## 1NC Nano Doubles

## 1

### Topicality

#### Interp: Reductions must decrease, otherwise it’s a limit

Speirs 7 – brief in the District Ct of Eastern Texas (REEDHYCALOG v. BAKER HUGHES OILFIELD, 2007 U.S. Dist. Ct. Pleadings LEXIS 9234)//BB

Baker Hughes's interpretation should be adopted. The claims expressly use the word "limit," not "reduce." The plain meanings of those two words are not the same. "Limit" means "a boundary" or a "restrict[ion]." See, e.g., RANDOM HOUSE UNABRIDGED DICTIONARY, Exh. 5 (2006). "Reduce" means "to bring down to a smaller extent, size, amount, number, etc." Id. Accordingly, the word "reduce" cannot be substituted for the word "limit." Moreover, the specification discusses the two words disjunctively. See'631 patent, Exh. 4 at col. 3, lines 12-15 ("features which reduce, or limit, the extent" of "expos[ure]"); col. 6, line 61 ("reduced, or limited, exposure cutter").

#### Violation: They set a boundary for patents to only one period of exclusivity, it’s not a reduction of \*protections\*.

#### Standards:

#### 1] Limits and ground – placing arbitrary boundaries gets rid of neg generics like boundary related CPs and the Price Control CP. Independently not requiring the aff to decrease something means we get \*no\* DAs since they no-link out of all of them by saying that companies still get one period of exclusivity.

#### 2] Extra T is a voter – means the res is no longer a stable basis and they can defend whatever they want. Also means you don’t have jurisdiction to vote for them cuz they haven’t affirmed the res.

#### Drop the debater:

#### We indicted the whole aff so dta is incoherent

#### Use Competing Interps for T:

#### 1] There’s no way to be “reasonably” topical, it’s a yes/no binary

#### No RVI’s:

#### 1] It’s your burden to be topical means it’s a prereq to engaging in substance

#### 2] Encourages people to bait theory then win the RVI

#### 3] Moots substantive education by forcing me to collapse for a shell so I cant concede counterinterp if im wrong, if the shell is bad you should j answer it which solves the 1ar substantive education argument

## 2

### NC

#### TJFs first –

#### a] Frameworks are essentially T debates about the word ought which proves the better model of debate is what matters. b] Turns substance – it doesn’t matter how true a philosophy is if it can’t be engaged or is impossible to learn from

#### c] Exclusionary rule – we cant engage which means all their substantive arguments should be presumed false

#### The standard is consistency with absolute sovereignty.

#### 1] Predictability – every individual engages within the social contract when going to school or using public infrastructure which means it’s the one political engagement everyone is aware of.

#### 2] Political Education – politicians have to understand the social contract in order to know what powers they have and what they have to provide citizens and debating about Hobbes helps us learn about that.

#### 3] Topic Ed – the Hobbesian approach is ideal for dealing with IP in the context of public health disaster.

Ashcroft 05 [Richard E. Ashcroft (MA, PhD Reader in Biomedical Ethics in the Department of Primary Health Care and General Practice at Imperial College London). “Access to essential medicines: a Hobbesian social contract approach”. Dev World Bioeth. 2005 May;5(2):121-41. Accessed 7/31/2021. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/15842722/> //Xu]

The problems I have described in these concluding remarks are serious and difficult. I do not think they are decisive. None of these problems demonstrate either the falsity or incoherence of a Hobbesian approach. Rather, they show that a Hobbesian approach needs further detailed development. I think that the merits of the Hobbesian approach are plain, so far as it takes serious notice of the features of the state of war, the instrumental nature of states and their legal and civil institutions, and the overarching objective of states to preserve their citizens from misery and disaster. More obviously ‘moral’ theories (such as utilitarian theory, or natural rights theories such as Lockean theory or modern human rights theories) are less illuminating, in that they fail to construct compelling perfect obligations lying with specific agents. The Hobbesian account I have constructed here has many loose ends, but I hope I have shown in this paper how a powerful argument for a perfect duty lying on the state to protect its citizens from public health disaster can be constructed, and the foundations of legitimate sovereign enforcement of powers of compulsory license over intellectual property. Public health takes priority over private economic interest. The only question is whether private economic interest is the only, or indeed an, effective means for promoting the public health in conditions of disaster.

#### 4] Resource Disparities – philosophical frameworks ensure big squads don’t have a comparative advantage since debates become about quality of arguments rather than quantity and require a higher level of analytic thinking that small schools have.

#### Negate –

#### 1] Sequencing – a sovereign can’t be obligated to do anything because they are the ones who choose what ethics and truth – the rez tries to coerce the sovereign to do something which challenges its authority.

#### 2] IP rights are implicit in the creation of the sovereign in expressing creativity.

Ghosh 04 [Shubha Ghosh (B.A., Amherst College; Ph.D., University of Michigan; J.D., Stanford Law School; Professor of Law, University at Buffalo, SUNY, Law School; Visiting Professor, SMU Dedman School of Law). “PATENTS AND THE REGULATORY STATE: RETHINKING THE PATENT BARGAIN METAPHOR AFTER ELDRED”. BERKELEY TECHNOLOGY LAW JOURNAL. 2004. Accessed 9/3/21. <https://lawcat.berkeley.edu/record/1119327/files/fulltext.pdf> //Xu]

As illustration of the limits of social contract theory,46 particularly the malleability of the notions of consent and promise, consider a social contract theory of intellectual property based on the thoughts of Thomas Hobbes rather than that of John Locke. No scholar has expressly developed a Hobbesian theory of patent or of copyright, but as a challenge to social contract theory, it may be useful to imagine what such a theory would look like.47 For Hobbes, humans created the leviathan-the sovereign state-to protect themselves from each other in the state of nature. 48 Without the leviathan, the state of nature was not an idyllic paradise but a condition of savagery and brutality. In the state of nature, to the extent that any creative activity occurred, the objects of creation would be cannibalized, thoughtlessly copied, adapted, distributed, and performed or used, sold, offered to sell, and made by others. Thus, intellectual property law under the leviathan would protect individuals from this state of nature by making them absolute, immutable, bountiful, and unlimited. Humans would consent to these terms if they were enforced equally for all creations, and each author and inventor would promise to all others to abide by this form of the intellectual property social contract.

#### **No 1AR theory, a] intervention, 2ar gets to lbl 2nr standards and you have to assign credence based on that which triggers intervention, ow takes the debate out of debaters hands, b] topic ed, allows 1ar to spam 20 secnd shells that moot offense**

#### Reasonability on 1ar shells, the 2ar gets to spam 20 second shells and reasonability ensures we only lose for legitimate abuse and aren’t overpunished which also justifies drop the argument

## 3

### DA

#### Reconciliation passes now – the delay gives Biden time to work magic in the wings, but PC and focus are key

Herb et al. 10-1 (Jeremy Herb, CNN Politics Reporter, Kevin Liptak, Reporter, Phil Mattingly, Senior White House Correspondent, Lauren Fox, CNN Congressional Correspondent, Melanie Zanona, Capitol Hill Reporter, “'It doesn't matter when': How Biden gave feuding House Democrats an off-ramp”, CNN Politics, 10-1-21, <https://www.cnn.com/2021/10/01/politics/dems-biden-infrastructure-delay/index.html)//babcii>

(CNN)President Joe Biden didn't [travel to Capitol Hill on Friday](https://www.cnn.com/2021/10/01/politics/house-vote-infrastructure-democrats/index.html) to close the deal, or to rally the troops through a final legislative gantlet. There was nothing cinematic -- or dramatic -- about the trip down Pennsylvania Avenue for the 36-year Senate veteran, who has more than once informed aides of [his unparalleled ability](http://www.cnn.com/2021/09/27/politics/biden-agenda-congress-deal-maker/index.html) to read, speak to and corral lawmakers. Instead, in remarks that lasted less than 30 minutes, Biden served a singular purpose: a presidential pressure relief valve. In a week deemed an "inflection point" by top aides, where the President was rarely seen in public as his entire domestic agenda hung in the balance, it marked a seemingly low bar to clear for success. There would be no miraculous deal to unlock the formula to move forward on the two key components Democrats are attempting to pass. The promised vote on the [$1.2 trillion infrastructure bill](https://www.cnn.com/politics/live-news/congress-infrastructure-bill-vote-10-01-21/index.html) would not materialize. But after days of intraparty warfare and feverish late-night negotiations, a reset was desperately needed -- and the best Biden could offer. In delivering an unscripted and at times unwieldy message that the infrastructure vote wasn't likely to happen -- and the top-line cost of the economic and climate package was going to have to come down -- the President made the bet that he can keep both sides of the intraparty feud on board in the critical days and weeks to follow. **White House and Democratic leaders will now launch an all-out effort to win** over the two Senate Democratic holdouts, Sens. [Joe Manchin of West Virginia](https://www.cnn.com/2021/09/30/politics/joe-manchin-budget-bill-1-5-trillion-schumer/index.html) and [Kyrsten Sinema of Arizona](https://www.cnn.com/2021/09/30/politics/kyrsten-sinema-arizona-reaction/index.html), as they shape what the multitrillion-dollar economic and social package looks like -- and how high its price tag will be. Congressional Democrats and White House officials say progress was made this week getting all sides closer to an agreement on the massive economic, climate and health care spending package that Democratic leaders intend to pair with the bipartisan $1.2 trillion infrastructure bill that's passed the Senate already. But in the House, moderate and progressive Democrats were engaged in a **slow-motion game of chicken** over the infrastructure vote, with moderates demanding a vote on the infrastructure bill this week that had been pledged by House Speaker Nancy Pelosi -- and [progressives standing firm that they would vote it down](https://www.cnn.com/2021/09/30/politics/house-infrastructure-negotiations-vote/index.html) without an agreement on the framework for the larger economic package. On Friday, Biden sought the off-ramp. It marked his most direct effort to date to cajole the House Democratic caucus at a moment when its members have grown increasingly frustrated about the amount of attention the President and his team have paid to their side of the Capitol. Though well received with several ovations, the appearance didn't serve to salve those wounds entirely -- with some saying afterward that his pep talk had actually exacerbated them. But it did deliver a critical message and a consequential moment, multiple members said: Compromise now -- or end up with nothing. It's likely too soon to say whether the debate this week is just a preamble to Democrats' enacting their historic agenda or if it's a feud that leads to legislative defeat, hobbling the President's party ahead of a tough midterm election cycle with little to show for controlling both chambers of Congress and the White House. 'Who knows what label I get' After the roughly half hour meeting with the President, Democrats described a leader who was in his element and not working to change minds as much as remind members of their shared and unified goals as a caucus. Throughout the infrastructure push, Biden has made clear to Democrats that party unity -- or, in some participants' interpretation, loyalty -- is of utmost importance with only the slimmest of majorities in the House and Senate. He tried to break down the stalemate and the tensions that have hung over the party for weeks, reminding them that he's not on one side or the other. At one point, he made a reference to his own political ideology, saying, "Who knows what label I get." To which Pelosi replied: "President," prompting loud laughter from the room. Biden also talked about how he had redone his office to have paintings hung of Lincoln and FDR -- "A deeply divided country and the biggest economic transformation," said Rep. David Cicilline of Rhode Island, "which is kind of the moment we're in." White House officials think the President accomplished what he went to do on Capitol Hill: Remind Democrats of what is at stake while relieving some of the pressure that had built up over the last several days and reiterating his commitment to passing both pieces of legislation. With that done, officials believe, negotiators have a better environment to be able to push toward a deal. "We're going to get this done," Biden told reporters as he left the meeting. "It doesn't matter when. It doesn't, whether it's in six minutes, six days or six weeks -- we're going to get it done." 'As long as we're still alive' Even before Friday, Biden had alluded in recent days to negotiations slipping beyond the week's end. With the stakes simply too high -- on both the political and policy fronts -- there are no plans to walk away. "It may not be by the end of the week," the President had responded when asked Monday how he would define success at the end of this week. "I hope it's by the end of the week." "But as long as we're still alive ...," Biden said before shifting course in his thought.

#### Attacks on Pharmaceutical Profits triggers Mod Dem Backlash – it disrupts unity.

Cohen 9-6 Joshua Cohen 9-6-2021 "Democrats’ Plans To Introduce Prescription Drug Pricing Reform Face Formidable Obstacles" <https://www.forbes.com/sites/joshuacohen/2021/09/06/democrats-plans-to-introduce-prescription-drug-pricing-reform-face-obstacles/?sh=37a269917395> (independent healthcare analyst with over 22 years of experience analyzing healthcare and pharmaceuticals.)//Elmer

There’s considerable uncertainty regarding passage with a simple majority of the 2021 massive budget reconciliation bill. Last week, Senator Joe Manchin called on Democrats to pause pushing forward the budget reconciliation bill. If Manchin winds up saying no to the bill, this would scuttle it as the Democrats can’t afford to lose a single Senator. And, there’s speculation that provisions to reduce prescription drug prices may be watered down and not incorporate international price referencing. Additionally, reduced prices derived through Medicare negotiation may not be able to be applied to those with employer-based coverage. While the progressive wing of the Democratic Party supports drug pricing reform, **several key centrist Democrats** in both the House and Senate appear to be **uncomfortable** **with** particular aspects of the budget reconciliation bill, including a potential deal-breaker, namely the potential **negative impact of drug price controls on the domestic pharmaceutical industry**, as well as long-term patient access to new drugs. A paper released in 2019 by the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office found that the proposed legislation, H.R. 3, would reduce global revenue for new drugs by 19%, leading to 8 fewer drugs approved in the U.S. between 2020 and 2029, and 30 fewer drugs over the next decade. And, a new report from the CBO reinforces the message that drug pricing legislation under consideration in Congress could lead to fewer new drugs being developed and launched. **Intense lobbying efforts from biopharmaceutical industry groups** **are underway**, **warning of** what they deem are **harms from price controls in** the form of diminished patient **access to new innovations**. The argument, based in part on assumptions and modeling included in the CBO reports, asserts that price controls would dampen investment critical to the biopharmaceutical industry’s pipeline of drugs and biologics. **This** won’t sway most Democrats, but has been a traditional talking point in the Republican Party for decades, and **may convince some centrist Democrats to withdraw backing** of provisions **that** in their eyes **stymie pharmaceutical innovation.** If the budget reconciliation bill would fail to garner a majority, a pared down version of H.R. 3, or perhaps a new bill altogether, with Senator Wyden spearheading the effort, could eventually land in the Senate. But, a similar set of provisos would apply, as majority support in both chambers would be far from a sure thing. In brief, Democrats’ plans at both the executive and legislative branch levels to introduce prescription **drug pricing reform** **encounter challenges** which may prevent impactful modifications from taking place.

#### Sinema specifically jumps Ship.

Hancock and Lucas 20 Jay Hancock and Elizabeth Lucas 5-29-2020 "A Senator From Arizona Emerges As A Pharma Favorite" <https://khn.org/news/a-senator-from-arizona-emerges-as-a-pharma-favorite/> (Senior Correspondent, joined KHN in 2012 from The Baltimore Sun, where he wrote a column on business and finance. Previously he covered the State Department and the economics beat for The Sun and health care for The Virginian-Pilot of Norfolk and the Daily Press of Newport News. He has a bachelor’s degree from Colgate University and a master’s in journalism from Northwestern University.)//Elmer

Sen. Kyrsten **Sinema formed** a **congressional caucus to raise** “**awareness of the benefits of personalized medicine**” in February. Soon after that, employees of **pharmaceutical companies** **donated** $35,000 to her campaign committee. Amgen gave $5,000. So did Genentech and Merck. Sanofi, Pfizer and Eli Lilly all gave $2,500. Each of those companies has invested heavily in personalized medicine, which promises individually tailored drugs that can cost a patient hundreds of thousands of dollars. **Sinema** is a first-term Democrat from Arizona but has nonetheless **emerged as a pharma favorite in Congress** as the industry steers through a new political and economic landscape formed by the coronavirus. She is a **leading recipient of pharma campaign cash** even though she’s not up for reelection until 2024 and lacks major committee or subcommittee leadership posts. For the 2019-20 election cycle through March, political action committees run by employees of drug companies and their trade groups gave her $98,500 in campaign funds, Kaiser Health News’ Pharma Cash to Congress database shows. That stands out in a Congress in which a third of the members got no pharma cash for the period and half of those who did got $10,000 or less. The contributions give companies a chance to cultivate Sinema as she restocks from a brutal 2018 election victory that cost nearly $25 million. Altogether, pharma PACs have so far given $9.2 million to congressional campaign chests in this cycle, compared with $9.4 million at this point in the 2017-18 period, a sustained surge as the industry has responded to complaints about soaring prices. Sinema’s pharma haul was twice that of Sen. Susan Collins of Maine, considered one of the most vulnerable Republicans in November, and approached that of fellow Democrat Steny Hoyer, the powerful House majority leader from Maryland. It all adds up to **a bet by drug companies that** the 43-year-old **Sinema**, first elected to the Senate in 2018, **will** gain influence in coming years and **serve as an industry ally** in a party that also includes many lawmakers harshly critical of high drug prices and the companies that set them.

#### Infrastructure reform solves Existential Climate Change – it results in spill-over.

USA Today 7-20 7-20-2021 "Climate change is at 'code red' status for the planet, and inaction is no longer an option" <https://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/todaysdebate/2021/07/20/climate-change-biden-infrastructure-bill-good-start/7877118002/> //Elmer

**Not long ago**, **climate change** for many Americans **was** like **a distant bell**. News of starving polar bears or melting glaciers was tragic and disturbing, but other worldly. Not any more. **Top climate scientists** from around the world **warned of a "code red for humanity**" in a report issued Monday that says severe, human-caused global warming is become unassailable. Proof of the findings by the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change is a now a factor of daily life. Due to **intense heat waves and drought**, 107 wildfires – including the largest ever in California – are now raging across the West, consuming 2.3 million acres. Earlier this summer, hundreds of people died in unprecedented triple-digit heat in Oregon, Washington and western Canada, when a "heat dome" of enormous proportions settled over the region for days. Some victims brought by stretcher into crowded hospital wards had body temperatures so high, their nervous systems had shut down. People collapsed trying to make their way to cooling shelters. Heat-trapping greenhouse gases Scientists say the event was almost **certainly made worse and more intransigent by human-caused climate change**. They attribute it to a combination of warming Arctic temperatures and a growing accumulation of heat-trapping greenhouse gases caused by the burning of fossil fuels. The **consequences of** what mankind has done to the atmo**sphere are now inescapable**. Periods of **extreme heat** are projected to **double** in the lower 48 states by 2100. **Heat deaths** are far **outpacing every other form of weather killer** in a 30-year average. A **persistent megadrought** in America's West continues to create tinder-dry conditions that augur another devastating wildfire season. And scientists say **warming oceans** are **fueling** ever **more powerful storms**, evidenced by Elsa and the early arrival of hurricane season this year. Increasingly severe weather is causing an estimated $100 billion in damage to the United States every year. "It is honestly surreal to see your projections manifesting themselves in real time, with all the suffering that accompanies them. It is heartbreaking," said climate scientist Katharine Hayhoe. **Rising seas** from global warming Investigators are still trying to determine what led to the collapse of a Miami-area condominium that left more than 100 dead or missing. But one concerning factor is the corrosive effect on reinforced steel structures of encroaching saltwater, made worse in Florida by a foot of rising seas from global warming since the 1900s. The clock is ticking for planet Earth. While the U.N. report concludes some level of severe climate change is now unavoidable, there is still a window of time when far more catastrophic events can be mitigated. But mankind must act soon to curb the release of heat-trapping gases. Global **temperature** has **risen** nearly **2 degrees** Fahrenheit since the pre-industrial era of the late 19th century. Scientists warn that in a decade, it could surpass a **2.7**-degree increase. That's **enough** warming **to cause catastrophic climate changes**. After a brief decline in global greenhouse gas emissions during the pandemic, pollution is on the rise. Years that could have been devoted to addressing the crisis were wasted during a feckless period of inaction by the Trump administration. Congress must act Joe Biden won the presidency promising broad new policies to cut America's greenhouse gas emissions. But Congress needs to act on those ideas this year. Democrats cannot risk losing narrow control of one or both chambers of Congress in the 2022 elections to a Republican Party too long resistant to meaningful action on the climate. So what's at issue? A trillion dollar **infrastructure bill** negotiated between Biden and a group of centrist senators (including 10 Republicans) is a start. In addition to repairing bridges, roads and rails, it would **improve access** by the nation's power infrastructure **to renewable energy sources,** **cap millions of abandoned oil and gas wells spewing greenhouse gases**, **and harden structures against climate change**. It also **offers tax credits for** the **purchase of electric vehicles** and funds the construction of charging stations. (**The nation's largest source of climate pollution are gas-powered vehicles**.) Senate approval could come very soon. Much **more is needed** if the nation is going to reach Biden's necessary goal of cutting U.S. climate pollution in half from 2005 levels by 2030. His ideas worth considering include a federal clean electricity standard for utilities, federal investments and tax credits to promote renewable energy, and tens of billions of dollars in clean energy research and development, including into ways of extracting greenhouse gases from the skies. Another idea worth considering is a fully refundable carbon tax. **The vehicle** for these additional proposals **would be a second infrastructure bill**. And if Republicans balk at the cost of such vital investment, Biden is rightly proposing to pass this package through a process known as budget reconciliation, which allows bills to clear the Senate with a simple majority vote. These are drastic legislative steps. But drastic times call for them. And when Biden attends a U.N. climate conference in November, he can use American progress on climate change as a mean of persuading others to follow our lead. Further delay is not an option.

## Advantage

### ABR

#### 1] Overprescription/bad doctors alt cause they cant solve it and it ensures that even with innovation antiobiotics would have a risk of being overprescribed

#### 2] No extinction from pandemics

* Death rates as high as 50% didn’t collapse civilization
* Fossil fuel record caps risk at .1% per century
* health, sanitation, medicine, science, public health bodies, solve
* viruses can’t survive in all locations
* refugee populations like tribes, remote researchers, submarine crews, solve

Ord 20 Ord, Toby. Toby David Godfrey Ord (born 18 July 1979) is an Australian philosopher. He founded Giving What We Can, an international society whose members pledge to donate at least 10% of their income to effective charities and is a key figure in the effective altruism movement, which promotes using reason and evidence to help the lives of others as much as possible.[3] He is a Senior Research Fellow at the University of Oxford's Future of Humanity Institute, where his work is focused on existential risk. BA in Phil and Comp Sci from Melbourne, BPhil in Phil from Oxford, PhD in Phil from Oxford. The precipice: existential risk and the future of humanity. Hachette Books, 2020.

Are we safe now from events like this? Or are we more vulnerable? Could a pandemic threaten humanity’s future?10 The Black Death was not the only biological disaster to scar human history. It was not even the only great bubonic plague. In 541 CE the Plague of Justinian struck the Byzantine Empire. Over three years it took the lives of roughly 3 percent of the world’s people.11 When Europeans reached the Americas in 1492, the two populations exposed each other to completely novel diseases. Over thousands of years each population had built up resistance to their own set of diseases, but were extremely susceptible to the others. The American peoples got by far the worse end of exchange, through diseases such as measles, influenza and especially smallpox. During the next hundred years a combination of invasion and disease took an immense toll—one whose scale may never be known, due to great uncertainty about the size of the pre-existing population. We can’t rule out the loss of more than 90 percent of the population of the Americas during that century, though the number could also be much lower.12 And it is very difficult to tease out how much of this should be attributed to war and occupation, rather than disease. As a rough upper bound, the Columbian exchange may have killed as many as 10 percent of the world’s people.13 Centuries later, the world had become so interconnected that a truly global pandemic was possible. Near the end of the First World War, a devastating strain of influenza (known as the 1918 flu or Spanish Flu) spread to six continents, and even remote Pacific islands. At least a third of the world’s population were infected and 3 to 6 percent were killed.14 This death toll outstripped that of the First World War, and possibly both World Wars combined. Yet even events like these fall short of being a threat to humanity’s longterm potential.15 In the great bubonic plagues we saw civilization in the affected areas falter, but recover. The regional 25 to 50 percent death rate was not enough to precipitate a continent-wide collapse of civilization. It changed the relative fortunes of empires, and may have altered the course of history substantially, but if anything, it gives us reason to believe that human civilization is likely to make it through future events with similar death rates, even if they were global in scale. The 1918 flu pandemic was remarkable in having very little apparent effect on the world’s development despite its global reach. It looks like it was lost in the wake of the First World War, which despite a smaller death toll, seems to have had a much larger effect on the course of history.16 It is less clear what lesson to draw from the Columbian exchange due to our lack of good records and its mix of causes. Pandemics were clearly a part of what led to a regional collapse of civilization, but we don’t know whether this would have occurred had it not been for the accompanying violence and imperial rule. The strongest case against existential risk from natural pandemics is the fossil record argument from Chapter 3. Extinction risk from natural causes above 0.1 percent per century is incompatible with the evidence of how long humanity and similar species have lasted. But this argument only works where the risk to humanity now is similar or lower than the longterm levels. For most risks this is clearly true, but not for pandemics. We have done many things to exacerbate the risk: some that could make pandemics more likely to occur, and some that could increase their damage. Thus even “natural” pandemics should be seen as a partly anthropogenic risk. Our population now is a thousand times greater than over most of human history, so there are vastly more opportunities for new human diseases to originate.17 And our farming practices have created vast numbers of animals living in unhealthy conditions within close proximity to humans. This increases the risk, as many major diseases originate in animals before crossing over to humans. Examples include HIV (chimpanzees), Ebola (bats), SARS (probably bats) and influenza (usually pigs or birds).18 Evidence suggests that diseases are crossing over into human populations from animals at an increasing rate.19 Modern civilization may also make it much easier for a pandemic to spread. The higher density of people living together in cities increases the number of people each of us may infect. Rapid long-distance transport greatly increases the distance pathogens can spread, reducing the degrees of separation between any two people. Moreover, we are no longer divided into isolated populations as we were for most of the last 10,000 years.20 Together these effects suggest that we might expect more new pandemics, for them to spread more quickly, and to reach a higher percentage of the world’s people. But we have also changed the world in ways that offer protection. We have a healthier population; improved sanitation and hygiene; preventative and curative medicine; and a scientific understanding of disease. Perhaps most importantly, we have public health bodies to

facilitate global communication and coordination in the face of new outbreaks. We have seen the benefits of this protection through the dramatic decline of endemic infectious disease over the last century (though we can’t be sure pandemics will obey the same trend). Finally, we have spread to a range of locations and environments unprecedented for any mammalian species. This offers special protection from extinction events, because it requires the pathogen to be able to flourish in a vast range of environments and to reach exceptionally isolated populations such as uncontacted tribes, Antarctic researchers and nuclear submarine crews. 21 It is hard to know whether these combined effects have increased or decreased the existential risk from pandemics. This uncertainty is ultimately bad news: we were previously sitting on a powerful argument that the risk was tiny; now we are not. But note that we are not merely interested in the direction of the change, but also in the size of the change. If we take the fossil record as evidence that the risk was less than one in 2,000 per century, then to reach 1 percent per century the pandemic risk would need to be at least 20 times larger. This seems unlikely. In my view, the fossil record still provides a strong case against there being a high extinction risk from “natural” pandemics. So most of the remaining existential risk would come from the threat of permanent collapse: a pandemic severe enough to collapse civilization globally, combined with civilization turning out to be hard to re-establish or bad luck in our attempts to do so.

#### 3] Superbug impact is hype

**Tyson 12**{Greg, syndicated science columnist, PhD student in microbiology (Northwestern), “Tipping Point: The Threat of Antibiotic Resistance,” Helix, 8/17, http://helix.northwestern.edu/article/tipping-point-threat-antibiotic-resistance}

What happens if we stand pat? We won’t return to the Middle Ages, where plague wiped out one third of Europe’s population. The truth is that many of the most dangerous and widespread bacterial pathogens that truly deserve the moniker “superbug” have been tamed, especially in the United States. This is because for the healthy person, pathogens like MRSA are not an immediate threat. But people hospitalized and already sick with other conditions are in danger of contracting bacterial infections we are sometimes powerless to treat. It truly is a shame that we are constantly making medical advances in other fields, but have taken a step back in this area. Some potential solutions include treating infections with multiple antibiotics and offering greater incentives for the pharmaceutical industry to produce these products. Also, more specific therapies directed at toxins the bacteria produce could be used in conjunction with antibiotics to more effectively control infections. Stories about MRSA as a “superbug” are often overblown, causing unnecessary panic among people unlikely to get sick**.** Nevertheless, it rightfully draws attention to a public health problem that requires new solutions. The appropriate response is concern and action. But if we continue to ignore the problem, it can only get worse.

#### 4] Humans are too dispersed and disease trends against lethality

Sebastian Farquhar 17, director at Oxford's Global Priorities Project, Owen Cotton-Barratt, a Lecturer in Mathematics at St Hugh’s College, Oxford, John Halstead, Stefan Schubert, Haydn Belfield, Andrew Snyder-Beattie, "Existential Risk Diplomacy and Governance", GLOBAL PRIORITIES PROJECT 2017, 1/23/2017, https://www.fhi.ox.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/Existential-Risks-2017-01-23.pdf

1.1.3 Engineered pandemics For most of human history, natural pandemics have posed the greatest risk of mass global fatalities.37 However, there are some reasons to believe that natural pandemics are very unlikely to cause human extinction. Analysis of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) red list database has shown that of the 833 recorded plant and animal species extinctions known to have occurred since 1500, less than 4% (31 species) were ascribed to infectious disease.38 None of the mammals and amphibians on this list were globally dispersed, and other factors aside from infectious disease also contributed to their extinction. It therefore seems that our own species, which is very numerous, globally dispersed, and capable of a rational response to problems, is very unlikely to be killed off by a natural pandemic. One underlying explanation for this is that highly lethal pathogens can kill their hosts before they have a chance to spread, so there is a selective pressure for pathogens not to be highly lethal. Therefore, pathogens are likely to co-evolve with their hosts rather than kill all possible hosts.39

#### 5] Containment solves---it’s more effective than vaccination

Bryan **Walsh 17**, Bryan Walsh is a contributor to TIME. Previously, he was TIME’s International Editor, its energy and environmental correspondent and was the Tokyo bureau chief in 2006 and 2007. 5-4-2017, "The Next Global Security Threat Isn’t What You Think," Time, http://time.com/4766624/next-global-security/

No disease better illustrates the need for a next-gen vaccine than influenza. "We need to do better with flu vaccine," says Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the NIH National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. A healthy market exists for the seasonal-flu vaccine, but because the influenza virus constantly mutates, a new version has to be made each year, a process that takes months. That lag could be deadly during a severe influenza pandemic. Humans have little to no immune protection against new flu strains, which then spread rapidly around the world and--sometimes--cause severe disease. And though the flu usually isn't deadly for otherwise healthy people, it can be, as the 1918 pandemic showed. While flu vaccines didn't exist in 1918, they did in 2009, when a new flu strain jumped from pigs to people and ultimately killed an estimated 203,000 people around the world, a majority of them under the age of 65. Efforts were made to fast-track a vaccine, but the first doses weren't available for 26 weeks, and it would have taken a year to produce vaccines for every American. Since it can require years of testing and well over $1 billion to successfully develop a single vaccine against a single pathogen, drug companies have increasingly shied away from the business. "There's just no incentive for any company to make pandemic vaccine to store on shelves," says Dr. Trevor Mundel, president of the global health division at the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. That's why most infectious-disease experts aren't hanging their hopes solely on new treatments or vaccines. After all, that's not what ultimately contained the most recent lethal outbreak of Ebola. It chiefly fell to health workers on the ground and to Frieden, director of the CDC for eight years under President Obama. And on no day did that effort come closer to failure than on July 23, 2014. That was the day Frieden received news that Ebola had arrived in the Nigerian megacity of Lagos. The virus had been killing people for months in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, but Ebola in Lagos--the biggest city on the African continent, with a metro population of 21 million--represented a threat of an entirely different magnitude. "If it got out of control in Lagos, it could spread through Nigeria and the rest of Africa," says Frieden. "It could still be going on today." But it isn't, thanks largely to the herculean efforts of thousands of expert health workers--U.S. staff from the CDC and Nigerian officials who had been trained in the international effort to stop polio--who were quickly diverted to fight Ebola. This is why Frieden, Gates and others are so bullish about investing in science and foreign aid. Without aid, Nigeria would not have been able to stem the spread of Ebola. And without the next-generation science that helped track the outbreak, far more people would have died. "It's very important that this kind of work continues," says Frieden, "or America is going to be less safe." Make no mistake: for all our high-tech isolation units, top-tier doctors and world-class scientists, the U.S. health care system is not ready for the stresses of a major pandemic. As the infectious-disease expert Osterholm notes, a pandemic is not like other natural disasters, which tend to be confined to a single location or region. Disease can strike everywhere at once. In the event of a pandemic, even the best hospitals could rapidly run out of beds and mechanical ventilators.

#### 6] No impact to antibiotic resistance.

Sepkowitz 13 [Kent Sepkowitz (Professor of Medicine @ Weill Cornell Medical School, head of Memorial Sloan Ketterings’s infection control program), “Why I’m Not Worried About Dying From a Superbug, and You Shouldn’t Be, Either,” 3-8-13, <http://www.thedailybeast.com-/articles/2013/03/08/why-i-m-not-worried-about-dying-from-a-superbug-and-you-shouldn-t-be-either.html>]

There’s a scary new superbug showing up in hospitals, resistant to all but one aging antibiotic. But Dr. Kent Sepkowitz says your chances of infection are microscopic, and shouldn’t keep you from getting care you need. Pity the poor public-health official: in the midst of an epidemic, he must adopt a soothing avuncular tone of near-boredom, a “we’ve seen this, not to worry” sort of yawn to calm people who otherwise seem ready to run screaming into the streets. But on the other hand, in this day of sequestered public-health funding, he has to raise a major ruckus about some other problem that might happen, swearing that the earth may end soon if we don’t wake up now and face the music. The cavalcade of past get-ready-for-the-big-one hits includes drug-resistant TB, avian flu, swine flu, and drug-resistant gonorrhea among others, each introduced with shrill press releases and snapshots of grim faces peering through microscopes. It is no surprise, therefore, to see the CDC roll out the heavy artillery this week by proclaiming the dangers of the latest superbug. This one is ugly for sure, a resistant-to-almost-everything bacteria that preys on the hospitalized patient. Called carbapenem-resistant Enterobacteriaceae, or CRE, to denote the class of antibiotics (carbapenems) to which it is resistant, and the group of bacterial organisms—Enterobacteriaceae, bacteria that reside in the gut—to which it belongs, CRE is being seen increasingly in hospitals across the U.S. Unheard of before 2001, CRE now is in 181 (4.6 percent) U.S. acute-care hospitals, affecting hundreds of patients. In August 2012, the NIH Clinical Center had a widely reported outbreak from a CRE that killed six of 18 patients, the mortality rate seen in most series. The CDC and other public-health officials are particularly alarmed by this latest wrinkle because the carbapenem class was the last thoroughly modern group of antibiotics with predictable activity against gut bacteria. With the carbapenem hegemony now wobbling, the next (and last) antibiotic is an oldie from the 1960s, pulled from the market then because of concerns about toxicity, but now being used in many hospitals and ICUs to treat CRE infection. If and when CRE becomes resistant to this old-timer, the cupboard is truly bare. This sort of progressive resistance to antibiotics is standard operating procedure for bacteria exposed to high doses of potent antibiotics over time; resistance can and must occur according to the most basic principle of evolution: survival of the fittest. If a billion bacteria are exposed to an antibiotic and just one bacterium, because of a chance mutation, is resistant to the antibiotic while the other near-billion are not, that single organism will survive while the others will die off. The resistant organism will then have the run of the place with enough nutrition to support the billion now-absented brethren, allowing the resistant clone to take root and get in position to spread. We have been here before of course: methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) played through the hospitals and the headlines (and even the National Football League) last decade, alarming the public and spurring new regulations to contain it as well as the application of money, sort of, to develop new weapons. Perhaps because of all the hubbub, MRSA now seems almost quaint and surely not a headline-screaming scourge: mostly contained, a nuisance, a problem, but being dealt with at the right place by the right people. In other words, it has assumed its proper proportion in the world of threats and dangers. The same likely will happen with CRE. More cases will occur, hospitals will make the necessary adjustments suggested by the CDC, specialists will learn their way around the diseases, and eventually the threat and the excitement around it will flatten out. And then the next red-hot development on some other front will emerge rendering the acronym to oblivion. The problem though is this: the mix of steady CDC concern about a real issue that requires attention, a world with infinite capacity for both news and “news,” and a perverse public enjoyment of being frightened has succeeded in little other than scaring the crap out of people who might need medical care. Indeed, hospitals seem to occupy the same imagined place as the Overlook Hotel, the cavernous inn Jack Nicholson prowled in The Shining—the last place on earth a sane person would go. Health care in general and hospitals specifically are viewed these days by just about everyone as a veritable killing field, the place where the two inevitabilities—death and taxes—meet daily as people are fleeced then killed.

#### Large-scale diseases solve nuclear war---it’s likely now.

Barry. R. Posen 20. Ford International Professor of Political Science at MIT and Director Emeritus of the MIT Security Studies Program. 4/23/2020. “Do Pandemics Promote Peace?” https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/china/2020-04-23/do-pandemics-promote-peace. DOA: 9/2/2020. SIR.

As the novel coronavirus infects the globe, states compete for scientific and medical supplies and blame one another for the pandemic’s spread. Policy analysts have started asking whether such tensions could eventually erupt into military conflict. Has the pandemic increased or decreased the motive and opportunity of states to wage war? War is a risky business, with potentially very high costs. The historian Geoffrey Blainey argued in The Causes of War that most wars share a common characteristic at their outset: optimism. The belligerents usually start out sanguine about their odds of military success. When elites on both or all sides are confident, they are more willing to take the plunge—and less likely to negotiate, because they think they will come out better by fighting. Peace, by contrast, is served by pessimism. Even one party’s pessimism can be helpful: that party will be more inclined to negotiate and even accept an unfavorable bargain in order to avoid war. When one side gains a sudden and pronounced advantage, however, this de-escalatory logic can break down: the optimistic side will increase its demands faster than the pessimistic side can appease. Some analysts worry that something like this could happen in U.S.-Chinese relations as a result of the new coronavirus. The United States is experiencing a moment of domestic crisis. China, some fear, might see the pandemic as playing to its advantage and be tempted to throw its military weight around in the western Pacific. What these analysts miss is that COVID-19, the disease caused by the coronavirus, is weakening all of the great and middle powers more or less equally. None is likely to gain a meaningful advantage over the others. All will have ample reason to be pessimistic about their military capabilities and their overall readiness for war. For the duration of the pandemic, at least, and probably for years afterward, the odds of a war between major powers will go down, not up. PAX EPIDEMICA? A cursory survey of the scholarly literature on war and disease appears to confirm Blainey’s observation that pessimism is conducive to peace. Scholars have documented again and again how war creates permissive conditions for disease—in armies as well as civilians in the fought-over territories. But one seldom finds any discussion of epidemics causing wars or of wars deliberately started in the middle of widespread outbreaks of infectious disease. (The diseases that European colonists carried to the New World did weaken indigenous populations to the point that they were more vulnerable to conquest; in addition, some localized conflicts were fought during the influenza pandemic of 1919–21, but these were occasioned by major shifts in regional balances of power following the destruction of four empires in World War I.) That sickness slows the march to war iis partly due to the fact that war depends on people. When people fall ill, they can’t be counted on to perform well in combat. Military medicine made enormous strides in the years leading up to World War I, prior to which armies suffered higher numbers of casualties from disease than from combat. But pandemics still threaten military units, as those onboard U.S. and French aircraft carriers, hundreds of whom tested positive for COVID-19, know well. Sailors and soldiers in the field are among the most vulnerable because they are packed together. But even airmen are at risk, since they must take refuge from air attacks in bunkers, where the virus could also spread rapidly. Ground campaigns in urban areas pose still greater dangers in pandemic times. Much recent ground combat has been in cities in poor countries with few or no public health resources, environments highly favorable to illness. Ground combat also usually produces prisoners, any of whom can be infected. A vaccine may eventually solve these problems, but an abundance of caution is likely to persist for some time after it comes into use. Major outbreaks damage national economies, which are the source of military power. The most important reason disease inhibits war is economic. Major outbreaks damage national economies, which are the source of military power. COVID-19 is a pandemic—by definition a worldwide phenomenon. All great and middle powers appear to be adversely affected, and all have reason to be pessimistic about their military prospects. Their economies are shrinking fast, and there is great uncertainty about when and how quickly they will start growing again. Even China, which has slowed the spread of the disease and begun to reopen its economy, will be hurting for years to come. It took an enormous hit to GDP in the first quarter of 2020, ending 40 years of steady growth. And its trading partners, burned by their dependence on China for much of the equipment needed to fight COVID-19, will surely scale back their imports. An export-dependent China will have to rely more on its domestic market, something it has been attempting for years with only limited success. It is little wonder, then, that the International Monetary Fund forecasts slower growth in China this year than at any time since the 1970s. Even after a vaccine is developed and made widely available, economic troubles may linger for years. States will emerge from this crisis with enormous debts. They will spend years paying for the bailout and stimulus packages they used to protect citizens and businesses from the economic consequences of social distancing. Drained treasuries will give them one more reason to be pessimistic about their military might. LESS TRADE, LESS FRICTION How long is the pacifying effect of pessimism likely to last? If a vaccine is developed quickly, enabling a relatively swift economic recovery, the mood may prove short-lived. But it is equally likely that the coronavirus crisis will last long enough to change the world in important ways, some of which will likely dampen the appetite for conflict for some time—perhaps up to five or ten years. After all, the world is experiencing both the biggest pandemic and the biggest economic downturn in a century. Most governments have not covered themselves with glory managing the pandemic, and even the most autocratic worry about popular support. Over the next few years, people will want evidence that their governments are working to protect them from disease and economic dislocation. Citizens will see themselves as dependent on the state, and they will be less inclined to support adventures abroad. At the same time, governments and businesses will likely try to reduce their reliance on imports of critical materials, having watched global supply chains break down during the pandemic. The result will probably be diminished trade, something liberal internationalists see as a bad thing. But for the last five years or so, trade has not helped improve relations between states but rather fueled resentment. Less trade could mean less friction between major powers, thereby reducing the intensity of their rivalries. In the Chinese context, less international trade could have positive knock-on effects. Focused on growing the domestic economy, and burdened by hefty bills from fighting the virus, Beijing could be forced to table the Belt and Road Initiative, an ambitious trade and investment project that has unnerved the foreign policy establishments of great and middle powers. The suspension of the BRI would soothe the fears of those who see it as an instrument of Chinese world domination. Interstate wars have become relatively rare since the end of World War II. The United States and the Soviet Union engaged in a four-decade Cold War, which included an intense nuclear and conventional arms race, but they never fought each other directly, even with conventional weapons. Theorists debate the reasons behind the continued rarity of great-power conflict. I am inclined to believe that the risk of escalation to a nuclear confrontation is simply too great. COVID-19 does nothing to mitigate such risks for world leaders—and a great deal to feed their reasonable pessimism about the likely outcome of even a conventional war.

#### Disease pandemics decrease the likelihood of war

Walt 20 (Stephen M. Walt is the Robert and Renée Belfer professor of international relations at Harvard University; “Will a Global Depression Trigger Another World War?”; Foreign Policy; May 13, 2020; https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/05/13/coronavirus-pandemic-depression-economy-world-war/; ERB)

By many measures, 2020 is looking to be the worst year that humankind has faced in many decades. We’re in the midst of a pandemic that has already claimed more than 280,000 lives, sickened millions of people, and is certain to afflict millions more before it ends. The world economy is in free fall, with unemployment rising dramatically, trade and output plummeting, and no hopeful end in sight. A plague of locusts is back for a second time in Africa, and last week we learned about murderous killer wasps threatening the bee population in the United States. Americans have a head-in-the-sand president who prescribes potentially lethal nostrums and ignores the advice of his scientific advisors. Even if all those things magically disappeared tomorrow—and they won’t—we still face the looming long-term danger from climate change. Given all that, what could possibly make things worse? Here’s one possibility: war. It is therefore worth asking whether the combination of a pandemic and a major economic depression is making war more or less likely. What does history and theory tell us about that question? For starters, we know neither plague nor depression make war impossible. World War I ended just as the 1918-1919 influenza was beginning to devastate the world, but that pandemic didn’t stop the Russian Civil War, the Russo-Polish War, or several other serious conflicts. The Great Depression that began in 1929 didn’t prevent Japan from invading Manchuria in 1931, and it helped fuel the rise of fascism in the 1930s and made World War II more likely. So if you think major war simply can’t happen during COVID-19 and the accompanying global recession, think again. But war could still be much less likely. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology’s Barry Posen has already considered the likely impact of the current pandemic on the probability of war, and he believes COVID-19 is more likely to promote peace instead. He argues that the current pandemic is affecting all the major powers adversely, which means it isn’t creating tempting windows of opportunity for unaffected states while leaving others weaker and therefore vulnerable. Instead, it is making all governments more pessimistic about their short- to medium-term prospects. Because states often go to war out of sense of overconfidence (however misplaced it sometimes turns out to be), pandemic-induced pessimism should be conducive to peace. Moreover, by its very nature war requires states to assemble lots of people in close proximity—at training camps, military bases, mobilization areas, ships at sea, etc.—and that’s not something you want to do in the middle of a pandemic. For the moment at least, beleaguered governments of all types are focusing on convincing their citizens they are doing everything in their power to protect the public from the disease. Taken together, these considerations might explain why even an impulsive and headstrong warmaker like Saudi Arabia’s Mohammed bin Salman has gotten more interested in winding down his brutal and unsuccessful military campaign in Yemen. Posen adds that COVID-19 is also likely to reduce international trade in the short to medium term. Those who believe economic interdependence is a powerful barrier to war might be alarmed by this development, but he points out that trade issues have been a source of considerable friction in recent years—especially between the United States and China—and a degree of decoupling might reduce tensions somewhat and cause the odds of war to recede. For these reasons, the pandemic itself may be conducive to peace. But what about the relationship between broader economic conditions and the likelihood of war? Might a few leaders still convince themselves that provoking a crisis and going to war could still advance either long-term national interests or their own political fortunes? Are the other paths by which a deep and sustained economic downturn might make serious global conflict more likely? One familiar argument is the so-called diversionary (or “scapegoat”) theory of war. It suggests that leaders who are worried about their popularity at home will try to divert attention from their failures by provoking a crisis with a foreign power and maybe even using force against it. Drawing on this logic, some Americans now worry that President Donald Trump will decide to attack a country like Iran or Venezuela in the run-up to the presidential election and especially if he thinks he’s likely to lose. This outcome strikes me as unlikely, even if one ignores the logical and empirical flaws in the theory itself. War is always a gamble, and should things go badly—even a little bit—it would hammer the last nail in the coffin of Trump’s declining fortunes. Moreover, none of the countries Trump might consider going after pose an imminent threat to U.S. security, and even his staunchest supporters may wonder why he is wasting time and money going after Iran or Venezuela at a moment when thousands of Americans are dying

#### Nuke war causes extinction AND outweighs other existential risks

PND 16. internally citing Zbigniew Brzezinski, Council of Foreign Relations and former national security adviser to President Carter, Toon and Robock’s 2012 study on nuclear winter in the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists, Gareth Evans’ International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament Report, Congressional EMP studies, studies on nuclear winter by Seth Baum of the Global Catastrophic Risk Institute and Martin Hellman of Stanford University, and U.S. and Russian former Defense Secretaries and former heads of nuclear missile forces, brief submitted to the United Nations General Assembly, Open-Ended Working Group on nuclear risks. A/AC.286/NGO/13. 05-03-2016. http://www.reachingcriticalwill.org/images/documents/Disarmament-fora/OEWG/2016/Documents/NGO13.pdf

Consequences human survival 12. Even if the 'other' side does NOT launch in response the smoke from 'their' burning cities (incinerated by 'us') will still make 'our' country (and the rest of the world) uninhabitable, potentially inducing global famine lasting up to decades. Toon and Robock note in ‘Self Assured Destruction’, in the Bulletin of Atomic Scientists 68/5, 2012, that: 13. “A nuclear war between Russia and the United States, even after the arsenal reductions planned under New START, could produce a nuclear winter. Hence, an attack by either side could be suicidal, resulting in self assured destruction. Even a 'small' nuclear war between India and Pakistan, with each country detonating 50 Hiroshima-size atom bombs--only about 0.03 percent of the global nuclear arsenal's explosive power--as air bursts in urban areas, could produce so much smoke that temperatures would fall below those of the Little Ice Age of the fourteenth to nineteenth centuries, shortening the growing season around the world and threatening the global food supply. Furthermore, there would be massive ozone depletion, allowing more ultraviolet radiation to reach Earth's surface. Recent studies predict that agricultural production in parts of the United States and China would decline by about 20 percent for four years, and by 10 percent for a decade.” 14. A conflagration involving USA/NATO forces and those of Russian federation would most likely cause the deaths of most/nearly all/all humans (and severely impact/extinguish other species)

### Econ

#### Growth causes extinction via climate change, aging crisis, food and water wars, and global inequality—try or die for de-development

Gagulina 21 (Natalya Gagulina, Institute for Regional Economic Studies Russian Academy of Sciences Leading researcher, Artur Budagov, 2State University of Aerospace Instrumentation, Director of the Institute of Enterprinership Technologies, Elena Yanova, ITMO University, Faculty of Technological Management and Innovations, Department of Economics and Strategic Management, “Global Challenges of the Modern Paradigm of Economic Development,” SHS Web of Conferences 92 2021 NL)

1 Introduction Comprehension of the global problems at the beginning of the third millennium prompts us to take new approach to assessing the development of modern civilization, and sometimes to question the inviolability of values formed over centuries. For more than three centuries, the development of the world’s leading countries has been based on the paradigm, according to which realization of human creative potential occurs through the transformation of world and nature, and then society. Continuous growth of production and improvement of the human living standards, provided by the modern paradigm of development, are based on the ideas of progress, democracy, freedom and personal initiative. The flip side of the coin is exacerbation of key contradictions generated by the current paradigm of economic development: between wealth and poverty, liberal social practices and government guarantees, economic growth and the resource potential of nature. 2 Economic Development Paradigm Methods The progressive development of mankind within the framework of accepted scientific paradigm is continuous process of improving the laws, conditions of life, social reproduction, art, science, values. One of the most important results of formation of the modern development paradigm is to recreate the world general scientific picture as an integral system of scientific ideas about nature, man and society [1]. The important role in this is played by the rapid convergence of methodology of natural science and humanitarian knowledge. Thus, the ideas of irreversibility and variability in decision-making, the variety of directions for development of complex systems at bifurcation points and many other ideas that have been developed in synergetics are becoming more and more important for the humanities. The change in the place and role of man in the representation of most self-developing systems became manifestation of the principles of global evolutionism in the scientific paradigm of development and contributed to even greater dissemination of its ideas both in the scientific knowledge space and in the modern civilization space. The dominance of global evolutionism principles in the development paradigm has determined its influence on cultural values on the scale of the entire world economy. Besides convergence of the methodology of natural science and humanitarian knowledge, prerequisites are created for the convergence of the main, at first glance, diametrically opposed models of development of the modern East and West countries, which the main features are given in Table 1. Containing the human mind progress history, the modern paradigm of economic development has formed the basic laws, the laws of emergence and development of social relationships at all levels for many years to come. The manifestation of global evolutionism principles in the modern paradigm of economic development is becoming the important factor in cross-cultural interaction between East and West in connection with overarching significance of globalization, liberalization and informatization. Globalization has become tool for formation of world markets for goods, labour and capital, has expanded the information space to planetary scale. Liberalization, pushing the boundaries of private initiative in the implementation of economic activity, stimulated investment and entrepreneurship, created conditions for the effective use of information technologies. Informatization has created new capital-intensive and rapidly growing markets for infocommunication technologies and mass media. Perhaps the most significant result of the influence of these factors in formation of the cultural space at the turn of the XX-XXI centuries was the rooting and spread of the consumer society model on global scale, closed at consumption as a way of life. First of all, this was facilitated by new opportunities for standardizing the way of life, consciousness and behaviour, education, in increasing the role of supranational structures and transnational corporations, opened under the influence of globalization. The economy of consumer society is based on the principle of individual consumption, supported by system of attitudes and values that often ignore the laws of morality. Rapidly developing, dynamic and aggressive economy with its innovative guidelines and pronounced individualism of free personality, with active transformative vector in relation to the natural and social world, has had a huge impact on the entire social structure, starting with forms of human behaviour and social communication and ending with the rationalization of thinking in the whole [2,3]. The consumer economy does not encourage passivity and frugality, because they are accompanied by loss of consumer ability. Economic choice based on real human needs is replaced by choice dictated by the consumer society structure and the corresponding abstract values. Global scale result: overproduction and excessive consumption, accumulation of production and consumption wastes, anthropogenic pollution of atmosphere and water resources, energy overloads, etc. The processes generated by globalization are closely related to the tightening of competition in the world market for control over natural resources and information space through the use of the latest technologies. Market relations include natural resources that were previously outside the competition [4]. The problems of preserving the natural environment and ecology associated with degradation, and sometimes destruction of the environment of human life, are ignored. Social connections and relationships are increasingly falling into the sphere of private interests. Common human values are being levelled, creating the basis of morality, humanity and social justice. The influx of cheap labour into the labour market of prosperous countries complicates interethnic relations [5,6]. The influence of psychological shock of globalization processes creates the fertile ground for nationalism outbursts. Currently, the internationalization of all key problems is taking place against the background of globalization, liberalization and informatization: from interethnic and interconfessional conflicts to security problems [7,8]. This leads to the question of the crisis of the modern paradigm of economic development. 3 Results: Economic Development Paradigm Crisis The modern paradigm of economic development is continuation of the general development paradigm formed by the centuries-old history of scientific discoveries and achievements. At the present stage, the great influence on the general development paradigm, generally, and on the economic development paradigm, particularly, was exerted by convergence of methodology of natural science and humanitarian knowledge, exchange of attitudes of the current paradigm both within the natural science segment and in the field of natural sciences and social sciences and humanities. The combined application of principles of evolutionary and systemic approaches in the paradigm of economic development not only opened up new opportunities in describing complex self-regulating and self-developing systems, the search for approaches to managing such systems, but also identified problems that called into question the viability of paradigm itself. The aggravation of crisis situations in the economic, financial, socio-political, environmental and socio-spiritual spheres of the modern society life makes us take a new approach to understanding the modern paradigm of economic development. Achieving the better quality of life within the accepted paradigm of economic development seems to be difficult due to the problem of dominance of interests of subjects whose sources of income are non-renewable resources, harmful industries and outdated technologies. They not only stand in the way of progress, but also contribute to the emergence of such social risks as the loss of jobs, cuts in investment programs, reduction in tax payments to budgets of various levels, etc. Regarding the complication of classical contradictions and problems of the economy, some market instruments, mechanisms, institutions become poorly managed, stochastic, and acquire a spontaneous character. The existing classical contradictions are supplemented by new ones (Figure 1). Particularly, the classical contradiction between labour and capital was supplemented by contradictions between various forms of capital, rapidly developing science-intensive technologies of material production and archaic forms of capital reproduction, etc. At the international level, the contradiction between the world market globalization process and the national interests of the participating countries is growing [9], the crisis has emerged in the post-war system of international law and international organizations. A series of problematic situations that have no explanation by modern science and crises that arise in vital spheres of the economy indicate a crisis of the very economic development paradigm. At the same time, problems and challenges that are urgent for all countries of the world deserve special attention. 3.1 Global Problems and Challenges The term "global problems" began to be used in scientific literature in connection with concerns about population growth, environmental pollution, depletion of natural resources, etc., that is, almost simultaneously with the first models of J. Forrester, D. Meadows, and others. Understanding global problems as a set of social, natural-resource and socio-cultural problems, as the progressive development and preservation of civilization depends on the attitude towards them and which require the united efforts of all mankind for their resolution, we will group them (Figure 2). Among the problems of humanitarian nature are the problems of eliminating poverty, exploitation and other forms of social inequality, problems of education, health care, planning and regulation of the life level and quality. Natural resource problems include a wide range of problems caused not only by the objective limited natural resource potential of the planet, but also by the alarmingly high rates of its use. Comparing the growth rates of the planet's population and the rate of changes in the volumes of extraction of the main types of mineral raw materials, we see that the intensity of oil and gas consumption per capita is growing (Table 2). Problems that cannot be solved without revising international relations owe their origin to the loss of functionality by some codes of international law and international organizations. The close analysis of global problems, which are becoming more acute as the modern paradigm of economic development takes root, enable singling out the following ones from them: Climatic, ecological and biological aspects of the problem of human survival. The problem of preserving the individual integrity in the context of the disintegration of the traditional structures of transmission from generation to generation of such eternal global values as the value of labour, the living control of society over moral behaviour, etc. The inclusion of person simultaneously in many systems of social relations leads to personality splitting and stress. The problem of communicative unity of mankind and the need to resolve conflicts without the use of force. For successful dialogue focused on consent, tolerance, pluralism of opinions, new criteria and approaches are needed, and the use of double standards is unacceptable. The exacerbation of existing or the emergence of new global problems due to failures, which is adopted the economic development paradigm as a basis, produces global challenges (Figure 3). Challenges are consequence of the emergence of new factors in world development that disrupt the stability of the normal functioning of reproduction mechanisms, intercultural relations, etc. Thus, the acceleration of historical time is facilitated by a constant reduction in the life cycles of goods, services, infrastructures and ways, endless and rapid change of new methods of labour and technologies in the context of accelerating the period of implementation of scientific discoveries. This complicates the adaptation of people to changes in the technological, social and cultural environment. Not having time to fully realize the benefits of change, to take advantage of them, people are faced with new, more and more technically complex aspects of life. The global demographic imbalance, which manifests itself in the population structure change, the birth rate decrease and the indigenous population decline in developed countries, the general aging of the world's population, including the spread of the demographic deficit to some countries in Asia and South America, contributes to the emergence of migration waves, increases economic instability. The problem of shortage of food and fresh water in the world is caused not only by the fact of limited natural resources, but also by their irrational use [11]. Economic inequality, uneven distribution of food in the world and climate change have led to the fact that more than 1 billion people in underdeveloped countries are undernourished, and between 500 million and 1 billion people go hungry. The crisis of values, provoked by the predominance of the principles of global evolutionism in the development paradigm, threatens all further development of mankind. The problems and challenges associated with the new technological reality deserve special attention. 3.2 Digital Economy Problems and Challenges The contours of new technological reality in the context of global issues have emerged due to globalization, liberalization and informatization as the leading features of the modern paradigm of economic development. The emergence of the main innovations of new technological reality in form of information and telecommunication technologies, digital communication networks and virtual reality put on different scales the advantages and disadvantages of the digital economy, selectively presented in Figure 4. Digitalization satellites on global scale are the Internet of Things and smart cities, open source public access platforms, cloud information technologies, dynamic capitalization of Internet business and info-business, increase in the volume of financial assets and the emergence of their new forms (digital assets), predictive software events providing, increasing the influence of "new media" and much more [12-14]. The formation of information space covering the whole world has become innovative form of globalization, which is accompanied by its inherent problems. In our opinion, the following can be attributed to the global challenges of the digital economy: Accelerated virtualization of the economy associated with the phenomenon of virtual reality. According to M. Poster, the problematization of reality, which so far only occurs in the field of modern telecommunications (games, teleconferences, etc.), casts doubt on the validity, exclusivity and conventional evidence of "ordinary" time, space and identity. Information superhighways and virtual reality, which have not yet become common cultural practices, have enormous potential for creating such a subject that exists only into interactive environment. Examples of large-scale transformation processes caused by many years of virtualization can be observed in the economy financial sector [15-17]. b) The spontaneous reduction of jobs in the labour market and disappearance of occupations that were widespread and in demand until recently: teachers, shop assistants, cashiers, postmen, tourism managers, notaries, call centre operators, packers, accountants, etc. The number of "useless people" includes not only the listed professions "from the risk zone", but also older age categories, which find it more difficult to adapt to innovative technological changes. c) Computerization of the decision-making process at different levels, leading to the "cybernation" of the subject of control through the use of supercomputers. The inability of the subject of management to make adequate decisions about the most complex processes in social and technical systems in real time has led to the management crisis. Computer models, which incorporate more than a thousand mathematical equations and huge amounts of various kinds of data, enable to predict the types of behaviour of people in various situations and, in a time frame commensurate with the time for solving problems, develop ready-made solutions. d) The gradual decrease in the ability of individuals to make decisions due to formation of stereotype to overcome the limitation of individual cognitive abilities by tools of info communication technologies. The list of global challenges of the digital economy presented by us is very general, it can be supplemented and expanded taking into account the ongoing changes. 4 Discussions Global actions in response to global challenges are foreseen in almost all spheres of human life, which are usually associated with the human welfare and well-being. The list of global actions has more than half a century history and includes the UN Conference "Man and the Environment" (1972), the World Conservation Strategy (1980), the International Commission on Environment and Development Paper (1983), UN Conference on Environment and Development (COSR-92), Earth Summit +5, Millennium Declaration - 2000, Earth Summit - 2002, RIO + 20, Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), developed and adopted by the UN for the period up to 2030, and a number of other equally important international events. It should be noted that the coordination of state policies in the field of legal regulation of information space, ecology, fight against terrorism, drug trafficking and crime also contributes to the development and implementation of global actions in response to global problems and challenges. At the same time, it can be argued that the crisis state of the modern paradigm of economic development is accompanied by a conflict of archaic and newest forms of economic reality, which "explode" it from the inside (Figure 5). The emergence of the newest forms of economic reality in the context of the acceleration of historical time creates the risk of delay in global actions in response to global challenges. This is especially true of the challenges associated with the economic space digitalization. 5 Conclusion The stability of adopted paradigm of economic development in the context of global challenges is under threat, therefore, a new look at the relationship "global challenges - global actions" is needed. The global problems and challenges we have outlined in the modern economic development paradigm force us to start searching for a new biocompatible and biocentric paradigm aimed at harmoniously solving the problems of life support, which is accompanied by revision of views on consumption and fair distribution, attitude to the living environment and nature, life values and dominant needs. The economic development paradigm change presupposes the initial condition change for existence of socio-ecological-economic system, which will radically affect the subsequent evolution of the system and the entire organizational structure of society. In this case, it seems appropriate, in our opinion, to use the quality economics methodology, which is distinguished by interdisciplinary and comprehensive scientific approach [18,19]. The economy of quality has features that make it possible to correlate it with a new, synergetic, paradigm for development of modern scientific knowledge. It is an integral part of all scientific areas, focusing on the need to take into account the quality features studied in a given aspect.

#### Corona sent shockwaves throughout the global economy and makes collapse inevitable—we need a new system to ensure survival

Tooze, 20

(Adam, history professor and director of the European Institute at Columbia University "The Normal Economy Is Never Coming Back," April 9 <https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/04/09/unemployment-coronavirus-pandemic-normal-economy-is-never-coming-back/> NL)

As the coronavirus lockdown began, the first impulse was to search for historical analogies—1914, 1929, 1941? As the weeks have ground on, what has come ever more to the fore is the historical novelty of the shock that we are living through. The economy is currently in something akin to free fall. If it were to continue to contract at its current pace, 12 months from now GDP would be [one-third lower](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-goldman/goldman-sachs-slashes-us-gdp-estimate-further-idUSKBN21I235) than at the beginning of 2020. That is a rate of shrinkage four times faster than during the Great Depression of the 1930s. There has never been a crash landing like this before. There is something new under the sun. And it is horrifying. As recently as five weeks ago, at the beginning of March, U.S. unemployment was at record lows. By the end of March, it had surged to somewhere around 13 percent. That is the highest number recorded since World War II. We don’t know the precise figure because our system of unemployment registration was not built to track an increase at this speed. On successive Thursdays, the number of those making initial filings for unemployment insurance has surged first to 3.3 million, then 6.6 million, and now by another 6.6 million. At the current rate, as the economist Justin Wolfers [pointed out](https://www.nytimes.com/2020/04/03/upshot/coronavirus-jobless-rate-great-depression.html) in the New York Times, U.S. unemployment is rising at nearly 0.5 percent per day. It is no longer unimaginable that the overall unemployment rate could reach 30 percent by the summer. Thursday’s news confirms that the Western economies face a far deeper and more savage economic shock than they have ever previously experienced. Regular business cycles generally start with the more volatile sectors of the economy—real estate and construction, for instance, or heavy engineering that depends on business investment—or sectors that are subject to global competition, such as the motor vehicles industry. In total, those sectors employ less than a quarter of the workforce. The concentrated downturn in those sectors transmits to the rest of the economy as a muffled shock. The coronavirus lockdown directly affects services—retail, real estate, education, entertainment, restaurants—where 80 percent of Americans work today. Thus the result is immediate and catastrophic. In sectors like retail, which has recently come under fierce pressure from online competition, the temporary lockdown may prove to be terminal. In many cases, the stores that shut down in early March will not reopen. The jobs will be permanently lost. Millions of Americans and their families are facing catastrophe. The shock is not confined to the United States. Many European economies cushion the effects of a downturn by subsidizing short-time working. This will moderate the surge in unemployment. But the collapse in economic activity cannot be disguised. The north of Italy is not just a luxurious tourist destination. It [accounts](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-03-31/nightmare-haunting-euro-s-founders-may-now-be-reality-with-italy) for 50 percent of Italian GDP. Germany’s GDP is predicted to fall by more than that of the United States, dragged down by its dependence on exports. The latest set of [forecasts](https://www.ft.com/content/b427db58-77e6-11ea-af44-daa3def9ae03) from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development are apocalyptic across the board. Hardest hit of all may be Japan, even though the virus has had a moderate impact there. In rich countries, we can at least attempt to make estimates of the damage. China was the first to initiate shutdowns on Jan. 23. The latest official figures show China’s unemployment at 6.2 percent, the highest number since records began in the 1990s, when the Chinese Communist Party reluctantly admitted joblessness was not a problem confined to the capitalist world. But that figure is clearly a gross understatement of the crisis in China. Unofficially, perhaps as many as [205 million migrant workers](https://www.scmp.com/economy/china-economy/article/3078251/coronavirus-chinas-unemployment-crisis-mounts-nobody-knows) were furloughed, more than a quarter of the Chinese workforce. How one goes about counting the damage to the Indian economy from Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s abrupt 21-day shutdown is anyone’s guess. Of India’s workforce of 471 million, only 19 percent are covered by social security, two-thirds have no formal employment contract, and at least [100 million](https://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/coronavirus-lockdown-headed-home-as-migrants-have-no-room-to-isolate-120032501678_1.html) are migrant workers. Many of them have been sent in headlong flight back to their villages. There has been nothing like it since partition in 1947. The economic fallout from these immense human dramas defies calculation. We are left with the humdrum but no less remarkable statistic that this year, for the first time since reasonably reliable records of GDP began to be computed after World War II, the emerging market economies will contract. An entire model of global economic development has been brought skidding to a halt. An entire model of global economic development has been brought skidding to a halt. This collapse is not the result of a financial crisis. It is not even the direct result of the pandemic. The collapse is the result of a deliberate policy choice, which is itself a radical novelty. It is easier, it turns out, to stop an economy than it is to stimulate it. But the efforts that are being made to cushion the effects are themselves historically unprecedented. In the United States, the congressional stimulus package agreed within days of the shutdown is by far the largest in U.S. peacetime history. Across the world, there has been a move to open the purse strings. Fiscally conservative Germany has declared an emergency and removed its limits on public debt. Altogether, we are witnessing the largest combined fiscal effort launched since World War II. Its effects will make themselves felt in weeks and months to come. It is already clear that the first round may not be enough. An even more urgent task is to prevent the slowdown from turning into an immense financial crisis. It is commonly said that the U.S. Federal Reserve under Chairman Jerome Powell is following the 2008 playbook. This is true. Day by day, it spawns new programs to support every corner of the financial market. But what is different is the scale of the Fed’s interventions. To counter the epic shock of the shutdown, it has mobilized an immense wave of liquidity. In late March, the Fed was buying assets at a rate of $90 billion per day. This is more per day than Ben Bernanke’s Fed purchased most months. Every single second, the Fed was swapping almost a million dollars’ worth of Treasurys and mortgage-backed securities for cash. On the morning of April 9, at the same moment that the latest horrifying unemployment number was released, the Fed announced that it was launching an additional $2.3 trillion in asset purchases. This huge and immediate counterbalancing action has so far prevented an immediate global financial meltdown, but we now face a protracted period in which falling consumption and investment drive further contraction. Seventy-three percent of American households report having [suffered](https://www.ft.com/content/7a7233a3-160a-41be-8d63-40f64e041e57) a loss of income in March. For many, that loss is catastrophic, tipping them into acute need, default, and bankruptcy. Delinquencies on consumer debt will no doubt surge, leading to sustained damage to the financial system. Discretionary expenditure will be deferred. Petrol consumption in Europe has [fallen](https://www.ft.com/content/4c59fd16-6020-4798-b8f1-5df686bbd97a) by 88 percent. The market for automobiles is stone dead. Auto manufacturers across Europe and Asia are sitting on giant lots of unsold vehicles. The longer we sustain the lockdown, the deeper the scarring to the economy and the slower the recovery. In China, regular economic activity is inching back. But given the risk of second- and third-wave outbreaks, no one has any idea how far and fast the resumption of normal life can safely go. It seems likely, barring a dramatic medical breakthrough, that movement restrictions will need to stay in place to manage the unevenness of containment. A protracted and halting recovery seems far more likely at this point than a vigorous V-shaped bounce back. And even once current production and employment have restarted, we will be dealing with the financial hangover for years to come. The argument over fiscal policy is rarely engaged in the heat of the moment. In a crisis, it is easy to agree to spend money. But that fight is coming. We are engaged in the largest-ever surge in public debt in peacetime. Right now we are parking that debt on the balance sheet of central banks. Those central banks can also hold the interest rate low, which means that the debt service will not be exorbitant. But that defers the question of what to do with them. To the conventional mind debt must be eventually repaid through surpluses History suggests, however, there are also more radical alternatives. One would be a burst of inflation, though how that would be engineered given prevailing economic conditions is not obvious. Another would be a debt jubilee, a polite name for a public default (which would not be as drastic as it sounds if it affects the debts held on the account of the central bank). Some have [suggested](https://voxeu.org/article/fight-covid-pandemic-policymakers-must-move-fast-and-break-taboos#.Xos1vsVFjSp.twitter) it would be simpler for the central banks to cut out the business of buying debt issued by the government and instead simply to credit governments with a gigantic cash balance. And on 9 April that is exactly what the Bank of England [announced](https://www.ft.com/content/664c575b-0f54-44e5-ab78-2fd30ef213cb) it would be doing. For all intents and purposes, this means the central bank is simply printing money. That this is even being considered, and under a conservative government, is a measure of how extreme the situation is. It is also symptomatic that, rather than howls of outrage and immediate panic selling, the Bank of England’s decision has so far produced little more than a shrug from financial markets. They are under few illusions about the acrobatics that all the central banks are performing. This resigned attitude is helpful from the point of view of crisis-fighting. But do not expect the calm to last. When the lid comes off, politics will resume and so will the arguments about “debt burdens” and “sustainability.” When the lid comes off, politics will resume and so will the arguments about “debt burdens” and “sustainability.” And given the scale of the liabilities that have already been accumulated, we should expect it to get ugly.

#### Transition is possible in a post-coronavirus world—there’s a sea change towards sustainability

Cohen, 20

(Maurie, PhD from the University of Pennsylvania, Professor of Sustainability Studies at the New Jersey Institute of Technology, Editor of Sustainability: Science, Practice, and Policy, Associate Editor of Environmental Innovation and Sustainability Transitions, and co-coordinator of the Future Earth Knowledge-Action Network on Systems of Sustainable Consumption and Production, “Does the COVID-19 outbreak mark the onset of a sustainable consumption transition?,” Sustainability: Science, Practice and Policy Vol 16 No 1 pg 1-3 NL)

For nearly 30 years, since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, sustainability proponents have sought in various ways to foster a “sustainable consumption transition.” For instance, Chapter Four of Agenda 21 forthrightly observes that “[w]hile poverty results in certain kinds of environmental stress, the major cause of the continued deterioration of the global environment is the unsustainable pattern of consumption and production, particularly in industrialized countries, which is a matter of grave concern, aggravating poverty and imbalances” (United Nation 1992; see also Cohen 2001). During the following decades, numerous governments, multilateral organizations, scientific societies, and others developed carefully detailed plans outlining how to facilitate less resource intensive forms of consumption and to ensure prosperity without transgressing planetary boundaries (Royal Society of London and the United States National Academy of Sciences 1997; Nash 2009; Scholl et al. 2010). For instance, in 1998 the United Nations Development Program described the circumstances of the affluent nations as a “runaway consumption train” (UNDP 1998). Consistent with this characterization, the Nordic Council, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, the European Commission, the Royal Society of London, and the United States National Academy of Sciences highlighted the challenges of designing more sustainable means of consumption and production. More recently, given the close correspondence between consumption practices and greenhouse-gas emissions, the Paris Climate Agreement appropriately recognized, “sustainable patterns of consumption and production … play an important role in addressing climate change” (United Nations 2015; refer also to Alfredsson et al. 2018). The issue of sustainable consumption has evolved on the international policy agenda since the Rio Conference through three loosely demarcated phases. First, the 1990s were largely marked by an emphasis on the promotion of cleaner and more efficient processes for manufacturing consumer goods and their intermediary inputs (Hertwich 2005). Second, during the early 2000s attention shifted to “greener” forms of household provisioning exemplified by strategies devoted to educating consumers, designing eco-labels on product packages, and “nudging” shoppers to make responsible choices (Matthias, Mont, and Heiskanen 2016; Sunstein 2015). Finally, in the years since the onset of the global financial crisis in 2008, we have witnessed growing appreciation of the need for systemic change of the social and institutional arrangements that perpetuate contemporary consumerist lifestyles—in short, to achieve absolute reductions in consumptive throughput (Cohen 2019; Foden et al. 2019; see also Akenji et al. 2016). Against this background, we are now struggling to anticipate the impacts of COVID-19. Major financial markets are gyrating and international supply chains are in turmoil, prompting managers to canvass about to find local sources of fabricated materials to maintain industrial production. Tourism is grinding to a halt as travelers cancel trips, airlines suspend flights, and hotels become increasingly vacant. Sporting events, concerts, theatrical performances, museum exhibitions, and other public showcases are being postponed. Growing numbers of companies are encouraging employees to take time off from work and contemplating the imposition of compelled furloughs. Economic forecasters are warning that gross domestic product for many countries will contract, perhaps very significantly, in coming months. While the present situation is being treated as an emergent economic crisis, it merits acknowledging that sustainability scientists and policy makers have implicitly been seeking to achieve over the past decade broadly similar objectives—albeit with greater political subtlety and awareness for adverse societal consequences—in the form of a sustainable consumption transition (see, e.g. O’Rourke and Lollo 2015; Valentine, Ruwet, and Bauler 2015; Røpke 2015; Welch and Southerton 2018).1 It merits recognizing that COVID-19 is simultaneously a public health emergency and a real-time experiment in downsizing the consumer economy. Social scientists have long recognized that disasters, especially when the scale of their tragic consequences emerges with modest but steady pace, have a tendency to catalyze processes of social change. For instance, the renowned Russian-American sociologist Pitirim Sorokin observed in 1942 that society “is never the same as the one that existed before the calamity. For good or ill, calamities are unquestionably the supreme disruptors and transformers of social organization and institutions” (Sorokin 1942). Although current circumstances pose unique challenges to foretelling the future, it is notable that medical authorities are now making comparisons to the Spanish flu of 1918 and 1919 that internationally resulted in the death of 50 million people (Chen et al. 2020; Lambert 2020). While it is extremely premature to suggest that the current public health emergency will reach this alarming level, political regimes in a number of the most severely affected countries are coming under profound strain due to intensifying anxiety about the coronavirus epidemic. With respect to supply chains, at least some of the stopgap measures being implemented to get through the next few weeks or months will become locked in on a longer-term basis. Consumers are stockpiling nonperishable food and other supplies and public authorities have not disclaimed the eventual need for rationing and other consumption controls. A practical outcome is that we are liable to see customarily face-to face activities move to virtual platforms as users become more acclimated with online interfaces for conducting business, delivering educational programing, and engaging in a widening range of social activities. Experience in China to date suggests that extended periods of quarantine create novel forms of consumer demand as people cope with the exigencies of isolation. The more protracted the threat of contagion proves to be, the further engrained and resistant to reversal these adaptive responses will become. As is frequently the case in the aftermath of disasters, we will quickly forget “how things used to be.” Nonetheless, as soon as circumstances allow, there will be vigorous promotional efforts encouraging us to revert to “normal.” We should expect a relentless stream of inducements from governments and companies encouraging consumers to get out of the house and back on the bandwagon. Central banks are already signaling a willingness to lower interest rates—already in negative territory in some countries—as far as necessary to make this happen. Many individuals are likely, at least initially, to respond positively to these appeals, but we should not be surprised in due course to discover that other predilections have supplanted once-familiar practices. While it may seem both fanciful and insolent, COVID-19 is an opportunity to reduce over the longer term the prevalence of lifestyles premised on large volumes of energy and material throughput. At the same time, imperatives for social distancing to lower the risk of community transmission will regrettably reinforce commitments to individualized rather than public and shared modes of consumption. Despite what appears to be an increasingly dire public health emergency, policy makers should work to ensure that the coronavirus outbreak contributes to a sustainable consumption transition. This would be one way to offset some of the unfortunate suffering and disruption caused by this event.

#### Vote neg to allow the system to collapse—a degrowth paradigm is possible from within the shell of the current system—any evidence to the contrary is from neoliberal hacks

Alexander, 20

(Samuel is a lecturer with the Office for Environmental Programs, University of Melbourne, Melbourne, VIC, Australia. He is also a research fellow with the Melbourne Sustainable Society Institute, Postcapitalism by design not disaster. The Ecological Citizen 3(Suppl B): 13–21. NL)

This article examines how to proactively design the end of capitalism rather than simply waiting for its collapse. It argues that capitalism is unable to resolve the emerging crises, for capitalism cannot function without economic growth, yet for ecological reasons economic growth cannot continue. However, there is a coherent alternative political economy – degrowth – and the emergence of various grassroots alternatives that, suitably scaled up, could help to form a post-capitalist economy. But our culture is not yet ready to embrace degrowth, with consumer affluence and techno-optimism still at the heart of mainstream conceptions of the ‘good life’. Nonetheless, it is important to keep alive these ideas of what an ecocentric, post-capitalist economy could look like, for in a crisis what today seems impossible or implausible can suddenly become possible and even probable. This article addresses the subject of post-capitalist political economy. That is an intimidating topic, especially since transcending capitalism will be a monumental task. Capitalism certainly is not going to lie down like a lamb at the polite request of left-leaning environmentalists. What this means is that sustainability and justice advocates with radical visions of societal futures need to think very carefully about the question of strategy. More specifically, we must confront the question of where and how to invest our time, energy and resources, if we genuinely seek a fundamentally different type of economic system ‘beyond capitalism.’1 Attempting to save capitalism through so-called ‘green growth’ is increasingly recognized as little more than neoliberal ideology, the function of which is to entrench the status quo while pretending to change (Smith, 2016; Hickel and Kallis, 2019). And yet hopes for an imminent proletarian uprising that abolishes capitalism and erects an eco-socialist utopia governed by an enlightened centralized state seems equally misconceived. This paucity of hope has led critical theorist Frederic Jameson (2003) to note that it is now easier to imagine the end of the world than the end of capitalism, although perhaps that says more about a sterility of contemporary political imagination than it does about our future. This exploratory article will share some thoughts on what might come after capitalism and how we might manage and drive this transition by design rather than disaster. I say by design not disaster, hinting at a certain optimism, however it will become clear that there is, in fact, an underlying pessimism that shapes my perspective – a pessimism which some readers might share. Or, perhaps rather than ‘pessimism,’ a better term to describe my orientation might be ‘apocaloptimism.’ This neologism can be defined as the view that ‘everything is going to hell but that things might still turn out okay.’ While in truth I am neither apocalyptic nor optimistic, this term does evoke something of the grounded but cautious hope that will inform my analysis. It will be argued that deepening crisis in the current system is probably unavoidable now; for a range of reasons, our time for a smooth transition may have passed. Nevertheless, I certainly will not use that to justify inaction or despair; quite the opposite. Indeed, the instability created by systemic crisis may be one of the prerequisites for deep societal change – unsettling though that is to admit. Our challenge will be to turn deepening crises, as they emerge, into opportunities to create something other than capitalism: a post-capitalist society that better accords with our shared ideals for social justice, ecological viability and human flourishing. If capitalism is coming to an end in coming years or decades as it collides with various ecological and financial limits, we can ask ourselves: how can we proactively design the end of capitalism rather than wait for its collapse? Or even, if necessary, how can we design the collapse of capitalism in ways that makes the best of a bad situation? These are the questions of an apocaloptimist. Over the last ten years I have been part of a movement advocating for a ‘degrowth’ process of planned economic contraction (Alexander, 2009, 2015a, 2015b; Alexander and Gleeson, 2019). In what follows I am going to use this alternative economic paradigm to frame and analyse the political economy of post-capitalism. I don’t expect anyone to like the terminology of degrowth – I know very well it is an ugly term – and it may never be the banner under which a social or political movement marches. But as a slogan for justice and sustainability, I maintain that degrowth captures an essential insight: it directly evokes, more clearly than any other term, the need for planned contraction of the energy and resource demands of overgrown or ‘developed’ economies. That is an agenda that mainstream environmental and social discourse refuses to acknowledge, because significant contraction of energy and resource demands is incompatible with ongoing growth in GDP. This growth fetish must be overcome (Hickel and Kallis, 2019). The following sections offer some thoughts on why the degrowth paradigm signifies the most coherent political economy for a post-capitalist society and how such a transition might unfold. I will also highlight the role grassroots social movements and alternative economic experiments may need to play prefiguring degrowth economies and creating the cultural conditions for a politics and macroeconomics of degrowth to emerge. Prerequisites for a degrowth transition Recently the Danish political economist Hubert Buch-Hansen (2018) published a paper which outlined a conceptual framework that is useful for thinking about how paradigm shifts in political economy occur. He argues that there are four main prerequisites. There must be: 1 a crisis or series of crises that cannot be resolved within the existing political economy; 2 a coherent alternative political project; 3 a comprehensive coalition of social forces attempting to produce the alternative paradigm through political struggle and social activism; 4 broad-based cultural consent – even passive consent – for the new paradigm. I am going to adopt this framework, add my own analytical flesh to its theoretical bones, and use it to discuss the question of a degrowth transition to a post-capitalist society. I hope this provides a useful and provocative broad-ranging analysis to get this special issue underway, although I am sure I will raise more questions than I answer. Capitalism is not in crisis – capitalism is the crisis The first prerequisite, then, for a paradigm shift in the existing political economy is crisis – but not just any crisis. It must be a crisis or series of crises in the system that the system itself cannot resolve. There are many reasons to think this prerequisite is met. Growth economics is sometimes called the ‘ideology of the cancer cell,’ and this provocative metaphor neatly summarizes the fatal anomaly in capitalism, namely, that on the one hand, it must keep growing for stability, and, on the other hand, for various ecological and financial reasons, it simply cannot keep growing. Like a chorus of others, I do not believe capitalism can resolve this fundamental contradiction, which is creating conditions for a new, postcapitalist paradigm to replace it. Today, a range of theorists (from radical reformers, to eco-anarchists and eco-socialists) argue that degrowth is a necessary feature of any coherent macroeconomic alternative (Kallis et al., 2018). The clearest way to understand the multidimensional crisis of capitalism is to grasp the so-called ‘limits to growth’ predicament, which I will now review very briefly, and this will also help frame and define the post-capitalist alternative of degrowth. Limits to growth: A restatement By a wide range of indicators, the global economy is now exceeding the sustainable carrying capacity of the planet. Climate change is perhaps the most prominent ecological transgression, but there is also biodiversity loss, resource depletion, pollution, deforestation, and a long list of other deeply unsustainable impacts. In the haunting words of James Lovelock (2010), the face of Gaia is vanishing. It is important to understand the extent of ecological overshoot, because responding appropriately to the global predicament depends on a clear understanding of our situation. The ecological footprint analysis indicates that humanity would need 1.7 planets if the existing global economy could be sustained over the long term (Global Footprint Network, 2019). If the United States or Australian way of life were globalized to the world’s population, humanity would need four or five planets worth of biocapacity, implying a need to reduce our ‘first world’ impacts by 75% or more. Despite the global economy being in this state of ecological overshoot, it is also known that billions of people on the planet are, by any humane standard, underconsuming (Hickel, 2017). If these people are to raise their living standards to some dignified level of material sufficiency, as they have every right to do, it is likely that this will place further burdens on already overburdened ecosystems. To make matters more challenging still, there are now 7.7 billion people on Earth, increasing by about 200,000 people everyday. Recent projections from the United Nations suggest we are heading for around 9.7 billion by mid-century and 11 billion by 2100. All this calls radically into question the legitimacy of continuous economic expansion and rising material living standards in rich nations. And yet, despite the fact that humanity is already making grossly unsustainable demands on a finite biosphere, all nations on the planet – including or especially the richest nations – are seeking to grow their economies without apparent limit. It is assumed that a larger economy is always better; that ongoing growth is necessary for ‘progress.’ One does not have to be a sophisticated thinker to see that this is a recipe for ecological disaster, although alarmingly this point seems to be lost on almost all politicians and most economists. Capitalism cannot resolve its ecological contradictions In theory, there are two broad ways to respond to the limits to growth predicament within capitalism. The first is to try to create a form of capitalism that deliberately stops growing and actually voluntarily contracts in order to operate within sustainable limits. The problem here is that there are various growth imperatives built into the structure of capitalism, which makes the notion of ‘degrowth capitalism’ a contradiction in terms (to be distinguished of course from capitalism in recession, which is unplanned economic contraction). Therefore, the only other means of resolving the limits to growth predicament within capitalism is to radically decouple economic activity from environmental impact through what is called ‘green growth.’ The hope here is that technological innovation, market mechanisms and efficiency improvements will reduce energy and resource demands even as economies continue to grow in terms of GDP. Nice in theory, perhaps, but what is happening is that the absolute reductions in energy and resource demands needed for sustainability are not occurring – certainly not to sufficient degrees – and as the global economy seeks ongoing growth, absolute decoupling gets harder and harder to achieve (Kallis, 2017; Hickel and Kallis, 2019). Efficiency without sufficiency is lost. This brings us to the most egregious flaw in growth economics, which is the apparent failure to understand the exponential function and its ecological implications. Post-growth economist Tim Jackson (2009) has shown that if the OECD nations grew their economies by a modest 2% over coming decades and by 2050 a global population of nine billion had achieved similar income per capita, the global economy would be fifteen times larger than it is today. It is obvious that ecological limits will not permit that scenario to eventuate. Even an economy twice as large as today’s economy would surely wreak ecological havoc. The critical point is that the degree of ‘decoupling’ required to make ongoing growth ‘sustainable’ is simply too great. So capitalism wants or needs what it cannot have: that is, limitless growth on a finite planet. This ecological predicament is the defining contradiction of capitalism in the 21st century, insofar as growth is now causing the problems that growth was supposed to be solving. This suggests that the first prerequisite of a paradigm shift in political economy is well and truly met: capitalism is facing a multi-dimensional crisis that it cannot resolve, and therefore, sooner or later, capitalism will come to an end. The question of our time, as stated in my introductory comments, is how to make the transition beyond capitalism by design rather than disaster. The crisis of ecological overshoot also provides insight into what any alternative must look like. Broadly speaking, the implications here are clear but radical: if the global economy is to operate within the sustainable carrying capacity of the planet, this requires (among other things) the richest nations to initiate a degrowth process of planned economic contraction, on the path to a ‘steady state’ economy of stable and sustainable biophysical throughput. Obviously, the poorest nations would also need to achieve some ‘steady state’ in time, but first their economic capacities must be developed in some appropriate form to ensure basic needs for all are met. However, the focus of this discussion is the wealthy nations. An alternative political project The second prerequisite for a paradigm shift in political economy – for a degrowth transition, in particular – is the existence of an alternative political project. This is not the forum to comprehensively defend this alternative political project, so I am just going to state it, or one version of it, in order to show that an alternative post-capitalist political project is beginning to take form. The following political agenda is, in my view, both coherent and attractive, but it is, all too obviously, disconnected from political ‘realism’ in developed nations (or anywhere) today. Of course, I would argue that this is an indictment of mainstream politics, rather than of degrowth. However, the political and social unpalatability of degrowth is a point to which I will return, because it has implications for the question of strategy. But as an exercise in political imagination, these policies could initiate a transition to a degrowth society. n Alternatives to GDP: Any political transition beyond capitalism requires transcending the GDP fetish (Hamilton, 2003) and establishing better and more nuanced ways to measure societal progress, such as the Genuine Progress Indicator (see Kubiszewski et al. [2013]). Post-growth measures of progress like this open up space for political parties to implement policy and institutional changes – including those which I am about to review – which would genuinely improve social wellbeing and enhance ecological conditions, even if these would not increase, and probably even decrease, GDP. n Diminishing resource caps: If the rich, overgrown economies are serious about moving toward a just and sustainable human inhabitation of Earth, then first, we must acknowledge that we are hugely over-consuming our fair share of global resources, and second, we must institute diminishing resource caps which put strict limits on national resource flows. Fortunately, this would incentivize the efficient use of resources and disincentivize waste, and lead to degrowth in ecological impacts. Eco-socialists would argue that reducing societal material and energy flows will require significant nationalization of key industries for stability during the planned contraction (e.g. Smith, 2016) whereas eco-anarchists would argue that a confederation of small self-governing communities would be the better path (e.g. Trainer, 2010). This debate is likely to continue (Alexander and Burdon, 2017) and it may be this controversy can only be resolved through practical experimentation not theory. n Reduced working hours (in the formal economy): One obvious implication of diminishing resource caps is that a lot less resource-intensive production and consumption would take place in a degrowth economy. This would almost certainly lead to reduced GDP. To avoid the unemployment that typically flows from declining GDP, a degrowth economy would reduce work in the formal economy and share available work amongst the working population. Financial security in a contracting economy could be maintained through policies such as a Universal Basic Income, Universal Basic Services or a Job Guarantee. n Rethink government spending: Currently, governments shape many of their policies and spend much of their money in order to promote economic growth. Under a degrowth paradigm, it follows that the ways government spend their funds would need to be fundamentally reconsidered. For example, fewer airports, roads, and military equipment; more bike lanes and public transport. How we spend our money is one way to vote for what exists in the world. Rethinking government spending would also need to go hand in hand with transformations in the systemic provision of basic services. For example, Cubans have better health on average than US citizens and yet spend an estimated 90% less on healthcare per capita (Hamblin, 2016). This suggests that there is ample room to provide for basic services in an affordable way while also making more public money available to fund other social projects (like a Universal Basic Income or renewable energy technologies). n Renewable energy transition: In anticipation of the foreseeable stagnation and eventual decline of fossil fuel supplies, and recognizing the grave dangers presented by climate change, a degrowth economy would divest from fossil fuels and invest in a renewable energy transition with the urgency of ‘war time’ mobilization. This will be much more affordable and technically feasible if energy demand across society is greatly reduced, and that is a key feature of a degrowth society (Alexander and Floyd, 2018). The energy transition needed cannot just involve ‘greening’ the supply of energy, it must also involve greatly reduced demand. This means anticipating and managing what David Holmgren calls ‘the energy descent future’ (Holmgren, 2018). n Banking and finance: Our systems of banking and finance currently have a growth imperative built into their structures. Any degrowth society would have to create systems that did not require growth for stability. Debt jubilees would probably be required, especially with respect to the poorest nations. These are particularly complex issues and the forces of opposition will be fierce. But the point is that any post-growth transition is going to require deep changes to the most fundamental financial institutions of capitalism. n Population policies: This is always controversial territory, especially in an age of Trump, but the environmental logic is compelling. As population grows, more resources are required to provide for the material conditions of human wellbeing. As Paul Ehrlich once said, “whatever problem you’re interested in, you’re not going to solve it unless you also solve the population problem.” I will not suggest specific policies here; the point is that we need to discuss this topic openly and with all the wisdom and compassion we can muster (e.g. Kuhleman, 2018). Population policy must be part of any coherent politics of sustainability in recognition that we live on a ‘full Earth.’ n Distributive justice: Last but not least, environmental concerns cannot be isolated from social justice concerns, both nationally and globally. The conventional path to poverty alleviation is via the strategy of GDP growth, on the assumption that a ‘rising tide will lift all boats.’ A degrowth economy would recognize that a rising tide will sink all boats, and thus poverty alleviation must be achieved much more directly. Rather than growing the economic pie, a politics of degrowth would slice the economic pie differently through a major redistribution of wealth and power. Prominent policies in this space include the notion of a Universal Basic Income, while others argue for a Job Guarantee, or Universal Basic Services (see Mitchell and Wray [2005] and Frankel [2018]). These types of policies would go a long way to directly eliminating poverty, with inequality further reduced by policies such as maximum wage legislation, and progressive wealth, income and land taxes. Again, eco-socialists would argue that a just distribution of wealth and power would have to involve significant socialization of property and curtailment of ‘the market.’ How far socialization would need to go, and the nature of such a transformation, is obviously open to debate. These policy platforms – all in need, of course, of far more elaboration and discussion – are coherent political, economic and social goals if a transition to a degrowth society were recognized as necessary. Each of these policies could take various forms, and there is, and should be, debate within the degrowth movement and beyond about various ways to structure a post-capitalist society. But my present point is simply that a relatively coherent and developed alternative politicoeconomic project is emerging to replace the capitalist paradigm. So, the second prerequisite for a paradigm shift is also arguably present, which is to say: there is a coherent, alternative political economy. Nevertheless, as implied above, I am the first to admit that this policy platform, coherent though it may be (to my mind), is so unpalatable to the dominant cultural consciousness that it would be political suicide for any political party to try to implement it at present. In other words, what is arguably politically necessary is both socially and politically unthinkable – which is one reason, no doubt, for our current state of despairing political paralysis. Because of this situation, whereby the politically necessary is unthinkable, I would argue that the policy platform outlined is unlikely to initiate a degrowth transition, but will only ever be the outcome of social movements; the outcome, that is, of social forces that emerge out of crisis or a series of crises and which actively create the cultural consciousness that see policies for degrowth as both necessary and desirable (Alexander and Gleeson, 2019). It is through crisis that I see the citizenries in affluent societies being shaken awake from the depoliticizing effects of affluence. Encountering crises can play, and might have to play, an essential consciousnessraising role, if it triggers a desire to learn about the structural underpinnings of the crisis situation itself. While I do not deny the need for, and desirability of, deep structural changes in the nature of our economic and political systems, what I am proposing is that a post-capitalist government may only be the outcome, not the driving force, of a transition to a just and sustainable society. In other words, our best hope for inducing a degrowth transition by design is to build a post-capitalist economics ‘from below,’ within the shell of the current system that is currently in the process of deteriorating (Alexander and Burdon, 2017). Waiting for government to act would be like waiting for Godot – a tragi-comedy in two acts, in which nothing happens, twice. Support from a comprehensive coalition of social forces This leads me to the third prerequisite for a degrowth transition, and that is that it must have support from a comprehensive coalition of social forces. Again, space does not permit an in-depth review of these issues, but a few comments will be made on examples of post-capitalist grassroots activities that are exploring modes of economy that are transcending the profit-motive for the common good, or simply building new forms of informal or household economies ‘beyond the market.’ These can easily be seen to be prefiguring aspects of a degrowth economy, even if this terminology is not used. Four key features of post-capitalism that I see emerging from the grassroots – features which I feel must scale up for a degrowth economy to emerge – are as follows. 1 Non-monetary forms of the sharing economy, whereby communities selforganize to share resources in order to save money, partially ‘escape the market,’ and avoid significant amounts of production (Nelson, 2018). Indeed, this is a key feature of why a degrowth economy could still thrive even when contracting in GDP terms: produce much less but share much more, for societies can create common wealth through sharing. This is part of what ‘efficiency’ means in a degrowth economy. 2 A degrowth economy is likely to require a transformation of the household economy: from being merely a place of consumption, to becoming a place of production and self-provision. On this topic there is no better place to look than the work of permaculturist, David Holmgren (2018), whose vision and insights here are indispensable. There are two main reasons why a resurgence of household economies is central to a degrowth paradigm shift (Alexander and Gleeson, 2019): First, by producing more within the household, less time is needed to work in the formal economy, leaving more time outside the market for social activism and community engagement. This strategy is about escaping capitalism in order to erode it, that is, building the new economy within the shell of the old. Secondly, if financial crises deepen in coming years, the household economy may be an essential means of meeting basic needs, so the task is to prepare now for what may well prove to be harder economic times ahead. We should aim for sustainability, but we may have to settle for resilience. 3 A key feature of a degrowth economy involves significant localization of the economy, moving toward a ‘bioregional’ economy where local needs are predominantly met with local resources, shortening the chain between production and consumption (Trainer, 2010). 4 Finally, any post-capitalist economy is going to require new modes of production, moving away from profitmaximizing corporations (often owned by absentee shareholders), towards an economy where worker cooperatives, community enterprises and not-forprofit models are the dominant forms of economic organization, paying people living wages but reinvesting surpluses back into the local community (Albert, 2004; Gibson-Graham et al., 2013). Again, there are various ways to imagine such alternative economic arrangements. Experimentation may be required as societies pursue the goal of creating economic and social systems in which more wealth and power are held in common, rather than concentrating it in private hands. It seems to me that alternative modes of economy, such as these four, are bubbling everywhere under the surface, which is a hopeful sign. The Transition Towns Movement, for example, is a coherent manifestation of this grassroots approach to building local, community economies. But one must also admit that these transgressive experiments remain small and marginalized by the dominant modes of political economy. So, in terms of the third prerequisite for a post-capitalist transition, we have to conclude that the social forces are mobilizing but have not yet been able to scale up to positively disrupt, or even significantly threaten, the dominant paradigm. Cultural consent: The sufficiency imperative The final prerequisite for a post-capitalist degrowth transition is broad-based cultural consent. Passive consent may suffice here, without the majority of people actively seeking degrowth. This really is a critical element in any planned transition in political economy and one that currently does not exist in terms of degrowth. It seems that the majority of people either do not think degrowth (or what it represents) is necessary or, if they do, they do not like what it means in terms of reduced and transformed consumption and production practices. I think there are two main reasons why culture is not ready to embrace degrowth. The first reason is a deep-seated technooptimism that shapes cultural thinking about environmental problems. This view assumes that technology and market mechanisms will be able to resolve the crises of capitalism without system change and without even much in terms of ‘lifestyle’ change. In other words, the zeitgeist seems to be that consumer affluence is consistent with justice and sustainability, because it is assumed that efficiency improvements in modes of production will be able to produce ‘green growth’ without having to rethink consumption practices (Hickel and Kallis, 2019). Although this techno-optimistic blind spot is a major obstacle to degrowth, I hold some uneasy confidence that as capitalism continues to collide with ecological limits in coming years and decades, the case for degrowth will become clearer to more and more people, which could act as a mobilizing force. However, even if the crises of capitalism deepen and the majority of people come to desire a post-capitalist political economy, it does not follow that a degrowth economy is what they would demand. This points to a serious cultural obstacle to a degrowth transition: the fact that the dominant conception of the good life under capitalism is based on consumer affluence. It seems to me that there will never be a post-capitalist politics until there is a post-consumerist culture that is prepared to embrace material sufficiency as a desirable way of life (Alexander, 2015b). Herein lies the importance of the voluntary simplicity, simple living and downshifting movements. Although in need of radicalization (and organization for collective action), these movements or subcultures are beginning to create the cultural conditions needed for a politics and economics of degrowth to emerge. It all depends on the ideas (and practices) that are lying around When the crises of capitalism deepen – perhaps in the form of a new financial crisis or a second Great Depression – the task will be to ensure that such destabilized conditions are used to advance progressive humanitarian and ecological ends, rather than exploited to further entrench the austerity politics of neoliberalism. I recognize, of course, that the latter remains a real possibility, as did the archcapitalist Milton Friedman (2002: xiv), who expressed the point in these terms: Only a crisis – actual or perceived – produces real change. When that crisis occurs, the actions that are taken depend on the ideas that are lying around. That, I believe, is our basic function: to develop alternatives to existing policies, to keep them alive and available until the politically impossible becomes the politically inevitable. I do not often find myself in complete agreement with Milton Friedman, but on this point I am. It is essential for the ecocentric community to keep hopes of a radically different and more humane form of society alive, until what today seems impossible or implausible becomes, if not inevitable, then at least possible and perhaps even probable. And on those rare occasions when despair lifts and the human spirit shows itself in noble forms, ‘the ideas that are lying around’ and indeed ‘the practices that are lying around,’ look so strong and convincing that it tempts even this apocaloptimist into considering becoming a plain, old-fashioned optimist. Or, with a nod to Gramsci, at least one is permitted to proceed with a pessimistic intellect and a cautiously optimistic will.

#### No Economic Wars or breakdown – prefer post-COVID evidence

Walt 20 Stephen M Walt 5-13-2020 "Will a Global Depression Trigger Another World War?" <https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/05/13/coronavirus-pandemic-depression-economy-world-war/> (Stephen M. Walt is the Robert and Renée Belfer professor of international relations at Harvard University.)//Elmer

For these reasons, the pandemic itself may be conducive to peace. But what about the relationship between broader economic conditions and the likelihood of war? Might a few leaders still convince themselves that provoking a crisis and going to war could still advance either long-term national interests or their own political fortunes? Are the other paths by which a deep and sustained economic downturn might make serious global conflict more likely? One familiar argument is the so-called diversionary (or “scapegoat”) theory of war. It suggests that leaders who are worried about their popularity at home will try to divert attention from their failures by provoking a crisis with a foreign power and maybe even using force against it. Drawing on this logic, some Americans now worry that President Donald Trump will decide to attack a country like Iran or Venezuela in the run-up to the presidential election and especially if he thinks he’s likely to lose. This outcome strikes me as unlikely, even if one ignores the logical and empirical flaws in the theory itself. War is always a gamble, and should things go badly—even a little bit—it **would hammer the last nail** in the coffin of Trump’s declining fortunes. Moreover, none of the countries Trump might consider going after **pose an imminent threat** to U.S. security, and even his staunchest supporters may wonder why he is wasting time and money going after Iran or Venezuela at a moment when thousands of Americans are dying preventable deaths at home. Even a successful military action won’t put Americans back to work, create the sort of testing-and-tracing regime that competent governments around the world have been able to implement already, or hasten the development of a vaccine. The same logic is likely to guide the decisions of other world leaders too. Another familiar folk theory is “military Keynesianism.” War generates a lot of economic demand, and it can sometimes lift depressed economies out of the doldrums and back toward prosperity and full employment. The obvious case in point here is World War II, which did help the U.S economy finally escape the quicksand of the Great Depression. Those who are convinced that great powers go to war primarily to keep Big Business (or the arms industry) happy are naturally drawn to this sort of argument, and they might worry that governments looking at bleak economic forecasts will try to restart their economies through some sort of military adventure. I doubt it. It takes a really big war to generate a significant stimulus, and it is **hard to imagine** any country launching a large-scale war—with all its attendant risks—at a moment **when debt** levels are already soaring. More importantly, there are lots of easier and more direct **ways to stimulate the economy**—**infrastructure spending, unemployment insurance, even “helicopter payments**”—and launching a war has to be one of the least efficient methods available. The threat of war usually spooks investors too, which any politician with their eye on the stock market would be loath to do. Economic downturns can encourage war in some special circumstances, especially when a war would enable a country facing severe hardships to capture something of immediate and significant value. Saddam Hussein’s decision to seize Kuwait in 1990 fits this model perfectly: The Iraqi economy was in terrible shape after its long war with Iran; unemployment was threatening Saddam’s domestic position; Kuwait’s vast oil riches were a considerable prize; and seizing the lightly armed emirate was exceedingly easy to do. Iraq also owed Kuwait a lot of money, and a hostile takeover by Baghdad would wipe those debts off the books overnight. In this case, Iraq’s parlous economic condition clearly made war more likely. Yet I cannot think of any country in similar circumstances today. Now is hardly the time for Russia to try to grab more of Ukraine—if it even wanted to—or for China to make a play for Taiwan, because the costs of doing so would clearly outweigh the economic benefits. Even conquering an oil-rich country—the sort of greedy acquisitiveness that Trump occasionally hints at—doesn’t look attractive when there’s a vast glut on the market. I might be worried if some weak and defenseless country somehow came to possess the entire global stock of a successful coronavirus vaccine, but that scenario is not even remotely possible. If one takes a longer-term perspective, however, a sustained economic depression could make war more likely by strengthening fascist or xenophobic political movements, fueling protectionism and hypernationalism, and making it more difficult for countries to reach mutually acceptable bargains with each other. The history of the 1930s shows where such trends can lead, although the economic effects of the Depression are hardly the only reason world politics took such a deadly turn in the 1930s. Nationalism, xenophobia, and authoritarian rule were making a comeback well before COVID-19 struck, but the economic misery now occurring in every corner of the world could intensify these trends and leave us in a more war-prone condition when fear of the virus has diminished. On balance, however, I do not think that even the extraordinary economic conditions we are witnessing today are going to have much impact on the likelihood of war. Why? First of all, if depressions were a powerful cause of war, **there would be a lot more** of the latter. To take one example, the United States has suffered 40 or more recessions since the country was founded, yet it has fought perhaps 20 interstate wars, most of them unrelated to the state of the economy. To paraphrase the economist Paul Samuelson’s famous quip about the stock market, if recessions were a powerful cause of war, they would have predicted “nine out of the last five (or fewer).” Second**, states do not start wars unless they believe they will win a quick** and relatively cheap victory. As John Mearsheimer showed in his classic book Conventional Deterrence, national leaders avoid war when they are convinced it will be long, bloody, costly, and uncertain. To choose war, political leaders have to convince themselves they can either win a quick, cheap, and decisive victory or achieve some limited objective at low cost. Europe went to war in 1914 with each side believing it would win a rapid and easy victory, and Nazi Germany developed the strategy of blitzkrieg in order to subdue its foes as quickly and cheaply as possible. Iraq attacked Iran in 1980 because Saddam believed the Islamic Republic was in disarray and would be easy to defeat, and George W. Bush invaded Iraq in 2003 convinced the war would be short, successful, and pay for itself. The fact that each of these leaders miscalculated badly does not alter the main point: No matter what a country’s economic condition might be, its leaders will not go to war unless they think they can do so quickly, cheaply, and with a reasonable probability of success. Third, and most important, **the primary motivation for most wars is the desire for security, not economic gain**. For this reason, the odds of war increase when states believe the long-term balance of power may be shifting against them, when they are convinced that adversaries are unalterably hostile and cannot be accommodated, and when they are confident they can reverse the unfavorable trends and establish a secure position if they act now. The historian A.J.P. Taylor once observed that “every war between Great Powers [between 1848 and 1918] … started as a preventive war, not as a war of conquest,” and that remains true of most wars fought since then. The bottom line: Economic conditions (i.e., a depression) may affect the broader political environment in which decisions for war or peace are made, but they are only one factor among many and rarely the most significant. Even if the COVID-19 pandemic has large, lasting, and negative effects on the world economy—as seems quite likely—it is not likely to affect the probability of war very much, especially in the short term. To be sure, I can’t rule out another powerful cause of war—stupidity—especially when it is so much in evidence in some quarters these days. So there is no guarantee that we won’t see misguided leaders stumbling into another foolish bloodletting. But given that it’s hard to find any rays of sunshine at this particular moment in history, I’m going to hope I’m right about this one.

#### No war, increase in costs, resources, and inequality solves breakdown and incentivizes coop

Paganelli and Schumacher, 19—Professor of Economics at Trinity University AND postdoc, Potsdam University (Maria and Reinhard, “Do not take peace for granted: Adam Smith’s warning on the relation between commerce and war,” Cambridge Journal of Economics 2019, 43, 785–798, dml)

Does commerce bring about peace? Contrary to what is commonly believed, one of the most famous promoters of the civilising role of commerce seems to answer the question with a negative warning. Commerce, and the wealth commerce creates, may not decrease international conflicts; they may actually increase them. This is not because commerce is an extension of war or because commerce does not offer a ‘bond of friendship’. It is rather because of a set of perverse incentives: commerce and the wealth it brings about increase the power of commercial interest groups and decrease the relative and the perceived costs of wars.

Analysing the positions of Smith introduces an economic analysis and offers a fresh contribution to open a debate on the effects of commerce on warfare and the probability of current wars. For Smith, the development of commercial societies brings about justice and order at home, and more humanity both in peace and in war, but it also increases the likelihood and the likely duration of wars. Economic development, which varies from country to country, increases the inequality in international wealth— a possible motive for increasing the frequency of international wars, as richer countries become enticing targets of poorer countries.25 In addition, for Smith, the likelihood of wars increases with the increase in commerce because the ‘mean rapacity’ of merchants and manufacturers ‘intimidates’ the legislature and wrongly convinces the population that establishing monopolies and higher profits for themselves is actually good for the country. The majority of the population supports more wars because it can ‘dream of empire’ at a relatively low price. Soldiers can be taken out of productive work without affecting the subsistence of the rest of the population, differently from non-commercial societies, in which wars cannot last long because the country is too poor to support troops for long periods of time without starvation. For Smith, the relative price of war decreases with the increase in commerce, and as with all price decreases, the decrease in the price of war increases the quantity demanded of wars. In addition, for Smith, even if the absolute cost of war increases, the ability to pay increases too, thanks to the availability of debt financing of commercial societies. Debt financing decreases the perceived cost of war, generating increasing support for more frequent and longer wars.

#### Reject McLennan its just a laundry list of things that could happen in a world of economic decline, a] none of these are substantiated by analysis, b] assumes econ decline is unequitable i.e. some countries face it worse than others but under the plan everyone would suffer from it so no one could lash out