# 1AC

## 1AC – Shell

### 1AC – Framing

#### Ethics begin a priori. Prefer:

#### [A] Empirical Uncertainty – evil demon could deceive us and inability to know others experience make empiricism an unreliable basis for universal ethics. Outweighs since since people could say they don’t experience the same.

#### [B] Constitutive Authority – The meta-ethic is bindingness. Practical reason is the only unescapable authority because to ask why I should be a reasoner concedes it’s authority since you’re actively reasoning.

#### [C] Naturalistic fallacy – experience only tells us what is since we can only perceive what is, not what ought to be. But it’s impossible to derive an ought from descriptive premises, so there needs to be additional a priori premises to make a moral theory.

#### That justifies universality – a] a priori principles like reason apply to everyone since they are independent of human experience and b] any non-universalizable norm justifies someone’s ability to impede on your ends i.e. if I want to eat ice cream, I must recognize that others may affect my pursuit of that end.

#### Additionally: Theoretical justifications outweigh –

#### 1] Frameworks are T debates about the word just which proves the better model of debate is what matters.

#### 2] Turns substance – it doesn’t matter how true a philosophy is if it can’t be engaged or is impossible to learn.

#### Prefer non extinction intent-based frameworks

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

#### 2] Resource disparities- Our framework ensures big squads don’t have a comparative advantage since debates become about quality of arguments rather than quantity - their model crowds out small schools because they have to prep for every unique advantage under each aff, every counterplan, and every disad with carded responses to each of them

#### 3] Resolvability – other debates create a mess of weighing and link turns, but using Kant is easily resolvable because it becomes a question of whether or not it violates

#### Thus, the standard is consistency with the categorical imperative.

#### [1] Consequences Fail: a] Every action has infinite stemming consequences, because every consequence can cause another consequence so we can’t predict. b] Induction is circular because it relies on the assumption that nature will hold uniform and we could only reach that conclusion through inductive reasoning based on observation of past events. c] action theory – Every action is infinitely divisible, only intents unify because we commit the end point of an action – but consequences cannot determine what step of action is moral d] Yes act/omission distinction – there are infinite events occurring over which you have no control, so you can never be moral

#### [2] Contesting offense under the Aff framework is a voting issue. Reciprocity – I have to win my framework and beat the NC before I can access case, whereas you can collapse to either layer or dump on offense for 7 minutes as a no-risk issue so there’s a skew. Key to fairness because it’s definitionally equal access to the ballot.

#### [3] Only universalizable reason can effectively explain the perspectives of agents – that’s the best method for combatting oppression.

Farr 02 Arnold Farr (prof of phil @ UKentucky, focusing on German idealism, philosophy of race, postmodernism, psychoanalysis, and liberation philosophy). “Can a Philosophy of Race Afford to Abandon the Kantian Categorical Imperative?” JOURNAL of SOCIAL PHILOSOPHY, Vol. 33 No. 1, Spring 2002, 17–32.

**One** of the most popular **criticism**s **of Kant’s moral philosophy is that it is too formalistic.**13 That is, the universal nature of the categorical imperative leaves it devoid of content. Such a principle is useless since moral decisions are made by concrete individuals in a concrete, historical, and social situation. This type of criticism lies behind Lewis Gordon’s rejection of any attempt to ground an antiracist position on Kantian principles. The rejection of universal principles for the sake of emphasizing the historical embeddedness of the human agent is widespread in recent philosophy and social theory. I will argue here on Kantian grounds that **although a distinction between the universal and the concrete is** a **valid** distinction, **the unity of the two is required for** an understanding of human **agency.** The attack on Kantian formalism began with Hegel’s criticism of the Kantian philosophy.14 The list of contemporary theorists who follow Hegel’s line of criticism is far too long to deal with in the scope of this paper. Although these theorists may approach the problem of Kantian formalism from a variety of angles, the spirit of their criticism is basically the same: The universality of the categorical imperative is an abstraction from one’s empirical conditions. **Kant is** often **accused of making the moral agent an abstract, empty**, noumenal **subject. Nothing could be further from the truth. The Kantian subject is** an embodied, empirical, concrete subject. However, this concrete subject has a dual nature. Kant claims in the Critique of Pure Reason as well as in the Grounding that human beings have an intelligible and empirical character.15 It is impossible to understand and do justice to Kant’s moral theory without taking seriously the relation between these two characters. The very concept of morality is impossible without the tension between the two. By “empirical character” Kant simply means that we have a sensual nature. We are physical creatures with physical drives or desires. **The** very **fact that I cannot simply satisfy my desires without considering the rightness** or wrongness **of my actions suggests that my empirical character must be held in check** by something, or else I behave like a Freudian id. My empiri- cal character must be held in check **by my intelligible character**, which is the legislative activity of practical reason. It is through our intelligible character that **we formulate principles that keep our** empirical **impulses in check.** The categorical imperative is the supreme principle of morality that is constructed by the moral agent in his/her moment of self-transcendence. What I have called self-transcendence may be best explained in the following passage by Onora O’Neill: In restricting our maxims to those that meet the test of the categorical imperative we refuse to base our lives on maxims that necessarily make our own case an exception. The reason why a universilizability criterion is morally signiﬁcant is that it makes our own case no special exception (G, IV, 404). In accepting the Categorical Imperative we accept the moral reality of other selves, and hence the possibility (not, note, the reality) of a moral community. **The Formula of Universal Law enjoins no more than that we act only on maxims that are open to others also.**16 O’Neill’s description of the universalizability criterion includes the notion of self-transcendence that I am working to explicate here to the extent that like self-transcendence, universalizable moral principles require that the individ- ual think beyond his or her own particular desires. The individual is not allowed to exclude others **as** rational **moral agents** who have the right to act as he acts in a given situation. For example, if I decide to use another person merely as a means for my own end I must recognize the other person’s right to do the same to me. I cannot consistently will that I use another as a means only and will that I not be used in the same manner by another. **Hence,** the **universalizability** criterion **is a principle of consistency and** a principle of **inclusion.** That is, in choosing my maxims **I** attempt to **include the perspective of other moral agents.**

### 1AC – Offense

#### 1] Extending policies to space violates the categorical imperative through not recognizing extra-terrestrial life as agents.

Segobaetso 18 Segobaetso, Benjamin. *Ethical Implications of the Colonization, Privatization and Commercialization of Outer Space*. SJEP //recut Nato

It can be argued through Kantian ethics that our record here on Earth paints a picture of neoliberal and capitalist policies with tendencies to favour the highest bidder at the exclusion of the under privileged and puts profit first at the expense of the environment. For Kantians, there are two questions that we must ask ourselves whenever we decide to act: (i) Can I rationally will that everyone act as I propose to act? If the answer is no, then we must not perform the action. (ii) Does my action respect the goals of human beings? Again, if the answer is no, then we must not perform the action. Kantian ethicists would argue that extending to space neoliberal and capitalist policies is immoral because these systems create economic disparities and life threatening environmental injustices; therefore, they are set up in a way that we could not rationally will everyone to act the way they act either here on Earth or in space. Also, Kantian ethicists would ask whether the action of extending neoliberal and capitalist policies to space would respect the goals of extra-terrestrial intelligent life if any rather than merely using them for humans’ own purposes? If the answer is no, then the participating agent must not perform the action. Kant wrote on the possible existence of extra-terrestrial intelligent species in the final pages of the last book that he published, Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View [Anthropologie in pragmatischer Hinsicht] (1978). In this publication, Kant hinted that the highest concept of the Alien species may be that of a terrestrial rational being [eines irdischen vernünftigen ]; however, he argued that it will be difficult to describe its characteristics because there is no knowledge available of a non-terrestrial rational being [nicht irdischen Wesen] which could be used as a reference in regards to its properties and ultimately classify that terrestrial being as rational. This dilemma will continue until extraterrestrial intelligent life is discovered because comparing two species of rational beings has to be on the basis of experience, but that experience has not been possible yet (Kant, 237-238). In applying Kant’s deontological moral theory, it must first be recognized that Kant visualized a kind of respect in which we all can recognize every rational being exists as an end in itself (1) as being not fully comprehensible by any human understanding, (2) as being an end in him- or herself, and (3) as being a potential source of moral law (Kant, 2012). In this regard, since Kant insinuated that the highest concept of the extraterrestrial intelligent species may be that of a terrestrial rational being [eines irdischen vernünftigen ]; that implies any encounter with extra-terrestrial intelligent life will compel us under the deontological moral theory to recognize that life as being not fully comprehensible by any human understanding, as being an end in itself, and as being a potential source of moral law (Kant, 2012). It must be realized that Kant’s deontology theory does not go without criticism by critical theorists who believe in dismantling all systems of oppression.

#### 2] Promise breaking – private entities appropriating space violates articles 2 and 4 of the OST

Wisaeus 17 Per Wisaeus JURM02 Graduate Thesis Graduate Thesis, Master of Laws program 30 higher education credits Supervisor: Moa De Lucia Dahlbeck Semester of graduation: Period 1 Autumn semester 2017 “Our future march on Mars – a walk on a well-known path” FACULTY OF LAW Lund University <https://lup.lub.lu.se/student-papers/record/8930484/file/8933833.pdf> SJMS //Recut Nato

3.5 Appropriation of space The word appropriation is used in Article II OST but it does not exist consensus nor an exact definition of its meaning. Traditionally, appropriation have had the meaning of taking control over an area to use it exclusively and with a long-term intention.129 As mentioned above it is clear that the difference between use and appropriation is not entirely clear. I will in the following use the meaning of appropriation as defined in Definition of terms in this thesis, and present aspects of it below 3.5.1 Physical appropriation of parts of space Whether something is even possible to appropriate is due to if it is possible to control and possess. The possibility to appropriate outer space has the problem of the difficulty of defining outer space due to the lack of landmarks. Article II OST and its prohibition of national appropriation is regarding outer space and celestial bodies. As an example of the difficulties of defining areas in space are the different opinions on the limits of air space contra outer space. In simple terms: where does the sky end and outer space start? Therefore, it is difficult to envisage an appropriation of parts of outer space. A celestial body has the advantage of being tangible and possible to locate. 130 Another aspect of the problem is the fact that space law is not clear on what constitutes a celestial body, which opens up for the possibility of circumventing the prohibition of Article II OST by appropriating asteroids or meteorites. This is, as much else in space law, not completely clear.131 As mentioned earlier, it can be said that the UN claimed jurisdiction of the whole outer space with its declarations adopted in 1961 and 1963. One of the main objections to this relies on the fact that the whole outer space is enormous and ever-expanding and human jurisdiction and legal regulation cannot be applicable to the whole universe due to the absurdity of the claim. 132 Therefore, it is only reasonable to limit the jurisdiction to our solar system.133 Even this is a liberal limitation since the furthest a human made space object has travelled is outside our planet system.134 Therefore a starting point for appropriation would be to actually be able to physically access the object. In order to appropriate a celestial body in space one would have to be able to control it. In order to control a celestial body a starting point is to be able to reach it. The conclusion is that if one is able to both reach a part of outer space or a celestial body and define it and maintain a presence, one would be able to theoretically appropriate it. 3.5.2 The legality of appropriation of space Whether it is possible to legally appropriate anything in space has been and is under discussion. Within the field of space law there is an ongoing discussion on Article II of OST. The relevant Article prohibits national appropriation. The wording of the Article has opened up for a vivid discussion about its precise meaning. There are mainly three standpoints regarding appropriation in space. These are: OST allows appropriation, OST prohibits appropriation and appropriation is not legally enforceable. I will examine each three in order in the following sections. 3.5.2.1 Private and international appropriation Whether one can decide if appropriation is allowed by OST is depending on what type of appropriation it is. National appropriation refers to when a state claims and takes control over a celestial body, which is clearly prohibited by Article II OST. This option will not be further discussed due to the clear language of OST. Private appropriation has the meaning of a private entity taking control over a celestial body. The third possibility is international appropriation which has not been thoroughly discussed within doctrine. The meaning of international appropriation means the appropriation of a celestial body by an international organization representing mankind. The conclusion that it is acceptable to appropriate an object in space based on this argument can be reached through an e contrario reading of Article II OST: Outer space, including the Moon and other celestial bodies, is not subjected to national appropriation by claim of sovereignty, by means of use or occupation or by any means. [Emphasis added] Of interest is the word ‘national’, implying that appropriation is allowed if it is not conducted under national cover. This interpretation has been supported by various authors but also contested by others. The supporters of this theory put emphasis on the notion that the word ‘national’ is used. It is seen as a way of narrowing down the applicability of the Article. Because the interpretation has made the Article’s applicability exclusive to national appropriation it would be possible to appropriate parts of space as a nonstate. Since Article II does neither mention explicitly private individuals or enterprises nor international organizations, it opens up for the possibility of appropriation.135 3.5.2.1.1 Private appropriation Those who favor private appropriation, such as Stephen Gorove, come to the frank conclusion that a private entity could lawfully appropriate parts of space because of the lack of explicit prohibition.136 This loophole theory is rejected by most authors, however. 137 One major flaw in Gorove’s argumentation is the overlooking of Article VI OST. Article VI OST prescribes that states have the responsibility for activities in outer space and other celestial bodies, including the Moon. Activities include both activities made by governmental as well as non-governmental organizations. Activities are not necessarily appropriation but it could be, see discussion in 3.4 Freedom of exploration, use and access. As mentioned earlier, the OST does not bind private entities per se, but private entities are forced to obey the OST due to the fact that a private entity is entitled to the freedoms set out in the OST via its supervising government. In theory, a private entity could appropriate i.e. a celestial body but its supervising state would be responsible for it and would most probably prevent the appropriation. However, it would be too easy for states to circumvent the state-prohibition by licensing private companies to appropriate space. Those arguing in favor of this position refer to Articles VI and VII of OST since these Articles proclaim that states are responsible for national activities in space. 138 Even if OST should not be regarded as prohibiting private appropriation and a private appropriation took place an appropriation wouldn’t be able to stand for itself without any support of a state. Private property cannot exist without a state endorsing it. Since at least one state would have to endorse the appropriation, Article II OST would once again be an obstacle for the appropriation.139

### 1AC – Method

#### Plan – The appropriation of outer space by private entities is unjust.

#### The advantage is Debris –

#### The space sector is trending towards privatization – that drives feedback loops of technology creating cascading collisions.

BERNAT 20. Pawel @ Military University of Aviation. 11/4/20. [SAFETY ENGINEERING OF ANTHROPOGENIC OBJECTS, “ORBITAL SATELLITE CONSTELLATIONS AND THE GROWING THREAT OF KESSLER SYNDROME IN THE LOWER EARTH ORBIT,” Volume 4, PDF] Justin

The second decade of the 21st century has brought a dynamic and somewhat surprising development of the space industry. Since 1972 – the Apollo 17 crew mission to the Moon, the humankind has not left the safe environment of Earth’s orbit, and for years the global space sector has been progressing in slow but steady pace run by a few largest space agencies like American NASA, European ESA, Japanese JAXA, and Chinese CNSA. The most significant achievement of the “old ways” of managing outer space exploration is the International Space Stations (ISS) that has facilitated more than 20 years of continuous crewed operations.

The situation started to change at the turn of the century when new generations of private entrepreneurs began to invest in and develop space technologies like rocket boosters, spaceships, and what most important for the subject of the paper – satellites and their constellations. This new shift is known among the space industry as “Space 2.0”, and its emergence is dated around 2000-2002 when the companies like SpaceX, Blue Origin, and Virgin Galactic were established. (Pyle, 2019). The real change, however, came in 2012 when the first SpaceX commercial mission was successfully launched to the ISS (NASA, 2012).

Since then, the participation of the private sector in the space industry has skyrocketed, especially in the United States. Today, SpaceX is the only entity that provides reusable rockets (first stage and fairings) that is capable of vertical launch and landing. Their current flagship rocket – Falcon 9 has carried out 23 successful missions in 2020 (SpaceX, 2020) and another four are planned for December of that year (Weitering, 2020). Moreover, thanks to Crew Dragon spaceship developed by the company, Americans have regained this year the capacity of sending astronauts from their own soil after nine years of buying the seats on Russian Soyuz capsule. SpaceX is now in the process of building a communication satellites constellation that will be addressed and analyzed in the paper.

Nowadays, in the space industry, we witness a very productive cybernetic feedback look between the development of space technologies, the democratization of those technologies, and a substantial reduction of prices. The latter is even more significant if we compare the cost of launching cargo into orbit now and 20 years ago – Falcon 9 is over ten times cheaper than Space Shuttle (Jones, 2018). This, of course, directly translates into the mass and number of objects that we are able to put in the orbit viably. Once the constellations consisting of thousands of satellites were unthinkable, but in the current environment, they become a reality.

Space 2.0 also has brought new threats and challenges in the sphere of national and international security. The increase in launch capacity, among other factors, has led to progressive militarization and weaponization of space and new arms race (Bernat, 2019), which has also contributed to the growing numbers of orbiting objects.

The goal of the paper is to present the argumentation that the threat posed by the cascading collisions in the Earth’s orbit (Kessler syndrome) is becoming more severe due to the construction of orbital satellite constellations; the threat that presents a real danger for people during their EVAs and orbital infrastructure, which may bare immediate consequences for safety and security systems on Earth. In order to provide the theoretical context for the above claim, the following issues will be presented and discussed: (1) space debris, (2) the Kessler syndrome, (3) orbital debris models, (4) the legal issues related to space debris and mitigation actions against their proliferation, and (5) the planned and being currently developed orbital satellite constellations and how they contribute to the growing threat of the Kessler syndrome.

#### Privatization exponentially increases debris – lack of regulations spikes it – models.

BERNAT 20. Pawel @ Military University of Aviation. 11/4/20. [SAFETY ENGINEERING OF ANTHROPOGENIC OBJECTS, “ORBITAL SATELLITE CONSTELLATIONS AND THE GROWING THREAT OF KESSLER SYNDROME IN THE LOWER EARTH ORBIT,” Volume 4, PDF] Justin

5. Orbital satellite constellations and the growing threat of the Kessler syndrome

Space 2.0 – the new era of space exploration that we witness now in the 21st century means, in words of Buzz Aldrin, “moving human enterprise into space” (Pyle, 2019, p. xiv). The process of commercialization of outer space has already begun and is not limited to private companies providing technologies and services for national or international space agencies, as it was in the past. On the contrary, private companies from the space sector have now matured to carry out their own independent projects.

As for 2020, SpaceX is a company that serves as the best example – it launches satellites to the orbit, both for state and private contractors, it successfully realized two crew missions to the International Space Station, and is in the process of constructing Starlink satellite constellation that will provide high-speed internet access across the planet.

Each satellite weighs around 260 kg, is equipped with an ion propulsion system, autonomous collision avoidance system, and orbits Earth at approximately 540-560 km altitude (Starlink, 2020). At the beginning of November 2020, more than 860 Starlink satellites were orbiting the Earth (Jewett, 2020). Immediate plans include launching 12,000 satellites, but they assume a potential later extension to 42,000 (Henry, 2019a). Of course, SpaceX has employed, at least declaratively, all necessary measures to keep the space clean – the satellites are equipped with the deorbiting system, and in the event of inoperability of the propulsion system (Starlink, 2020). The orbital collisions are, however, inevitable. As it was shown before, the possibility of collisions grows with the number of orbital objects. Bastida Virgili with the team compared (2016, p. 154-155) orbital debris environment development without and with a large hypothetical constellation consisting of merely 1080 satellites, distributed across 20 orbital planes at 1,100 km altitude (Fig. 5).

Chart, line chart

Description automatically generated

Figure 5. Comparison of long term evolution of the number of objects in LEO with and without the constellation (Virgili et al., 2016, p. 155)

It has to be noted that although SpaceX’s Starlink is the only constellation that is being built in orbit, it is not the only one planned. There are at least a few initiatives aiming at the same goal – to construct internet infrastructure at the Earth’s orbit. The planned Kuiper Systems LLC, which is a subsidiary of Amazon and intends to place 3,236 broadband satellites in the LEO, is one of Starlink’s biggest competitors (Henry, 2019b). Now, there is even a rivalry between the two companies because Kuiper’s lowest orbital shell is planned to be 590 km, with a tolerance of 9 km either above or below (Cao, 2020), which is the altitude of Starlink satellites. Moreover, the race for space in orbit is now at the beginning.

The outer space is vast. It increasingly becomes more cluttered with both operational satellites and space debris. The threat of collisions increases and no institution or body has enough power to license, coordinate and regulate what is sent to the orbit. The UNOOSA has not such power. National states decide what the companies from the space industry can launch to space. In the United States, which is most advanced in the area of private constellations, it is the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) that issues the appropriate approvals. The race to put broadband internet satellites bears similarities to the gold rush – there are no rules, at the global level, apart from first-come, first-served.

#### Models are rigorous and robust – the card above this.

---To clarify this is the methodology for above chart.

Virgili et al. 16 – Bastida, J.C. Dolado, H.G. Lewis, J. Radtke, H. Krag, B. Revelin, C. Cazaux b , C. Colombo, R. Crowther, M. Metz, 4/26/16, [“Risk to space sustainability from large constellations of satellites,” Act Astranautica, <https://sci-hub.se/10.1016/j.actaastro.2016.03.034>.] Justin

1.3. Simulation approach and result analysis A Monte Carlo (MC) approach was used to simulate the evolution of the object population over a period of 200 years under different post-mission disposal requirements, with four different tools (MEDEE – Modelling the Evolution of Debris on Earth's Environment [9], LUCA – Long Term Utility for Collision Analysis [10], DAMAGE – Debris Analysis and Monitoring Architecture to the Geosynchronous Environment [11] and DELTA – Debris Environment Long Term Analysis [12]). For analysis purposes, the effective number of objects was used where the contribution to the population by each object was weighted by the proportion of the orbital period spent in LEO. In a first step, four different evolutionary models performed an analysis of two reference scenarios. One scenario considered only the evolution of the background population and non-constellation traffic. The second scenario augmented the first with the addition of the representative constellation, with the requirement that 90% of the constellation satellites achieved post-mission disposal to orbits with remaining lifetimes of 25 years. The manoeuvres performed at the mission end to meet the disposal requirement are assumed to be impulsive (i.e. instantaneous) and result in an eccentric orbit with the apogee near the original (constellation) altitude and the perigee at an altitude such that the effects of atmospheric drag would cause the orbit to decay within 25 years. Two of the models considered an apogee remaining at the operational constellation altitude, while the other two reduced the apogee by 50 km. The purpose of these scenarios is to provide a cross-comparison of the models in terms of their predictions of the total object population, which take into account the effects of the constellation. As the distribution of the MC results for the models is of the same nature and the results are independent, a bootstrapping [20] approach is used to derive the mean, the standard deviation and the confidence levels at 95% of the combined results of all the MC runs from the four models (cf. Fig. 1), although not all the models performed the same number of MC runs (see Table 1). The main source of variation inside a particular model's MC runs included the randomness in collision activity, while the different models used their own solar activity forecast.

#### Debris is exponentially increasing and current models underestimate the risk. The aff is our best shot making it try-or-die.

Shen & Blake 2/24/22 [Zili Shen, Internally citing James Blake \* I am a Ph.D. student in Astronomy at Yale University. My research focuses on ultra-diffuse galaxies and their globular cluster populations. Since I came to Yale, I have worked on two "dark-matter-free" galaxies NGC1052-DF2 and DF4 \*\* Department of Physics and Centre for Space Domain Awareness, University of Warwick, Coventry. “How not to bury ourselves under space trash.” astrobites. <https://astrobites.org/2022/02/24/space-sustainability/>] Justin

What’s wrong with having some stuff orbiting the Earth, you might ask? Like my trash analogy, the problem is that they block our way to space. Fragments as small as 10 cm can kill a satellite mission. Unlike my trash analogy, if enough space junk accumulates, they can produce more fragments on their own. Several bands of LEO are already at risk of what’s called a runaway collisional cascade. This happens when space junk collide with each other and fall apart, their fragments going on to seeding more collisions, generating more debris, and restarting the cycle. On the other hand, space debris in high altitude orbits (like GSO) don’t experience much atmospheric drag, and will stay up there for centuries. From this you probably gathered that most of these debris are either abandoned satellites or their fragments. Even though these objects were originally launched by humans, cataloging and tracking them are a huge challenge.

What’s up there?

Since the first manmade satellite was launched in 1957, space agencies have been keeping track of bodies orbiting the Earth. By mass, 98% of those are satellites and rocket bodies, but we know very little about the remaining 2%, millions of small debris. These small debris elude radars and optical telescopes used in ground-based surveys, but they can still cause mission-fatal damage to a satellite. With limited data, NASA and ESA cannot accurately estimate the risk from orbital debris. Their models don’t even agree on the number of expected debris because there is no good observational constraint for very small fragments.

Fig. 2: Number of tracked objects in Low-Earth Orbit (LEO) and Geo-synchronous orbit (GSO). Modified from Fig.2 of the paper.

Fig. 2 shows a breakdown of what we do know about objects in LEO and GSO. In LEO (left panel) , the most numerous objects are debris. These come from fragmentation events, or “break-ups,” most commonly due to propulsion-related subsystems exploding. In other words, when leftover fuel gets heated up in space, it can blow the satellite to pieces. Other sources of debris include intentional anti-satellite tests (in which countries develop technology to destroy each other’s satellites) and a small number of accidental satellite collisions. In GSO (right panel), a large number of objects are “unknown” because GSO is significantly farther away from Earth and has historically received less attention. To quote Dr. Blake, the author of today’s paper, “monitoring the mess of near-Earth space cannot solve the problem entirely, especially while the bulk of the dangerous debris population remains invisible and uncatalogued.” Now that I’ve alerted you to the grave danger we face, how do we make sure that future humanity can still go to space?

What can be done?

Like any environmental problem, the best solution is prevention. To prevent leftover fuel from exploding, satellite operators are now advised to “passivate” the spacecraft at the end of the mission. That means dumping out residual fuel and discharging batteries while they still control the spacecraft. The other safe disposal measures after the mission ends are to have the satellite re-enter the atmosphere or move into unused high-altitude orbits. Even though these prevention measures are the best way forward, they are (un)surprisingly hard to enforce. The authors says, “despite an apparent consensus that [anti-satellite weapon] tests represent irresponsible and reckless behaviour, legally binding and internationally recognised regulations are still lacking.” The level of adherence to the above safety guidelines remain concerningly low. Given that prevention is a “legal quagmire,” we can also try to remove debris that is already up there. Everything from harpoons to nets and tentacles have been used to collect orbital debris, but there’s no one-size-fits-all solution. Imagine how hard it is to capture metal shards tumbling at high speed without creating more debris.

Looking towards the future

Small satellites have flourished in recent years as LEO satellite constellations proved commercially lucrative. These satellites are not only a problem for astronomers but also a huge issue for the existing surveillance infrastructure. Dr. Blake says, “the problem is one that affects all operators in space, truly global in nature… [and] warrants a cross-sector, cross-disciplinary approach.” As astronomers, we can help society keep a watchful eye and ensure that the future of space flight is sustainable. If you want to learn more about space sustainability, Dr. Blake recommends the GNOSIS project.

#### Debris triggers miscalculated war.

Robert Farley 22, Now a 1945 Contributing Editor, Dr. Robert Farley is a Senior Lecturer at the Patterson School at the University of Kentucky. Dr. Farley is the author of Grounded: The Case for Abolishing the United States Air Force (University Press of Kentucky, 2014), the Battleship Book (Wildside, 2016), and Patents for Power: Intellectual Property Law and the Diffusion of Military Technology (University of Chicago, 2020). 1/9/22. [19 Fourty Five, “Does A Space War Mean A Nuclear War?,” <https://www.19fortyfive.com/2022/01/does-a-space-war-mean-a-nuclear-war/>] Justin

The recent Russian anti-satellite test didn’t tell the world anything new, but it did reaffirm the peril posed by warfare in space. Debris from explosions could make some earth orbits remarkably risky to use for both civilian and military purposes. But the test also highlighted a less visible danger; attacks on nuclear command and control satellites could rapidly produce an extremely dangerous escalatory situation in a war between nuclear powers. James Acton and Thomas Macdonald drew attention to this problem in a recent article at Inside Defense. As Acton and MacDonald point out, nuclear command and control satellites are the connective tissue of nuclear deterrence, assuring countries that they’re not being attacked and that they’ll be able to respond quickly if they are.

For a long time, these strategic early-warning satellites were akin to a center of gravity in ICBM warfare. Nuclear deterrence requires awareness that an attack is underway. Attacks on the monitoring system could easily be read as an attempt to ~~blind~~ an opponent in preparation for general war, and could themselves incur nuclear retaliation. Thus, the nuclear command and control satellites are critical to the maintenance of nuclear deterrence. They make it possible to distribute an order from the chief of government to the nuclear delivery systems themselves. Consequently, their destruction might lead to hesitation or delay in performing a nuclear launch order.

It was only later that the relevance of satellites for conventional warfare became clear. Satellites could reconnoiter enemy positions and, more importantly, provide communications for friendly forces. Indeed, the expansion of the role of satellites in conventional warfare has complicated the prospect of space warfare. States have a clear reason for targeting enemy satellites which support conventional warfare, as those satellites enable the most lethal part of the kill chain, the communications and recon networks that link targets with shooters. Thus, we now have a situation in which space military assets have both nuclear and conventional roles. In a conflict confusion and misperception could rapidly become lethal. If one combatant views an attack against nuclear command and control as a prelude to a general nuclear attack, it might choose to pre-empt.

Nuclear powers have dealt with problems in this general category for a good long while; would a conventional attack against tactical nuclear staging areas represent an escalation, for example? Would the use of ballistic missiles that can carry either conventional or nuclear weapons trigger a nuclear response? Do attacks against air defense networks that have both strategic and tactical responsibilities run the risk of triggering a nuclear response? There’s also the danger that damage to communications networks designated for conventional combat could force traffic onto the nuclear control systems, further confusing the issue.

#### No limited nuclear wars – extinction.

Webber 19 – Dr Philip Webber has written widely on nuclear issues and is Chair of Scientists for Global Responsibility (SGR) – a membership organisation promoting responsible science and technology. We will all end up killing each other and one nuclear blast could do it. 5/18/19. [METRO.UK “We will all end up killing each other and one nuclear blast could do it,” <https://metro.co.uk/2019/05/18/we-will-all-end-up-killing-each-other-and-one-nuclear-blast-could-do-it-9370115/>] Recut Justin

The nuclear armed nations have inadvertently created a global Doomsday machine, built with 15,000 nuclear weapons.

Most (93%) have been built by Russia and in the US, 3,100 of them are ready to fire within hours.

Pre-programmed targets include main cities as well as a range of military and civilian targets across the world primarily in the UK, Europe, US, Russia and China but also in Japan, Australia and South America.

One nuclear blast, one mistake, one cyber attack could trigger it.

But first a reminder about the incredible destructive power of a nuclear weapon. Modern nuclear warheads are typically 20 times larger than either of the two bombs that obliterated Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the end of the Second World War. What just one nuclear warhead can do is unimaginable. We’ve drawn some of the key features to scale against cityscapes in the UK for a Russian SS-18 RS 20V (NATO designation ‘Satan’) 500kT warhead. US submarines deploy a similar weapon – the Trident II Mk5, 475kT warhead. A deafening, terrifying noise will be created, like an intense thunder that lasts for 10 seconds or longer.

After a blinding flash of light bright destroying the retina of anyone looking, and a violent electromagnetic pulse (EMP) knocking out electrical equipment several miles away, a bomb of this size quickly forms an incandescent fireball 850 metres across.

This is about the same height as the world’s tallest building, the Burj Khalifa. Drawn against the London Canary Wharf financial district or the Manchester skyline, the huge fireball dwarfs one Canary Sq. (240m), the South Tower Deansgate (201m) and the Beetham Tower Hilton, (170m). The fireball engulfs both city centres completely, melting glass and steel and forms an intensely radioactive 60m deep crater zone of molten earth and debris. A devastating supersonic blast wave flattens everything within a radius of two to three km, the entire Manchester centre, an area larger than the City of London, with lighter damage out to eight km. Most people in these areas would be killed or very seriously injured.

The fireball quickly rises forming an enormous characteristic mushroom shaped cloud raining highly radioactive particles (fallout). It rises to 60,000 ft (18,000m) – twice the altitude of Everest – and is 15 miles, 24km across.

This is one warhead. There are 10 such warheads on each of Russia’s 46 missiles (460 in total) and 48 on each of eight US Trident submarines (384 in total). In reality, in a nuclear conflict all of these warheads and a further 956 ready-to-fire are likely to be launched.

Whilst this scale of destruction is horrific and hundreds of millions of people would be killed in a few hours from a combination of blast, radiation and huge fires, there are also terrible longer-term effects.

Scientists predict that huge city-wide firestorms combined with very the high-altitude debris clouds would severely reduce sunlight levels and disrupt the world’s climate for a decade causing drought, a prolonged winter, global famine and catastrophic impacts for all life on earth and in the seas due to intense levels of UV with the destruction of the ozone layer.

But even at the level of a few hundred nuclear warheads, the consequences of a nuclear war would be extremely severe across the world far beyond the areas hit directly. A nuclear conflict between India and Pakistan with ‘only’ 100 small warheads would kill hundreds of millions and cause climate damage leading to a global famine. The sheer destructive nature of nuclear explosions combined with long lasting radiation, means that nuclear weapons are of no military use. ‘Enemy’ territory would be unusable for years because of intense radiation – especially when nuclear power stations and reprocessing plants are hit.

Even if your own country is not hit, radiation and climate damage will spread across the globe. No one escapes the consequences.

But the nuclear nations argue that they build and keep nuclear weapons to make sure that they are never used. After all no one would be stupid enough to actually launch a nuclear weapon facing such terrible retaliation? It sounds obvious. If you threaten any attacker with terrible nuclear devastation of course they won’t attack you. That might be true most of the time. It is very unlikely that any country would launch a nuclear attack deliberately. But there are two very major problems. First, a terrorist organisation with a nuclear weapon cannot be deterred in this way. Secondly, there are several ways in which a nuclear war can start by mistake. A report by the prestigious Chatham House in 2014 documents 30 instances between 1962 and 2002 when nuclear weapons came within minutes of being launched due to miscalculation, miscommunication, or technical errors. What prevented their use on many of these occasions was the intervention of individuals who, against military orders, either refused to authorise a nuclear strike or relay information that would have led to launch. Examples include a weather rocket launch mistaken for an attack on Russia, a US satellite misinterpreting sunlight reflecting off clouds as multiple missiles firings, a 42c chip fault creating a false warning of 220 missiles launched at the United States. Such risks are heightened during political crises.

The risk of mistake is very high because, in a hangover from the Cold War, the USA and Russia each keep 900 warheads ready to fire in a few minutes, in a ‘launch on warning’ status, should a warning of nuclear attack come in.

These nuclear weapons form a dangerous nuclear stand-off – rather like two people holding guns to each other’s heads.

With only a few minutes to evaluate a warning of nuclear attack before warheads would strike, one mistake can trigger disaster. A similar nuclear stand-off exists between India and Pakistan.

#### That destroys astronomical research AND creates a host of logistical problems.

Blake 2/16/22 [James Blake \* Department of Physics and Centre for Space Domain Awareness, University of Warwick, Coventry. “Looking out for a sustainable space.” Astronomy & Geophysics Journal. <https://arxiv.org/pdf/2202.06994.pdf>] Justin

Numerous studies have highlighted the negative effects that large LEO constellations are likely to have on ground- and space-based astronomical observations across a range of wavelengths (Hainaut & Williams 2020; Levchenko et al. 2020; McDowell 2020). Satellite streak contamination in astronomical imaging is by no means a new issue, but the vast numbers and low altitudes involved in maintaining LEO constellations look set to exacerbate the problem, particularly for wide-field systems such as the upcoming Vera C. Rubin Observatory, which will look to study large parts of the sky at any one time, thus resulting in a high probability of field contamination (Massey et al. 2020). An example of a contaminated wide-field image is provided in Figure 6.

While the lowest-altitude constellations are likely to be the brightest, those in higher-altitude bands will perhaps be of greater concern to astronomers; low-altitude satellites will spend much of the night eclipsed in the Earth’s shadow, while satellites in the upper bands of the LEO region will remain visible for larger portions of the night. This will be the case for nodes of the OneWeb constellation, now part-owned by the UK government. OneWeb satellites reside in altitude bands around 1200 km, to take advantage of a local minimum in the debris population. Seitzer (2020) has recommended that constellation operators take precautions to keep their satellites faint, and opt for altitude bands below roughly 600 km, to best combat the issue.

To add to the logistical challenges associated with monitoring a sky that is getting busier every year, surveillance networks may soon be tasked with tracking and cataloguing objects far beyond the ‘high-altitude’ GSO region, namely those in the cislunar domain. The expansion of launch traffic into cislunar space in the wake of NASA’s Artemis programme will undoubtedly pose problems for existing SDA architectures (Bolden et al. 2020): the increased range will result in diminished signal-to-noise, calling for more sensitive instruments; the much larger volume of space in need of monitoring will necessitate a more extensive array of ground- and space-based SDA capabilities; and observations will often be obstructed by the Moon, or eclipsed in shadow, calling for more sophisticated algorithms for object detection and orbital state prediction with sparse or diminished information (Yanagisawa & Kurosaki 2012; Virtanen et al. 2016; Hickson 2018; Nir et al. 2018; Pirovano et al. 2020). It is likely that a variety of astronomical techniques developed for data reduction, classification, fusion, tracking, and association, may prove transferable when applied to many of the upcoming challenges for SDA, from cislunar surveillance to the monitoring of rendezvous and proximity operations for on-orbit servicing and ADR missions.

#### Astronomical research solves every existential threat.

Harvard 17 [Harvard & Smithsonian. No exact date but most recent image cited is from 2017. “How can astronomy improve life on earth?.” Center for Astrophysics. <https://www.cfa.harvard.edu/big-questions/how-can-astronomy-improve-life-earth>] Justin

Our Work

The need for extremely precise instrumentation in astronomy can often be transferred into the medical field. Beyond pure research, which benefits humanity through various technological applications, some laboratories at the Center for Astrophysics pursue research that’s more directly beneficial.

High-energy and neutron optics laboratories design mirrors for the next generation of space-based telescopes. But with a simple modification, these optics can accurately aim high-energy particles for radiation treatment, focusing on destroying tumors while leaving surrounding tissue unharmed. Engineers are working on mirrors that can both focus neutrons from across the Universe, as well as those from a radioactive source sitting in the same room.

Work on nuclear magnetic resonance, which can be used to study molecular physics, can also be used to scan the human body. When used for imaging, this is known as magnetic resonance imaging, or MRI. Scientists at the CfA are developing an open-access, low-magnetic-field human MRI instrument, that can be used for molecular imaging and the study of traumatic brain injury.

On the other side of the coin, astrophysics sometimes adapts technology from the medical field. The complicated debris leftover after a supernova explosion, known as a supernova remnant, can be hard to visualize. We only have our vantage point and cannot travel around the remnant to view the intricacies of its structure. But by measuring how fast the material is traveling, and whether it’s traveling towards us or away, we can create a 3D map of the material’s motion. Supernova researchers are putting this data into medical imaging software originally designed for brain scans to get a 3D model that can be viewed in 360 degrees. To take it one step further, the models can then be 3D printed, allowing you to hold a dead star in your hand.

The Center for Astrophysics | Harvard & Smithsonian sets the standard for astronomical discovery. By pursuing scientific research, our scientists never know what might be the next big breakthrough. New detector technology means better lighter cameras. Astronomical data analysis software can be reconfigured to make cars safer. Novel techniques in radio astronomy paved the way for wireless internet. We don’t know what we are going to find, but we will never know if we don’t look.

How Curiosity Drives Ingenuity

Understanding our Universe is not an easy task. It requires an incredible amount of focused effort among worldwide collaborations of dedicated experts, the constant development of new technology at great expense, and theoretical modelling that pushes the boundaries of science. Even without any guarantee of success, such an undertaking has its benefits.

Astronomy is continually innovating and progressing. Seemingly by accident, scientific and technological developments in astronomy have worked their way into our daily lives. For example, the device you’re currently reading this text on is very likely to involve components and systems that saw their first application in astronomy.

Computers, satellites and the smartphones they service, Global Positioning System (GPS), energy-efficient solar panels, digital camera sensors, airport security scanners, portable X-ray machines, and Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) scanners are just a few of technological advances that are the legacy of astronomy, and that benefit us all on Earth. None of these would have happened if we hadn’t first been dedicated to simple human curiosity about what may be out in the far reaches of our Universe. As it has been throughout our history, the impulse to explore is still one of the greatest wellsprings of human ingenuity.

Protecting the Planet In 1859, the Sun launched an enormous magnetized mass of plasma at the Earth, shorting electrical lines, starting electrical fires and knocking out telegraph communication. The northern lights could be seen as far south as Mexico. If such a solar event hit the Earth today, it is estimated to cause damage measured in the trillions of dollars. Coronal mass ejections (CMEs), like the 1859 event, are giant eruptions of charged particles that threaten satellites, astronauts, and our electrical grid. A suite of CFA missions and instruments are monitoring the Sun, giving us warning of incoming CMEs, allowing time to prepare and protect people and our highly susceptible electronic and communication systems. The X-ray Telescope (XRT) aboard the Hinode spacecraft observes flares, CMEs, and the source of the highly charged flow of particles from the Sun, known as the solar wind. The Atmospheric Imaging Assembly (AIA), developed by scientists at the Center for Astrophysics | Harvard & Smithsonian (CfA), aboard the Solar Dynamics Observatory (SDO) takes fast, multi-wavelength images of the full sun. This allows scientists to watch monitor features at different temperatures and levels of the solar atmosphere. The Parker Solar Probe, will race through the Sun’s atmosphere, collecting material and measuring the solar wind at its source. It will eventually orbit seven times closer than any previous satellite, and withstand temperatures of 2,500 degrees (1,377 degrees Celsius). The Solar Wind Electrons Alphas and Protons (SWEAP) Investigation, developed by CfA scientists and engineers, is the set of instruments on the spacecraft that will directly measure the properties of the plasma in the solar atmosphere during these encounters. A special component of SWEAP is a small instrument that will look around the protective heat shield of the spacecraft directly at the Sun. This will allow SWEAP to sweep up a sample of the atmosphere and touch the Sun, our star, for the first time. Our Sun makes life on Earth possible, but is still an unpredictable, sometimes volatile star. By learning more about our Sun, astronomers can warn us about incoming solar storms and predict the next big eruption. Space Watch

Though the Solar System has certainly cleaned up its act in the 66 million years since an asteroid wiped out the dinosaurs, there have since been a couple of near misses that are too close for comfort.

The Minor Planet Center, located at the Center for Astrophysics, is tasked by the International Astronomical Union to collect and circulate positional measurements of minor planets like asteroids and comets. The Center calculates the motions of newfound objects and alerts observers when an object that might impact the Earth is detected. The orbit calculation and announcement of newly discovered Near-Earth Asteroids (NEOs) is a critically important job, ensuring that we won’t suffer the same fate as the dinosaurs.

Benefits Beyond the Balance Sheet

Astronomy has a unique ability to unite humans. Simply by asking big questions about the Universe and our place in it, we see ourselves as we are: together, voyaging through a singular moment in time on one very special but relatively minuscule planet among the vastness of space.

The sense of wonder inspired by humanity’s quest for knowledge of our Universe has its own important applications. In education, we see the teaching of astronomy at the primary or secondary level leading students to pursue careers in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math). In international relations, we see astronomy as a scientific field that transcends borders and promotes collaboration between global teams in unified pursuit of knowledge. In our culture, we see the impact of keystone scientific discoveries creating a more informed and scientifically literate society.

And let’s not forget that astronomy offers us a glimpse into our shared future. Will our species be able to spread across the cosmos, to colonize other planets, and to preserve our heritage and legacy through the ages? If so, it will only be through the study of astronomy.

#### Satellites enable digitalized agriculture – solves food insecurity.

Prof. Dr. Nevin Demirbaş 18 – Professor, Department of Agricultural Economics, Ege University, “Precision Agriculture in Terms of Food Security : Needs for The Future,” [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/328655146\_Precision\_Agriculture\_in\_Terms\_of\_Food\_Security\_Needs\_for\_The\_Future](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/328655146_Precision_Agriculture_in_Terms_of_Food_Security_Needs_for_The_Future,)

The current world population of 7.6 billion is expected to reach 8.6 billion in 2030, 9.8 billion in 2050 and 11.2 billion in 2100, according to United Nations (UN). With roughly 83 million people being added to the world’s population every year, the upward trend in population size is expected to continue, even assuming that fertility levels will continue to decline (UN, 2017). This means there will be an extra billion people to feed within the next decade. Continuing population and consumption growth will mean that the global demand for food will increase for at least another 50 years. A major correlate of this deceleration in population growth is increased wealth, and with higher purchasing power comes higher consumption and a greater demand for food, all of which add pressure to the food supply system (Godfray et al., 2010; FAO, 2017). At the same time, farmers are experiencing greater competition for land, water, and energy, and the need to curb the many negative effects of food production on the environmentis becoming increasingly clear. The effects of climate change are a further threat. But the world can produce more food and can ensure that it is used more efficiently and equitably (Thornton et al., 2009; Godfray and Garnett, 2014). There is a need for multi-faceted and linked strategies in which different components are explored to ensure sustainable and equitable food security at the global, regional and national level. At the same time, future’s food systems need to be resource efficient and sustainable. Efficient use of water, reduction of soil erosion and degradation to the minimum, minimization of energy input and maximization of yields under uncertain natural conditions are the goal (Hakkim et al., 2016). They pose highest requirements on the underlying information and knowledge infrastructure and make future farming a knowledge business and a very sophisticated management task (Bach and Mauser, 2018). Digitization has increased in importance for the agricultural sector and is described through concepts like Smart Farming (SF), Precision Farming (PF) and Precision Agriculture (PA). These type practices are sciences that is intertwined with several other emerging areas of research and practice (Zhou et al., 2017) such as digital agriculture, decision agriculture, smart agriculture, virtual agriculture, ‘Big-Data’ in agriculture, sustainable agriculture, agriculture 4.0, prescription farming and others (Yost et al., 2018). Technology like GPS, and, in particular, sensors are being used in field cultivation and livestock farming to undertake automatized agricultural management activities. PA or PF is generally defined as information and technology based farm management system to identify, analyse and manage spatial and temporal variability within fields for optimum productivity and profitability, sustainability and protection of the land resource by minimizing the production costs. Increasing environmental consciousness of the general public is necessitating us to modify agricultural management practices for sustainable conservation of natural resources such as water, air and soil quality, while staying economically profitable (Sonka and Cheng, 2015; Webber et al., 2017). Stakeholders, such as farmers, seed producers, machinery manufacturers, and agricultural service providers are trying to influence this process (Schönfeld et al., 2018). These practices are facilitating long-term improvements in order to achieve effective environmental protection. Despite all the positive contributions, the use of such technologies brings with it some controversial issues, particularly data protection.

#### It’s an impact multiplier – causes extinction.

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Extinction and Ecological Collapse More than half of the large animals that once inhabited the Earth have been wiped from it by human action since 1970, according to the Worldwide Fund for Nature’s Living Planet Index.3 So, too, have half the fish in the sea on which humans rely for food.4 Humans are, in the words of the great biologist E. O. Wilson, ‘tearing down the biosphere’, demolishing the very home that keeps us alive.5 Extinction, it should be noted, is a part of life: 99.9 per cent of all species ever to evolve on this planet have disappeared, and new ones like ourselves have arisen to replace them. But extinction rates like today’s – a hundred to a thousand times faster than normal – are a freak occurrence that usually takes tens of millions of years, not mere decades. Animal, plant and marine species are presently vanishing so fast that scientists have dubbed our time “the Sixth Extinction” – the sixth such megadeath in the geological history of the Earth.6 By the end of the present century, Wilson says, it is possible that up to half of the eight million species thought to exist here will be gone. Furthermore, in all previous extinctions, natural events like asteroid strikes and vast volcanic outbursts have been to blame. This will be the only time in the Earth’s history when the wipe-out was caused by a single species. Us.7 [Ommited 178-180] Oxfam, illustrates how just one tenth of humanity consumes five times as much in the way of material resources (expressed here in the form of their carbon footprint) as the poorest half of the world population. The affluent are chiefly responsible for the destruction taking place on a global scale as they seek to sustain lifestyles that the planet can no longer afford or support. The significance of this blind spot around consumption for global food security is very great. As described in earlier chapters, the world food system depends critically on soil, water, nutrients and a stable climate, to supply humanity’s daily need for nutriment – and all of these essential resources are in increasingly short supply, chiefly because of our own mismanagement of them and our collective failure to appreciate that they are finite. On current trends, the existing food system will tend to break down, first regionally and then globally, owing to resource scarcity from the 2020s onward, and especially towards the mid century – unless there is radical change in the world diet and the means by which we feed ourselves. This will lead to increasing outbreaks of violence and war. Nobody, neither rich nor poor, will escape the consequences. It remains an open question whether panicking regimes in Russia, the USA or even France would be ruthless enough to deploy atomic weapons in an attempt to quell invasion by tens of millions of desperate refugees, fleeing famine and climate chaos in their own homelands – but the possibility ought not to be ignored. That nuclear war is at least a possible outcome of food and climate crises was first flagged in the report The Age of Consequences by Kurt Campbell and the US-based Centre for Strategic and International Studies, which stated ‘it is clear that even nuclear war cannot be excluded as a political consequence of global warming’. 15 Food insecurity is therefore a driver in the preconditions for the use of nuclear weapons, whether limited or unlimited. A global famine is a likely outcome of limited use of nuclear weapons by any country or countries – and would be unavoidable in the event of an unlimited nuclear war between America and Russia, making it unwinnable for either. And that, as the mute hands of the ‘Doomsday Clock’ so eloquently admonish, is also the most likely scenario for the premature termination of the human species. Such a grim scenario can be alleviated by two measures: the voluntary banning by the whole of humanity of nuclear weapons, their technology, materials and stocks – and by a global effort to secure food against future insecurity by diverting the funds now wasted on nuclear armaments into building the sustainable food and water systems of the future (see Chapters 8 and 9). Food Security Our demand for food is set to double by the 2060s – potentially the decade of ‘peak people’, the moment in history when the irresistible human population surge may top out at around 10 billion. However, as we have seen, many of the resources needed to supply it agriculturally could halve and the climate for the growing of food outdoors become far more hostile. Why food insecurity is an existential threat to humanity should, by now, be abundantly clear from the earlier chapters of this book: present systems are unsustainable and, as they fail, will pose risks both to civilization and, should these spiral into nuclear conflict, to the future of the human species. The important thing to note in this chapter is that food insecurity plays into many, if not all, of the other existential threats facing humanity. The food sector’s role in extinction, resource scarcity, global toxicity and potential nuclear war has already been explained. Its role in the suppression of conflict is discussed in the next chapter. Its role in securing the future of the megacities, and of a largely urbanised humanity, is covered in Chapter 8. And its role in sustaining humanity through the peak in population and into a sustainable world beyond is covered in Chapter 9. Food clearly has a pivotal role in the future of human population – both as a driver of population growth when supplies are abundant and as a potential driver of population decline, should food chains collapse. It is no exaggeration to state that the fate of civilisation depends on it. Food insecurity affects the progression of pandemic diseases, often in ways that are not entirely obvious. First, new pandemics of infectious disease tend to originate in developing regions where nutritional levels are poor or agricultural practices favour the evolution of novel pathogens such as, for example, the new flu strains seen every year – which arise mainly from places where people, pigs and poultry live side-by-side and shuffle viruses between them – and also novel diseases like SARS and MERS. Second, because totally unknown diseases tend to arise first in places where rainforests are being cut down for farming and viruses hitherto confined to wild animals and birds make an enforced transition into humans. Examples of novel human diseases escaping from the rainforest and tropical savannah in recent times include HIV/AIDS, Hendra, Nipah, Ebola, Marburg, Lassa and Hanta, Lujo, Junin, Machupo, Rift Valley, Congo and Zika.29 And thirdly, because the loss of vital micronutrients from heavily farmed soils and from food itself predisposes many populations to various deficiency diseases – for example, a lack of selenium in the diet has been linked with increased risk from both HIV/AIDS and bowel cancer.30 A key synergy is the way **hunger** and **malnourishment** **exacerbate** the **spread** **of** **disease**, classic examples being the 1918 Global Flu Pandemic which spread rapidly among war-starved populations, or the more recent cholera outbreak in war-torn Yemen. In a fresh twist, Dr Melinda Beck of North Carolina University has demonstrated that obesity – itself a form of malnutrition – may cause increased deaths from influenza by both aiding the virus and suppressing the patient’s immune response.31