intrinsic element in this process. In the United States, for example, both household debt and private sector debt more than doubled relative to GDP between 1980 and 2007.24 The same is true for most OECD countries. At the same time, ‘the value of financial assets grew from four times GDP in 1980 to ten times GDP in 2007 and the finance sector’s share of corporate profits grew from about 10% in the early 1980s to almost 40% by 2006’.25 Adair Turner, chair of the UK’s Financial Services Authority in the years following the 2007–2008 crisis, regards unchecked private credit creation as the key system fault that led to that crisis with its devastating consequences.26 From this follows that the financial sector constitutes a significant and increasing risk factor in the economy. The degree of financialization varies from country to country but the increase in the power of finance is general. The current finance sector evolved in the context of the deregulation that gathered pace from the late 1970s and expanded dramatically after the 1999 removal of the separation between commercial and investment banking in the United States.27 This barrier had been put in place in 1933 by the Roosevelt administration in response to the Wall Street Crash of 1929, when a period of rampant credit creation and financial speculation collapsed. Similar speculation preceded the crisis of 2007–2008: The face value of financial products reached US$640 trillion in September 2008, 14 times the GDP of all the countries on earth.28 Lietaer et al.29 compare speculation with ordinary money transfers paying for goods and services: ‘In 2010, the volume of foreign exchange transactions reached $4 trillion per day’, which does not even include derivatives. In comparison, ‘one day’s exports or imports of all goods and services in the world amount to about 2% of those $4 trillion’. Transactions not paying for goods and services, almost by definition are speculative. Such financial products and transactions, the authors continue, lead regularly to monetary crashes, sovereign debt crises and systemic crashes with an average of more than ten countries in crisis every year. One of the consequences of this development is that a significant part of economic growth has been distributed to the wealthy, as mentioned with the new Oxfam figures in the previous subchapter. Practices within the financial sector demonstrate a disregard for the impact they have on both people and the planet. That includes a distinct short-termism, the ratio of banks’ reserves to their loans, the ratio of banks’ lending that support the real economy versus speculation in property and derivatives, unchecked credit creation – in fact money creation – and the failure to account for long-term climate and environmental risks. In the words of Otto Scharmer at MIT,30 ‘We have a system that accumulates oversupply of money in areas that produce high financial and low environmental and social returns, while at the same an undersupply of money in areas that serve important societal investment needs’. The failure to account for environmental risks means that the pressure on already scarce natural resources accelerates – trees are felled, waterways polluted, wetlands drained and the exploitation of oil, gas and coal accelerating, as long as there is demand. It also means that huge savings, among them pension funds, are locked into investments in fossil-based assets. Such assets are increasingly looked upon as high-risk assets (see Sect. 3.4).

#### Vote negative for proletarian internationalism -- only an organized global revolutionary struggle can overcome the destruction of capitalism.

Anastasi et al, 18 (editorial collective of Viewpoint Magazine, a militant research collective working to dialectically bring theory and practice into dialogue by studying cycles of struggle. Alphabetically, members of the editorial collective are as follows: Andrew Anastasi, graduate student in Sociology at CUNY; Cinzia Arruzza, Associate Professor of Philosophy at the New School for Social Research; Robert Cavooris, UC Santa Cruz graduate student and union representative, History of Consciousness Department; Maya Andrea Gonzalez, communist and revolutionary feminist in the Bay Area, graduate student in the Department of History of Consciousness at UC Santa Cruz; Asad Haider, Assistant Professor of Philosophy @ The New School, founding editor of Viewpoint Magazine, PhD in History of Consciousness Department @ UC Santa Cruz; Shuja Haider, widely-published writer and musician based in Brooklyn; Bue Rübner Hansen, writer and activist researcher in the Britain, Barcelona, and in migrant and refugee solidarity movements, PhD from Queen Mary University; Patrick King, graduate student at UC Santa Cruz; Rosa Lee, communist organizer and member of the Viewpoint editorial collective; Ben Mabie, managing editor at Viewpoint and editorial assistant at Verso Books, UCSC graduate; Sarah Mason, member of the Viewpoint editorial collective; Liz Mason-Deese, Assistant Professor, Department of Geography and Geoinformation Science, George Mason University; Dave Mesing, PhD student in Philosophy @ Villanova University; Magally Miranda-Alcazar, Eugene Cota-Robles Fellow and a Ford Foundation Predoctoral Fellow, PhD student in Chicana/o Studies @ UCLA; B.A. from the University of California, Santa Cruz (magna cum laude) with a double major in Community Studies and Feminist Studies, and has been published in The Nation, Verso and the New Left Review; Salar Mohandesi, Assistant Professor of History @ Bowdoin; Gavin Mueller, Lecturer in Media Studies at the University of Amsterdam, former contributing editor @ Jacobin; Evan Calder Williams, writer, translater, and artist, teaches theory at the Center for Curatorial Studies at Bard College and film production at Cooper Union, PhD in Literature from the University of California Santa Cruz and was a Fulbright Fellow in Italy for his research on cinema, industry, and revolt. “Internationalism against Imperialism,” *Viewpoint Magazine*, Issue 6, February 1, 2018, <https://www.viewpointmag.com/2018/02/01/internationalism-against-imperialism/>)

The challenge of reactivating an effective proletarian internationalism is made even more urgent by the aggressive rise of right-wing nationalisms, which have taken a range of organizational and ideological guises. The clarified ideological form of this rightward shift is an emboldened “possessive nationalism” in the North, which revolves around restrictive immigration and trade policies, as responses to the perceived erosion of territorial logics of sovereignty, and the hybridization of the ethno-national community.10 Any prolonged combat against these nativist impulses – especially as they seep into social-democratic or left-liberal parties in Europe and the United States – will need to reinforce the link between migration and imperialism, the former in many ways constituting the reflux of the latter. Here we might center the rich legacy and actuality of migrant struggles for communist politics, and how questions of mobility, control, and dispossession are now at the core of imperialist dynamics. The political and social, informal and formal spaces of migration remain an open field for investigation. As Etienne Balibar noted over 40 years ago, “the concrete knowledge of the causes and effects of immigration is a two-way guiding thread towards an understanding of imperialism,” a methodological linkage which “renders internationalism, more than ever, the very condition of struggles for workers’ liberation.”11 This raises the practical necessity of reconsidering the tactical repertoire and strategic horizons of anti-imperialism. The nearly two-decades-long “War on Terror” – a euphemism for a war on human welfare in the Middle East and a war against Muslims at home – has proven to be a difficult nub for anti-war and anti-militarist activism in “the belly of the beast,” particularly as U.S. violence, amidst ever-shallower domestic hegemony, takes forms other than that of U.S. boots on the ground. The fading – or destruction – of the anti-war movement after 2005, following massive demonstrations against the invasion of Iraq which featured considerable grassroots mobilization, is a critical episode to reflect upon. The ubiquity of manned and unmanned aerial bombardment, the diffuse and often cloaked nature of counterinsurgency operations, the multiplication of U.S. proxies, and dense financial ties have rendered the military conflicts of U.S. empire, perhaps the most visible manifestation of imperialism, an asymmetrical yet constant presence. Any sustained fight against it must be coordinated around several fronts. Recent experiences of mass protest show that a powerful anti-war movement, if it is to reappear, would do so in an altered shape and in close relation to other insurgent forces in society, an extension of their discursive and strategic reach. The high level of organized resistance to militarized border security and repressive immigration policies, the environmentalist/anti-extractivist campaigns around Standing Rock and elsewhere, and the nascent coalitions and activist milieus that have been fortified through the International Women’s Strike initiatives (resonant with calls from Latin America for a new feminist international) indicate a real potential to build a “popular anti-imperialism” from grounded social struggles, connecting the sites of contestation across neo-colonial and imperial frontiers. One can see how this changes the aims and targets of alter-globalization movements, exemplified in the militancy of summit-hopping demos that directly confront leading economic and financial bodies, or in the parallel institution-building and transnational networking of civil society organizations involved in the World Social Forums.12 A more adequate approach to questions of coordination and solidarity across borders would have to probe how political organization is tied to material practices of translation, and recognize that even localized concerns often involve the commonalities and divisions of the global labor force.13 The mutations of class struggle, where the wage-earning proletariat has given way to more diverse social alliances and associations of what Göran Therborn calls the “plebeian strata” or “popular classes,” has provided glimpses of what anti-imperialist mobilization could look like: new strategies of threading upsurges of disruption, combination, and antagonism as they extend over an unstable terrain.14 Today, it is necessary to re-situate the concept and question of imperialism. We agree with Lenin when we recognize that no revolution, even a national one, is possible without grasping the effects of imperialism on any local articulation of the working class. And we further agree that, of course, no national revolution would be sufficient for the goal of communism. In short, we see imperialism as both an obstacle to and enemy of internationalism and we in turn view internationalism as a position to be composed in working class struggle itself. Thus, at the risk of simplifying our approach, we propose that to examine imperialism today is to bring it into the realm of class composition. This can involve no disavowal of the complicated history of Marxism and popular struggle with regard to imperialism, nor a simple repetition of any one of its moments. In our sixth issue of Viewpoint, we instead seek out the possibility of an encounter, bringing together historical accounts, artefacts of struggle, and theoretical interventions past and present. Thus we neither “endorse” all of the positions represented here nor reject those that might be absent from this issue, which is a situated engagement with the problem of opposing imperialism from within American empire; we are proud to offer these contributions as material for the long-term work of thinking and struggling against imperialism in the 21st century.

## Legitimacy

#### We’re conceding the WTO collapses now absent the plan -- Impact turning legitimacy:

#### Azevedo and Worland doesn’t explain WHAT reforms even occur or how they change customs on trade -- err neg if uncertain.

#### Trade won’t decouple from emissions -- consumption patterns, distance, and domestic fuel sources are obviously not changed by reforms.

Bello 08Walden, senior analyst at the Bangkok-based research and advocacy institute Focus on the Global South and professor at the University of the Philippines, July 28, “Derail Doha, Save the Climate”, <http://www.commondreams.org/views/2008/07/29/derail-doha-save-climate/> brett

There’s something surreal about the ongoing World Trade Organization talks in Geneva, which aim at coming up with a new agreement to bring down tariffs in order to expand world trade and resuscitate global growth. In the face of the looming specter of climate change, these negotiations amount to arguing over the arrangement of deck chairs while the Titanic is sinking. Indeed, one of the most important steps in the struggle to come up with a viable strategy to deal with climate change would be the derailment of the so-called “Doha Round.” Global trade is carried out with transportation that is heavily dependent on fossil fuels. It’s estimated that about 60% of the world’s use of oil goes to transportation activities which are more than 95% dependent on fossil fuels. An OECD study estimated that the global transport sector accounts for 20-25% of carbon emissions, with some 66% of this figure accounted for by emissions in the industrialized countries. Global Trade: Deeply Dysfunctional From the point of view of environmental sustainability, global trade has become deeply dysfunctional. Take agricultural trade. As the International Forum on Globalization has pointed out, the average plate of food eaten in Western industrial food-importing nations is likely to have traveled 1,500 miles from its source. Long-distance travel contributes to the absurd situation wherein “three times more food is used to produce food in the industrial agricultural model than is derived in consuming it.” The WTO has been a central factor in increasing carbon emissions from transport. A study by the OECD done in the mid-nineties estimated that by 2004, the year marking the full implementation of free-trade commitments under the WTO’s Uruguay Round, there would have been an increase in the transport of internationally traded goods by 70% over 1992 levels. This figure, notes the New Economics Foundation, “would make a mockery” of the Kyoto Protocol’s mandatory emissions reduction targets for the industrialized countries. Transportation: More Fossil Intensive than Ever Ocean shipping accounts for nearly 80% of the world’s international trade in goods. The fuel commonly used by ships is a mixture of diesel and low-quality oil known as “Bunker C,” which has high levels of carbon and sulfur. As Jerry Mander and Simon Retallack point out, “If not consumed by ships, it would otherwise be considered a waste product.” Aviation, which has the highest growth rate as a mode of transport, is also the fastest growing source of greenhouse gas emissions, with its consumption of fuel expected to rise by 65% from 1990 levels by 2010, according to one study cited by the New Economics Foundation. Other estimates are more pessimistic, with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) suggesting that fuel consumption by civil aviation is going up at the rate of three percent a year and could rise by nearly 350% from 1992 levels by 2050. Note Mander and Retallack: “Each ton of freight moved by plane uses forty nine times as much energy per kilometer as when it’s moved by ship….A two-minute takeoff by a 747 is equal to 2.4 million lawn mowers running for twenty minutes.” In support of trade expansion and global economic growth, authorities have by and large not taxed aviation fuel as well as marine bunker fuel, which now account for 20% of all emissions in the transport sector. Along with fossil-fuel-intensive air transport, fossil-fuel-intensive road transport has also been favored by the expansion of world trade, instead of modes with less emission intensities like rail and marine traffic. In the European Union, for instance, the focus on building up a road transport network led an OECD study to comment that “the way in which the EU liberalization policy has been implemented has favored the less environment-friendly modes and accelerated the decline of rail and inland waterways.” Decoupling Growth and Energy: a Panacea There has been talk about decoupling trade and growth from energy or shifting from fossil fuels to other, less carbon-intensive energy sources. The reality is that the other energy sources being seriously considered are either dangerous, like nuclear power; with deleterious side-effects, like biofuels’ negative impact on food production; or science fiction as this stage, like carbon sequestration and storage technology. For the foreseeable future, trade expansion and global growth will fall in line with their historical trajectory of being correlated with increased greenhouse gas emissions. A sharp U-turn in consumption and growth in the developed countries and a significant decrease in global trade are unavoidable if we are to have a viable strategy against climate change. This will set the stage for a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, including from the energy-intensive transportation sector. The outcome of the Doha negotiations will determine whether free trade will intensify or lose momentum. A successful conclusion to Doha will bring us closer to uncontrollable climate change. It will continue what the New Economics Foundation describes as “free trade’s free ride on the global climate.” A derailment of Doha won’t be a sufficient condition to formulate a strategy to contain climate change. But given the likely negative ecological consequences of a successful deal, it’s a necessary condition.

#### Decoupling is extremely implausible---stats, empirics, and studies

Trainer 19—Conjoint Lecturer in the School of Social Sciences, University of New South Wales [Ted Trainer and Samuel Alexander (dedev king), March 2019, “The simpler way: envisioning a sustainable society in an age of limits”, Real-World Economics Review, issue no. 87, <http://www.paecon.net/PAEReview/issue87/whole87.pdf#page=90>] AMarb

Rejection of the limits to growth position is usually based on the belief that technical advance will deal with the associated problems by way of “decoupling”; that is, by enabling continued increase in production and consumption globally while bringing environmental impacts down to sustainable levels (e.g. Breakthrough Institute, 2015). It is not difficult to show the extreme implausibility of this “technofix” approach. The above figures show the enormity of the reductions that would be required. For the growth economy to operate within the sustainable carrying capacity of the planet and leave a share of the planet for other species, impact rates per unit of GDP would arguably have to be cut by 90% or more by 2050. What makes the decoupling vision even more implausible is that despite decades of extraordinary technological advance, global energy and resource use continues to rise steadily, not decline as the decoupling theory would imply. A litany of studies on decoupling show that efficiency gains within a globally growing economy have not led to, and will not lead to, reduced overall impacts, let alone reduce them sufficiently to achieve sustainability (Wiedmann et al., 2015b; Alexander, 2015; Ward et al., 2016; Trainer, 2016a). If economists are serious about designing a sustainable economy that could work well for all people (and species), not just for a minority in the highly developed regions of the world, then the severity of this “limits to growth” perspective must be central in their accounts. It is wrong and indeed dangerous to assume the legitimacy of high-impact modes of living that could not possibly be shared by all people. However, presently ever-rising GDP per capita is the goal to which most people and all nations aspire, puffed up by fantasies of sufficient decoupling. This “green growth” approach is a recipe for ecological and thus humanitarian disaster. Whether we like it or not, humanity will have to deal with the implications of living in an age of pressing ecological limits. Thus, the essential conclusion to be drawn from the limits to growth position is that the magnitude of ecological overshoot is so great that a transition to a sustainable society will require significant “degrowth” in the rich world to levels of per capita resource use that are likely to be in the region of one-tenth of present Australian per capita levels. Across the political spectrum, little attention has been given to the profound implications of this for social, economic, or political theory and practice (Trainer, 2019). Even some prominent figures in the schools of post-growth and steady state economics do not seem to appreciate what this degree of downshifting means in terms of the economics of sustainability, especially when we are talking about timescales needed to avoid dangerous climate change (see Anderson, 2015).

#### Jevon’s paradox dooms reforms – interconnected ecological and economic crises ensure failure -- tech changes exacerbate it

Foster and Clark ’12 [John Bellamy Foster, professor of sociology at the University of Oregon, and Brett Clark, assistant professor of sociology at the University of Utah. 2012. “The Planetary Emergency,” monthlyreview.org/2012/12/01/the-planetary-emergency] pat

Capitalism today is caught in a seemingly endless crisis, with economic stagnation and upheaval circling the globe. But while the world has been fixated on the economic problem, global environmental conditions have been rapidly worsening, confronting humanity with its ultimate crisis: one of long-term survival. The common source of both of these crises resides in the process of capital accumulation. Likewise the common solution is to be sought in a “revolutionary reconstitution of society at large,” going beyond the regime of capital.

It is still possible for humanity to avert what economist Robert Heilbroner once called “ecological Armageddon.” The means for the creation of a just and sustainable world currently exist, and are to be found lying hidden in the growing gap between what could be achieved with the resources already available to us, and what the prevailing social order allows us to accomplish. It is this latent potential for a quite different human metabolism with nature that offers the master-key to a workable ecological exit strategy.

The Approaching Ecological Precipice

Science today tells us that we have a generation at most in which to carry out a radical transformation in our economic relations, and our relations with the earth, if we want to avoid a major tipping point or “point of no return,” after which vast changes in the earth’s climate will likely be beyond our ability to prevent and will be irreversible. At that point it will be impossible to stop the ice sheets in Antarctica and Greenland from continuing to melt, and thus the sea level from rising by as much as “tens of meters.” Nor will we be able to prevent the Arctic sea ice from vanishing completely in the summer months, or carbon dioxide and methane from being massively released by the decay of organic matter currently trapped beneath the permafrost—both of which would represent positive feedbacks dangerously accelerating climate change. Extreme weather events will become more and more frequent and destructive. An article in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences demonstrated that the record-breaking heat wave that hit the Moscow area in 2010 with disastrous effect was made five times more likely, in the decade ending in that year as compared with earlier decades, due to the warming trend, implying “an approximate 80% probability” that it “would not have occurred without climate warming.” Other instances of extreme weather such as the deadly European heat wave in 2003 and the serious drought in Oklahoma and Texas in 2011, have been shown to be connected to earth warming. Hurricane Sandy, which devastated much of New York and New Jersey at the end of October 2012, was impacted and amplified to a considerable extent by climate change.

The point of irreversible climate change is usually thought of as a 2°C (3.6°F) increase in global average temperature, which has been described as equivalent at the planetary level to the “cutting down of the last palm tree” on Easter Island. An increase of 2°C in global average temperature coincides roughly with cumulative carbon emissions of around one trillion metric tons. Based on past emissions trends it is predicted by climate scientists at Oxford University that we will hit the one trillion metric ton mark in 2043, or thirty-one years from now. We could avoid emitting the trillionth metric ton if we were to reduce our carbon emissions beginning immediately by an annual rate of 2.4 percent a year.

To be sure, climate science is not exact enough to pinpoint precisely how much warming will push us past a planetary tipping point. But all the recent indications are that if we want to avoid planetary disaster we need to stay considerably below 2°C. As a result, almost all governments have signed on to staying below 2°C as a goal at the urging of the UN’s Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. More and more, 2°C has come to symbolize the reality of a planetary point of no return. In this sense, all the discussions of what the climate will be like if the world warms to 3°C, or all the way to 6°C, are relatively meaningless. Before such temperatures are attained, we will have already reached the limits of our ability to control the climate- change process, and we will then be left with the task of adapting to apocalyptic ecological conditions. Already Arctic sea ice experienced a record melt in the summer of 2012 with some scientists predicting an ice-free Arctic in the summer as early as 2016–2020. In the words of James Hansen, the world’s leading climatologist, we are facing a “planetary emergency”—since if we approach 2°C “we will have started a process that is out of humanity’s control.”

Given all of this, actually aiming for the one trillion metric ton mark in cumulative carbon emissions, or a 2°C increase in global temperature, would be courting long-term disaster. Some prominent climate analysts have proposed a target of staying below 750 billion cumulative metric tons of carbon—estimated to provide a 75 percent chance of staying below the climate change tipping point. At current rates of carbon emissions it is calculated that we will reach the 750 billion metric tons mark in 2028, or sixteen years. We could avoid emitting the 750 billionth metric ton if we were to reduce our carbon emissions beginning immediately at an average annual rate of 5.3 percent. To get some perspective on this, the Stern Review on The Economics of Climate Change issued by the British government in 2007, which is generally seen as representing the progressive side of the carbon debate, argued that a reduction in emissions of more than a 1 percent annual rate would generate a severe crisis for the capitalist economy and hence was unthinkable.

Many thought that the Great Financial Crisis would result in a sharp curtailment of carbon emissions, helping to limit global warming. Carbon emissions dipped by 1.4 percent in 2009, but this brief decline was more than offset by a record 5.9 percent growth of carbon emissions in 2010, even as the world economy as a whole continued to stagnate. This rapid increase has been attributed primarily to the increasing fossil-fuel intensity of the world economy, and to the continued expansion of emerging economies, notably China.

In an influential article published in Nature Climate Change, “Asymmetric Effects of Economic Decline on CO Emissions,” Richard York used data for over 150 countries between 1960 and 2008 to demonstrate that carbon dioxide emissions do not decline in the same proportion in an economic downturn as they increase in an economic upturn. Thus for each 1 percent in the growth of GDP per capita, carbon emissions grew by 0.733 percent, whereas for each 1 percent drop in GDP, carbon emissions fell by only 0.430 percent. These asymmetric effects can be attributed to built-in infrastructural conditions—factories, transportation networks, and homes— meaning that these structures do not disappear during recessions and continue to influence fossil-fuel consumption. It follows of necessity that a boom-and-bust economic system cannot reduce carbon emissions; that can only be achieved by an economy that reduces such emissions on a steady basis along with changes in the infrastructure of production and society in general.

Indeed, there is reason to believe that there is a strong pull on capitalism in its current monopoly-finance phase to seek out more fossil-fuel intensive forms of production the more deeply it falls into the stagnation trap, resulting in repeated attempts to restart the growth engine by, in effect, giving it more gas. According to the Low Carbon Index, the carbon intensity of world production fell by 0.8 percent in 2009, and by 0.7 percent in 2010. However, in 2011 the carbon intensity of world production rose by 0.6 percent. “The economic recovery, where it has occurred, has been dirty.” The notion that a stagnant-prone capitalist growth economy (what Herman Daly calls a “failed growth economy”) would be even more intensively destructive of the environment was a thesis advanced as early as 1976 by the pioneering Marxist environmental sociologist Charles H. Anderson. As Anderson put it, “as the threat of stagnation mounts, so does the need for throughput in order to maintain tolerable growth rates.”

The hope of many that peak crude oil production and the end of cheap oil would serve to limit carbon emissions has also proven false. It is clear that in the age of enhanced worldwide coal production, fracking, and tar sands oil there is no shortage of carbon with which to heat up the planet. Today’s known stocks of oil, coal, and gas reserves are at least five times the planet’s remaining carbon budget, amounting to 2.8 gigatons in carbon potential, and the signs are that the capitalist system intends to burn it all. As Bill McKibben observed in relation to these fossil-fuel reserves: “Yes, this coal and oil is still technically in the soil. But it’s already economically aboveground.” Corporations and governments count these carbon resources as financial assets, which means they are intended for exploitation. Not too long ago environmentalists were worried about the world running out of fossil fuels (especially crude oil); now this has been inverted by climate-change concerns.

As bad as the climate crisis is, however, it is important to understand that it is only a part of the larger global ecological crisis—since climate change is merely one among a number of dangerous rifts in planetary boundaries arising from human transformations of the earth. Ocean acidification, destruction of the ozone layer, species extinction, the disruption of the nitrogen and phosphorus cycles, growing fresh water shortages, land-cover change, and chemical pollution all represent global ecological transformations/crises. Already we have crossed the planetary boundaries (designated by scientists based on departure from Holocene conditions) not only in relation to climate change, but also with respect to species extinction and the nitrogen cycle. Species extinction is occurring at about a thousand times the “background rate,” a phenomenon known as the “sixth extinction” (referring back to the five previous periods of mass extinctions in earth history—the most recent of which, 65 million years ago, resulted in the extinction of the dinosaurs). Nitrogen pollution now constitutes a major cause of dead zones in oceans. Other developing planetary rifts, such as ocean acidification (known as the “evil twin” of climate change since it is also caused by carbon emissions), and chronic loss of freshwater supplies, which is driving the global privatization of water, are of growing concern. All of this raises basic questions of survival: the ultimate crisis confronting humanity.

The Ultimate Crisis

The scale and speed of the emerging ecological challenge, manifested not only in climate change but also in numerous other planetary rifts, constitutes irrefutable evidence that the root cause of the environmental problem lies in our socioeconomic system, and particularly in the dynamic of capital accumulation.

Faced with such intractable problems, the response of the dominant interests has always been that technology, supplemented by market magic and population control, can solve all problems, allowing for unending capital accumulation and economic growth without undue ecological effects by means of an absolute decoupling of growth from environmental throughput. Thus, when asked about the problems posed by fossil fuels (including tar sands oil, shale oil and gas, and coal) President Obama responded: “All of us are going to have to work together in an effective way to figure out how we balance the imperative of economic growth with very real concerns about the effect we’re having on our planet. And ultimately I think this can be solved with technology.”

Yet, the dream that technology alone, considered in some abstract sense, can solve the environmental problem, allowing for unending economic growth without undue ecological effects through an absolute decoupling of one from the other, is quickly fading. Not only are technological solutions limited by the laws of physics, namely the second law of thermodynamics (which tells us, for example, that energy is partially dissipated upon use), but they are also subject to the laws of capitalism itself. Technological change under the present system routinely brings about relative efficiency gains in energy use, reducing the energy and raw material input per unit of output. Yet, this seldom results in absolute decreases in environmental throughput at the aggregate level; rather the tendency is toward the evergreater use of energy and materials. This is captured by the well-known Jevons paradox, named after the nineteenth-century economist William Stanley Jevons. Jevons pointed out that gains in energy efficiency almost invariably increase the absolute amount of energy used, since such efficiency feeds economic expansion. Jevons highlighted how each new steam engine from Watt’s famous engine on was more efficient in its use of coal than the one before, yet the introduction of each improved steam engine nonetheless resulted in a greater absolute use of coal.

#### US protectionism against China with Trumps tariffs thumps war from protectionism -- if the biggest trade war in recent history didn’t go nuclear, nothing will -- prefer because this happened AFTER Lake came out.

#### Free trade causes, not prevents, war -- our stats are newer and better:

#### 1 -- Uncertainty.

Spaniel & Malone 19 [William Spaniel, Department of Political Science, University of Pittsburgh. Iris Malone, Department of Political Science, Stanford. The Uncertainty Tradeoff: Re-Examining Opportunity Costs and War. March 5, 2019. <https://wjspaniel.files.wordpress.com/2019/03/uncertainty-tradeoff-final.pdf>] brett

This paper has more general implications for trade-conflict research. It complements growing calls to disaggregate the effects of instruments like trade (Martin et al. 2008). Empirical analyses must carefully trace what precisely parties do not know about each other to draw the correct inference. It also suggests states should be careful in interpreting how other states value or benefit from mutual trade flows. A free trade agreement championed by one state may be perceived as relatively less beneficial in another state. This uncertainty may undermine the credibility to abide by the agreement in the long-run.

We also highlight the need for future research to consider screening incentives in trade deals themselves. Although the proposer benefits from greater trade—both from the direct economic benefit and indirect ability to steal more surplus from the receiver— trade can harm unresolved receivers and incentivize screening. This could generate some constraints in the deals a state is willing to sign, in fear that the rearranged incentives under uncertainty could hurt its ability to effectively bluff later. A more unified approach to trade and crisis negotiations would yield additional interesting insights.

Moving forward, the results speak to other lines of research in international relations theory predicated on changing costs of conflict. We couched our results in the interdependence literature due its clear application. However, the comparative static speaks to cases where the receiver’s costs increase more generally.23 Framed this way, the results have clear implications for other literatures. For example, standard nuclear deterrence theory argues that possessing nuclear weapons increases the costs of war for potential challengers due to the risk of a retaliatory nuclear response (Morgenthau 1961, 280; Gilpin 1983, 213-219). The logic of alliance formation similarly relies on the assumption that entering these pacts induces peace by raising an opponent’s costs of conflict (Morrow 1994). Together, these mechanisms assume raising the costs of war should decrease conflict. Our results demonstrate this effect is likely more conditional than previously realized. We find increased costs of conflict can exacerbate issues with uncertainty over resolve even if both states possess destructive weaponry. This promises to shed new insights into how raising costs affects deterrence and coercive bargaining in other contexts.

#### 2 -- Asymmetry.

Lucas Hahn 16. Bryant University. April, 2016. Global Economic Expansion and the Prevalence of Militarized Interstate Disputes. <https://digitalcommons.bryant.edu/honors_economics/24/> brett \*MIDs = Militarized Interstate Disputes

3. Neo-Marxist Views on Asymmetrical Trade One of the most supported arguments against the notion that economic expansion promotes peace is that trade, brought about by economic expansion, actually increases MIDs. Many authors have in fact argued that increased economic interdependence and increased trade may have, in some ways, “cheapened war”, and thus made it easier to wage war more frequently (Harrison and Nikolaus 2012). Neo-Marxists and Dependency Theorists argue that the notion that trade promotes peace often depends on the balance of trade between two nations with a trading relationship. If the two nations have a symmetrical trading relationship, then both nations benefit from trade equally and may thus, engage in less conflict just as proposed by many liberal theorists. However, more often than not, the trading relationship between two nations may be asymmetrical. In this case, one nation benefits more than the other. Furthermore, one nation is often more dependent on trade with its partner than the partner is with it. These circumstances can breed violent conflicts (Barbieri and Schneider 1999). Barbieri’s (1996, 40) regression analyses have supported these claims. She found that when dyads (pairs of nation-states) are highly interdependent, they are nearly 25 times more likely to engage in armed conflict than when the dyads are not interdependent. Ultimately, she came to the conclusion that there seems to be a “hurdle effect”. Up to a point trade does seem to promote peace. However, after that point, the balance of trade often becomes disproportionate between two nations and as a result trade promotes conflict.

#### Both of which breed suspicion, which is a much likelier cause for escalation.

Levy & Thompson 10 (Jack S & William R; Levy is Board of Governors' Professor of Political Science at Rutgers University, former president of the International Studies Association, Affiliate at the Saltzman Institute of War and Peace Studies at Columbia University; Thompson is Distinguished Professor and the Donald A. Rogers Professor of Political Science at Indiana University; 2010; “The Dyadic Interactions of States”; *Causes of War*; pp. 72-75, published by Wiley-Blackwell)

Realist and rationalist critiques Realists, who share the economic nationalism and statist orientation of the old mercantilists, criticize the liberal economic theory of peace on a number of grounds. First of all, they argue (as do some non-realists) that even if it were true that trade has a pacifying effect, the magnitude of the impact of trade on decisions for war and peace is small relative tothat of military and diplomatic considerations (Buzan, 1984 ; Levy, 1989b ). Realists, like mercantilists, argue that states are motivated primarily by power and that economic opportunity costs of war are minor in the context of the long-term struggle for power. Were the Western liberal democracies seriously concerned about the short-term loss of trade when they made decisions to go to war against the hegemonic threats posed by Germany in 1914 and again in 1939? Realists also argue that trade and other forms of economic interdependence can actually increase the level of militarized conflict rather than reduce it (Barbieri, 2002 ). As Rousseau (cited in Hoffmann, 1963 :319) argued, “…interdependence breeds not accommodation and harmony, but suspicion and incompatibility. ”Among other things, interdependence creates increased opportunities for conflict. The greater the interdependence between states, the greater the number of things to argue about. In addition, whereas liberals argue that economic interdependence creates mutual dependence and incentives to avoid war, realists argue that interdependence may also be asymmetrical. Each is dependent on the other, but the degree of dependence is uneven. The less dependent party may be tempted to use economic coercion to exploit the adversary’s vulnerabilities and influence its behavior relating to security as well as economic issues. 32 These can lead to retaliatory actions, conflict spirals, and war. 33

## COVID

#### Can’t solve COVID until 2022 – prefer our evidence based on supply chain experts

Garde et al 5-6 [Damian Garde , Helen Branswell and Matthew Herper May 6, 2021, 5-6-2021, "Waiver of patent rights on Covid vaccines may be mostly symbolic, for now," STAT, <https://www.statnews.com/2021/05/06/waiver-of-patent-rights-on-covid-19-vaccines-in-near-term-may-be-more-symbolic-than-substantive/> ] //Lydia

The U.S.’s stunning [endorsement](https://www.statnews.com/pharmalot/2021/05/05/biden-covid19-vaccine-patent-rights/) of a proposal to waive Covid-19 vaccine patents has won plaudits for President Biden and roiled the global pharmaceutical industry. But, at least in the short term, it’s likely to be more of a symbolic milestone than a turning point in the pandemic. For months, proponents of the proposal have argued that the need to waive intellectual property protections was urgent given the growth of Covid cases in low- and middle-income countries, which have been largely left without the huge shipments of vaccine already purchased by wealthy countries. But patents alone don’t magically produce vaccines. Experts suggested the earliest the world could expect to see additional capacity flowing from the waiver — if it’s approved at the World Trade Organization — would be in 2022. Prashant Yadav, a supply chain expert and senior fellow at the Center for Global Development, said the biggest barrier to increasing the global vaccine supply is a lack of raw materials and facilities that manufacture the billions of doses the world needs. Temporarily suspending some intellectual property, as the U.S. proposes to do, would have little effect on those problems, he said. “My take is: By itself, it will not get us much benefit in increased manufacturing capacity,” Yadav said. “But as part of a larger package, it can.” That larger package would include wealthy nations like the U.S. mounting an Operation Warp Speed-style effort to invest in manufacturing in low-income countries, he said, using their vast financial resources to actually produce vaccine doses rather than solely targeting patents. Lawrence Gostin, director of the O’Neill Institute for National and Global Health Law at Georgetown Law, said the waiver is necessary but hardly sufficient. It will likely take months of international infighting before the proposal would take effect, he said, months during which would-be manufacturers would not have the right to start producing vaccines. “We’re not talking about any immediate help for India or Latin America or other countries going through an enormous spread of the virus,” Gostin said. “While they’re going to be negotiating the text, the virus will be mutating.” Even James Love, director of the nonprofit Knowledge Ecology International and a longtime advocate of intellectual property reform, acknowledges a patent waiver would be a valuable first step, not a panacea. The fairly narrow proposal would mostly allow countries to issue compulsory licenses, essentially allowing third-party manufacturers to make and sell other companies’ patented products, while also helping free up some information about how that manufacturing is done. But that, at least, could provide a financial incentive for those third parties to invest in vaccine production.

#### Can’t solve prices.

Reto M. Hilty et al. 21,\* Max Planck Institute for Innovation and Competition; University of Zurich; Ludwig Maximilian University of Munich (LMU) Pedro Henrique D. Batista,\*\* Max Planck Institute for Innovation and Competition Suelen Carls,\*\*\* Max Planck Institute for Innovation and Competition Daria Kim,\*\*\* Max Planck Institute for Innovation and Competition Matthias Lamping,\*\*\* Max Planck Institute for Innovation and Competition Peter R. Slowinski,\*\* Max Planck Institute for Innovation and Competition \* Prof. Dr., Director. \*\* Junior Research Fellow and doctoral student. \*\*\* Dr., Senior Research Fellow. Max Planck Institute for Innovation and Competition. Position Statement of the Max Planck Institute for Innovation and Competition of 7 May 2021. “Covid-19 and the Role of Intellectual Property” <https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3841549> brett + lydia

Concerns regarding vaccine prices are understandable, especially in view of inequalities among countries as far as access to healthcare is concerned. However, there are several reasons why a waiver of IP rights might not result in a substantially lower price for biosimilar versions compared to the currently supplied products. First of all, some current vaccine developers and manufacturers have publicly announced ‘notfor-profit’ commitments.20 Even though there might be concerns that such commitments will eventually be lifted, prices are likely to stay at a competitive level, given that there is an increasing number of actual and potential substitutes and therewith competition.21 Second, technological requirements for production of biosimilars result in higher costs of the development and manufacturing of biosimilars, compared to generic versions of smallmolecule drugs. Setting the production for the new vector and mRNA vaccines therefore requires substantial investments. Biosimilar and generic companies, just like originators, usually operate as for-profit entities. The market prices for such products therefore might not be significantly lower than the current prices for vaccines, but the waiver would benefit the commercial interests of the generic manufacturers first of all because they would be exempt from paying royalties. Even if generic manufacturers were prepared to limit prices to their own production costs, it is questionable whether such prices would be substantially lower than the current prices for vaccines supplied under the not-for-profit commitments. Unless the manufacturers of biosimilars commit themselves to sell at cost price, a waiver might benefit their commercial interest more than it would serve the public interest in affordable vaccines. Third, the cost of vaccine delivery alone – not including manufacturing – is considerable.22 In some cases, it can equal half of the vaccine market price.23 Every entity along the complex supply chain needs to be paid for products and services, irrespective of whether vaccines are IP-protected or not. In the abstract, there was certainly a risk of excessive prices when the vaccines were still under development. Such risk should have been addressed by governments in the framework of the contracts subsidising research on vaccines (see also below at 7), while affordability of vaccines should be approached as a matter of global solidarity (see also below at 10).

#### Capitalism ensures existential pandemics:

#### 1 -- Underfunded healthcare -- colonial divisions lead to broad disparities in healthcare globally – disease responses will remain weak in the Global South regardless of IP because of capital’s excavation of their natural resources

#### 2 -- Industrial ag -- Capitalist agriculture practices such as factory farms and open markets produce immense zoonotic diseases – COVID proves.

#### 3 -- Rapid globalization -- expanding tourism industries and business requires constant travel which facilitates spread.

#### 4 -- Climate Change -- warming releases ancient diseases in the arctic, undermines healthcare infrastructure, kills cooperation, and warmer environments pathogen carrying animals like mosquitos thrive.

#### Absolutely no chance of extinction from disease

Adalja 16 [Amesh Adalja, infectious disease physician at the University of Pittsburgh] “Why Hasn't Disease Wiped out the Human Race?” June 17, 2016 (http://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2016/06/infectious-diseases-extinction/487514/) - MZhu

But when people ask me if I’m worried about infectious diseases, they’re often not asking about the threat to human lives; they’re asking about the threat to human life. With each outbreak of a headline-grabbing emerging infectious disease comes a fear of extinction itself. The fear envisions a large proportion of humans succumbing to infection, leaving no survivors or so few that the species can’t be sustained. I’m not afraid of this apocalyptic scenario, but I do understand the impulse. Worry about the end is a quintessentially human trait. Thankfully, so is our resilience. For most of mankind’s history, infectious diseases were the existential threat to humanity—and for good reason. They were quite successful at killing people: The 6th century’s Plague of Justinian knocked out an estimated 17 percent of the world’s population; the 14th century Black Death decimated a third of Europe; the 1918 influenza pandemic killed 5 percent of the world; malaria is estimated to have killed half of all humans who have ever lived. Any yet, of course, humanity continued to flourish. Our species’ recent explosion in lifespan is almost exclusively the result of the control of infectious diseases through sanitation, vaccination, and antimicrobial therapies. Only in the modern era, in which many infectious diseases have been tamed in the industrial world, do people have the luxury of death from cancer, heart disease, or stroke in the 8th decade of life. Childhoods are free from watching siblings and friends die from outbreaks of typhoid, scarlet fever, smallpox, measles, and the like. So what would it take for a disease to wipe out humanity now? In Michael Crichton’s The Andromeda Strain, the canonical book in the disease-outbreak genre, an alien microbe threatens the human race with extinction, and humanity’s best minds are marshaled to combat the enemy organism. Fortunately, outside of fiction, there’s no reason to expect alien pathogens to wage war on the human race any time soon, and my analysis suggests that any real-life domestic microbe reaching an extinction level of threat probably is just as unlikely. Any apocalyptic pathogen would need to possess a very special combination of two attributes. First, it would have to be so unfamiliar that no existing therapy or vaccine could be applied to it. Second, it would need to have a high and surreptitious transmissibility before symptoms occur. The first is essential because any microbe from a known class of pathogens would, by definition, have family members that could serve as models for containment and countermeasures. The second would allow the hypothetical disease to spread without being detected by even the most astute clinicians. The three infectious diseases most likely to be considered extinction-level threats in the world today—influenza, HIV, and Ebola—don’t meet these two requirements. Influenza, for instance, despite its well-established ability to kill on a large scale, its contagiousness, and its unrivaled ability to shift and drift away from our vaccines, is still what I would call a “known unknown.” While there are many mysteries about how new flu strains emerge, from at least the time of Hippocrates, humans have been attuned to its risk. And in the modern era, a full-fledged industry of influenza preparedness exists, with effective vaccine strategies and antiviral therapies. HIV, which has killed 39 million people over several decades, is similarly limited due to several factors. Most importantly, HIV’s dependency on blood and body fluid for transmission (similar to Ebola) requires intimate human-to-human contact, which limits contagion. Highly potent antiviral therapy allows most people to live normally with the disease, and a substantial group of the population has genetic mutations that render them impervious to infection in the first place. Lastly, simple prevention strategies such as needle exchange for injection drug users and barrier contraceptives—when available—can curtail transmission risk. Ebola, for many of the same reasons as HIV as well as several others, also falls short of the mark. This is especially due to the fact that it spreads almost exclusively through people with easily recognizable symptoms, plus the taming of its once unfathomable 90 percent mortality rate by simple supportive care. Beyond those three, every other known disease falls short of what seems required to wipe out humans—which is, of course, why we’re still here. And it’s not that diseases are ineffective. On the contrary, diseases’ failure to knock us out is a testament to just how resilient humans are. Part of our evolutionary heritage is our immune system, one of the most complex on the planet, even without the benefit of vaccines or the helping hand of antimicrobial drugs. This system, when viewed at a species level, can adapt to almost any enemy imaginable. Coupled to genetic variations amongst humans—which open up the possibility for a range of advantages, from imperviousness to infection to a tendency for mild symptoms—this adaptability ensures that almost any infectious disease onslaught will leave a large proportion of the population alive to rebuild, in contrast to the fictional Hollywood versions. While the immune system’s role can never be understated, an even more powerful protector is the faculty of consciousness. Humans are not the most prolific, quickly evolving, or strongest organisms on the planet, but as Aristotle identified, humans are the rational animals—and it is this fundamental distinguishing characteristic that allows humans to form abstractions, think in principles, and plan long-range. These capacities, in turn, allow humans to modify, alter, and improve themselves and their environments. Consciousness equips us, at an individual and a species level, to make nature safe for the species through such technological marvels as antibiotics, antivirals, vaccines, and sanitation. When humans began to focus their minds on the problems posed by infectious disease, human life ceased being nasty, brutish, and short. In many ways, human consciousness became infectious diseases’ worthiest adversary.

#### Diseases won’t cause extinction – burnout and geographical isolation check

Consiglio 17 [Dave, Community College Professor of Chemistry and Physics, 12/7/17, “Could a Disease Wipe Out Humans Entirely?”, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/quora/2017/12/07/could-a-disease-wipe-out-humans-entirely/#387c2f308203> Accessed 2/8/28] BBro

What scenarios seem like they should kill everyone but actually won't? Disease. Everyone seems worried about a killer disease, be it HIV or Ebola or Flu or some unknown pathogen. But humans are going to be really hard to wipe out via disease. Why? Well, we have several things going for us: We have a massive population. **We are geographically widespread**. We are capable of eating nearly anything. We are reasonably diverse as a species. **There are geographically** and genetically **isolated** pockets of our **population. Diseases require** a **vector** to spread. Let’s say the perfect disease arose tomorrow: It kills two weeks after you get it, shows no symptoms until the last minute, is really easy to transmit, and we have very little immunity to it. It still doesn’t kill everyone. Native Greenlanders and the people in Antarctica and people on Navy submarines and the few random people who are immune, and park rangers all either never come into contact with an infected person or else are spared by a genetic fluke. We even have the International Space Station as a potential place to hide and wait for the epidemic to die down. In fairness, nearly everyone is dead in short order, but **once** the **disease has run its course, the pathogen** that causes it **is also** likely to be **dead.** The vast majority of pathogens don’t survive for long outside of their hosts. As such, once nearly everyone is dead and the survivors wait a bit, they’re **unlikely to encounter live pathogen**. As an added bonus, the few surviving people include many of the most naturally immune members of the (now mostly dead) population. Now, don’t get me wrong, this scenario would be catastrophic for humanity. 99.9% of us could die in this way. And it’s possible that the remaining humans would be so isolated as to be unable to find one another for the purposes of reproduction. But I doubt it. Humans are nothing if not fecund, and we have those submarines, boats, airplanes, etc. We will eventually come out from hiding, find that special someone, and breed our way out of trouble. It’s why we’re still around as a species - nothing stops us from making more humans.

#### No extinction

Posner 5—Senior Lecturer, U Chicago Law. Judge on the US Court of Appeals 7th Circuit. AB from Yale and LLB from Harvard. (Richard, Catastrophe, http://goliath.ecnext.com/coms2/gi\_0199-4150331/Catastrophe-the-dozen-most-significant.html)

Yet the fact that Homo sapiens has managed to survive every disease to assail it in the 200,000 years or so of its existence is a source of genuine comfort, at least if the focus is on extinction events. There have been enormously destructive plagues, such as the Black Death, smallpox, and now AIDS, but none has come close to destroying the entire human race. **There is a biological reason**. Natural selection favors germs of limited lethality; they are fitter in an evolutionary sense because their genes are more likely to be spread if the germs do not kill their hosts too quickly. The AIDS virus is an example of a lethal virus, wholly natural, that by lying dormant yet infectious in its host for years maximizes its spread. Yet there is no danger that AIDS will destroy the entire human race. The likelihood of a natural pandemic that would cause the extinction of the human race is probably even less today than in the past (except in prehistoric times, when people lived in small, scattered bands, which would have limited the spread of disease), despite wider human contacts that make it more difficult to localize an infectious disease.