### Off

A. Interpretation – “economic engagement” means the aff must be an exclusively economic action – it cannot encompass broader forms of engagement

Jakstaite, 10 - Doctoral Candidate Vytautas Magnus University Faculty of Political Sciences and Diplomacy (Lithuania) (Gerda, “Containment and Engagement as Middle-Range Theories” Baltic Journal of Law & Politics Volume 3, Number 2 (2010), DOI: 10.2478/V10076-010-0015-7)

The approach to engagement as economic engagement focuses exclusively on economic instruments of foreign policy with the main national interest being security. Economic engagement is a policy of the conscious development of economic relations with the adversary in order to change the target state‟s behaviour and to improve bilateral relations

That means trade and aid in the form of loans or grants

Resnick, 1 – Assistant Professor of Political Science at Yeshiva University (Evan, Journal of International Affairs, “Defining Engagement” Vol. 54 No. 2, Political Science Complete)

A REFINED DEFINITION OF ENGAGEMENT

In order to establish a more effective framework for dealing with unsavory regimes, I propose that we define engagement as the attempt to influence the political behavior of a target state through the comprehensive establishment and enhancement of contacts with that state across multiple issue-areas (i.e. diplomatic, military, economic, cultural). The following is a brief list of the specific forms that such contacts might include:

DIPLOMATIC CONTACTS

Extension of diplomatic recognition; normalization of diplomatic relations

Promotion of target-state membership in international institutions and regimes

Summit meetings and other visits by the head of state and other senior government officials of sender state to target state and vice-versa

MILITARY CONTACTS

Visits of senior military officials of the sender state to the target state and vice-versa

Arms transfers

Military aid and cooperation

Military exchange and training programs

Confidence and security-building measures

Intelligence sharing

ECONOMIC CONTACTS

Trade agreements and promotion

Foreign economic and humanitarian aid in the form of loans and/or grants

CULTURAL CONTACTS

Cultural treaties

Inauguration of travel and tourism links

Sport, artistic and academic exchanges(n25)

B. Violation – the affirmative removes restrictions cuban oil assistance and technical assitance, which is not an exclusively economic instrument

C. Vote negative

1. Predictable limits – blurring the lines between economic and other forms of engagement makes any positive interaction with another country topical – becomes impossible for the neg to predict or prepare

2. Equitable ground – the economic limit is vital to critiques of economics, trade disads, and non-economic counterplans

## 1NC Shell

#### Text: The United States should normalize hydr if and only if the Republic of Cuba ensures democratic reforms.

(If you want to be more specific, you could add free and fair elections, freedom of speech, and/or human rights.)

#### Conditioning on democratic reforms solves best

**Noriega and Cárdenas 2012** (Roger F. is a former assistant secretary of state for Western Hemisphere affairs (Canada, Latin America, and the Caribbean) and a former U.S. ambassador to the Organization of American States. He coordinates AEI's program on Latin America and writes for the Institute's Latin American Outlook series. and José R.Writer for foreign policy, served in several foreign policy positions during the George W. Bush administration (2004-2009), including on the National Security Council staff. He is a consultant with Vision Americas in Washington, DC., “An action plan for US policy in the Americas,” Dec 5th http://www.aei.org/outlook/foreign-and-defense-policy/regional/latin-america/an-action-plan-for-us-policy-in-the-americas/ AS)

A US strategy to reengage with the Americas must include a vibrant democracy promotion component to assist US partners in helping to strengthen and consolidate their democratic institutions against the predations of would-be authoritarians. To be sure, the primary democracy-building responsi-bility rests with the leaders and citizens of each country. It is for each nation to make the difficult decisions to reduce the power of the state, protect individual freedoms, and promote accountability and integrity in government. The United States is not a disinterested bystander, however. It is best served by working to advance the cause of democracy around the world, for the very real benefits of America’s long-term security and prosperity. This is not only an issue of US self-interest. Democracy also confers significant benefits on its citizens wherever it has succeeded in taking root, resulting in more effective government, more security, and better prospects for economic development. The United States can support this process by backing reformers who are working in their countries to consolidate stable, honest, and rules-based institutions and creating incentives for increased accountability in government through US assistance. Also critical is the need to increase support for the bedrock of representative government: civil society nongovernmental organizations. These include, but are not limited to, busi¬ness associations, media organizations, government, labor unions, consumer and environmental groups, and women’s and human rights watchdog groups. In Cuba, citizens must rise to this challenge by overcoming their fears and claiming their future. Before they can build that future, they must dismantle the vestiges of the police state and command economy. The responsibility is theirs, but their friends can help with a series of bold and constructive measures. Although it is more important than ever to preserve the economic sanctions and use them as leverage to bring about broad, deep, and irreversible reforms, the United States should use the promise of aid, trade, and normal political relations as an incentive to leverage change. The United States must be conscientious and bold in its support for democrats in the Americas. It must not allow the hostility of antidemocratic regimes to deter it from helping struggling democrats in countries such as Venezuela, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Nicaragua. If those democrats are willing to take the necessary risks to advocate for different futures for their countries, the United States must demonstrate its solidarity and support for them.

#### Cuba will say yes – Castro is willing

Oppman, 12 Patrick Oppmann is CNN's Havana-based correspondent, responsible for covering Cuba and the surrounding region for all of the network's platforms. In addition to his reporting, Oppmann regularly shoots and edits his stories. Oppmann has traveled widely throughout Latin America and is fluent in Spanish. During an earlier assignment in Cuba, he covered a variety of stories, including the new economic challenges the country faces (7/26/12, Patrick, CNN, “Raul Castro again says Cuba willing to talk with U.S.,” http://www.cnn.com/2012/07/26/world/americas/cuba-us-talks)

Havana, Cuba (CNN) -- On Cuba's main holiday honoring the island's revolution, President Raul Castro declared once again that his government is ready to enter into talks with the United States. "The table is set. If they want to discuss the problems of democracy, as they say, freedom of speech, human rights, the things they have invented for years, we will discuss them," he said. But he added that the Cuban government has its own grievances. The comments came on the 59th anniversary of the assault led by Fidel Castro on a military barracks that marked the beginning of the Cuban revolution. This is not the first time Raul Castro has expressed a willingness to talk with Washington. In April 2009, for example, speaking at a summit of leftist Latin American leaders gathered in Venezuela, he said he was willing to discuss "everything, everything, everything" with the United States, even such sensitive topics as human rights, freedom of the press and political prisoners. Cubans were given the day off from work Thursday, and the July 26 event has historically been reserved for important announcements. Castro's speech was broadcast several times on the island's state-controlled media. His remarks appeared unscripted, as he made several off-the-cuff jokes and said he had not planned to give a speech. Cuban First Vice President Jose Ramon Machado Ventura had already given the keynote address, in which he demanded that the United States return the naval base near the Cuban town of Guantanamo, where this year's celebrations are taking place The United States maintains a five-decades-old trade embargo on Cuba, and any improvements in relations have been stalled by a number of issues, including the jailing of State Department contractor Alan Gross on charges of espionage in Cuba. After Machado Ventura's speech, Raul Castro took the stage, he said, to thank the crowd. But he said he had made several speeches this week and would not be making formal remarks. Then he dived into the strained U.S.-Cuba relations, saying he would prefer the two countries were adversaries only on the baseball field.

#### Democracy has a substantial and empirical association with absence of militarized conflict – shared norms, communication and transparency generate peace between democracies

Dafoe 11 (Allan Dafoe, Ph.D. candidate in the Travers Department of Political Science, Berkeley, “Statistical Critiques of the Democratic Peace: Caveat Emptor,” American Journal of Political Science, Volume 55, Issue 2, pages 247–262, April 2011)

The “**democratic peace**”—the inference that democracies rarely fight each other—**is one of the most important and empirically robust findings in** international relations (**IR**).1 The apparent empirical association2 between joint democracy3 and peace has been debated and challenged since its first discovery by political scientists to the present (Gartzke 2007). Scholars have argued that this empirical association is in fact a product of other confounding factors, such as Cold War alliances (Farber and Gowa 1997; Gowa 1999), satisfaction with the regional status quo (Kacowicz 1995), shared foreign policy interests (Gartzke 1998, 2000), unmeasured factors such as dyad-specific effects (Green, Kim, and Yoon 2001), stable borders (Gibler 2007), and capital openness and development (Gartzke 2007; Gartzke and Hewitt 2010). Despite the large number of serious challenges, most current **quantitative analyses continue to find a substantial, robust, and statistically significant association between joint democracy and the absence of militarized conflict**. This article will analyze a recent challenge to the democratic peace (Gartzke 2007), situate it in the context of other statistical challenges to the democratic peace, and show that the democratic peace persists as a compelling finding. In so doing, this article also identifies new features of the democratic peace. It is important to be clear about what this empirical association implies about international politics. Despite the robustness of this result to different model specifications, this observational finding by itself does not prove that it is characteristics of democracies—such as regular competitive elections, constraints on the executive, liberal norms, or civil rights—that make these countries more peaceful toward each other. Even less does it prove that the forceful spread of democracy in particular regions of the world will reduce the frequency or severity of wars. Justifying causal claims such as these exclusively using analyses of observational data requires the leverage of strong assumptions. It is for this reason that there is less agreement about the actual causal mechanisms of the democratic peace than that around the underlying explanandum. **Scholars have proposed that the democratic peace arises because of shared norms** (Maoz and Russett 1993**), restraint on democratic leaders** (Bueno deMesquita et al. 1999),**more credible communication through transparency** (Schultz 1998) or domestic audience costs (Fearon 1994; Tomz 2007; Weeks 2008), greater capacity to reach stable bargains (Lipson 2003), and other possible causal pathways. On the other hand, it may not be a “democratic” characteristic at all that accounts for the peace, but some other co-occurring or preceding factor, such as shared strategic circumstances, shared political systems, capitalism, prosperity, liberal economic norms, or other factors. Nonetheless, the democracy-peace empirical association remains of paramount importance because, **despite our best attempts to “control for” other possible correlates of this peace, the fact that two countries are democratic remains strongly associated with them having peaceful relations**. Furthermore, under relatively modest assumptions this apparently peaceful proclivity seems unlikely to have arisen by chance (that is, the finding is “statistically significant”). **This empirical association is foundational to a vast literature testing, refining, and extending theories about the apparent relationship between regime type and peace.** Thus it matters greatly whether this association is robust to potential confounders (for reviews of this literature, see George and Bennett 2004; Ray 1995).

### OFF

#### TPA spurs growth and trade leadership---political capital generates momentum for bill passage

Mark Kennedy and Mack McLarty 2/12/14, “Expand trade, improve economy: Column,” http://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2014/02/12/trade-promotion-authority-obama-economic-growth-column/5340989/

After struggling with anemic growth for the last six years, the nation now finds itself with an opportunity to renew its vitality through the most powerful economic elixir: expanded trade. This benefit cannot be achieved without giving our partners the confidence that the United States is negotiating in good faith, free from last minute changes and additions. This requires giving President Obama Trade Promotion Authority (commonly known as TPA or "fast track") to present trade agreements for an up or down vote in Congress. Passing TPA is distasteful to both Republicans who do not the trust the president and Democrats who believe the benefits of free trade are overstated. Yet before they added cherry flavors, many medicines with powerful cures had a bitter flavor. For the sake of America's economic health, Congress must come together in a bipartisan fashion to give President Obama fast track authority, a power granted to every chief executive since 1974. The Obama Administration, led ably by United States Trade Representative (USTR) Michael Froman, has engaged the European Union and nations in the Pacific in serious negotiations for high standard trade agreements. These two accords would increase ties with historic allies, make us more competitive, increase job opportunities, enhance incomes and allow American businesses to effectively sell to the fast growing Asian region. Critics would have you believe that somehow these agreements would weaken environmental and labor standards, but most partner countries in question are already high-income nations that embrace strong worker and environmental protections. Ambassador Froman attempted to assuage those fears saying, "We have made clear that we're committed to negotiating a high-standard, ambitious comprehensive deal." The TPA bill introduced by Sens. Max Baucus, D-Mont., and Orrin Hatch, R-Utah, already incorporates new protections to ensure that all partner countries meet rigorous guidelines. As President Clinton's chief of staff when the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) was passed and one of the deciding votes the last time Congress granted Fast Track authority, we know how hard it is to move a significant trade accord. We also know how the dire predictions of skeptics are often shown to be illusory. The only sucking sound induced by NAFTA was the gasps of trade skeptics whose economic chimeras failed to materialize. NAFTA has instead exceeded expectations. It launched Mexico on a path to strengthen its democratic institutions and progressively open its economy. A more democratic and competitive Mexico, along with a more tightly integrated supply chain between the three North American economies, makes each member of the NAFTA trio more competitive in world markets. Similar benefits await if we proceed with the proposed Asian and European accords. Passing TPA will require significant attention and effort from President Obama and Congress. Over 500 advocacy groups have written to lawmakers urging a vote against it. To date, 49 more House Democrats are on record opposing fast track than supported NAFTA in 1994. Advocating for free trade will require the president to stand up to members of his own party to further his economic agenda. It will take courage to forcefully advocate for an issue that splits one's party, but the benefits to the nation will far outweigh any intra-party strife. That is what presidential leadership is all about. There has never been an economic golden age without trade. It has been the driving force behind new innovation. Its expansion has allowed countless people the chance to achieve financial prosperity and advance civilization. Trade has a wonderful history, but we believe its best days are still ahead. Every trade liberalization advance has enhanced the well being of mankind. The United States has arrived at a monumental opportunity to craft landmark trade agreements with the world. Let us not fail to build accords that will spark economic growth, create a better future for our children and launch a new golden era of trade.

#### The plan gets drawn into the most divisive embargo debates---it’s perceived as throwing the Cuban government a lifeline

Nerurkar & Sullivan 10 – Neelesh Nerurkar, Specialist in Energy Policy at the Congressional Research Service, and Mark P. Sullivan, Specialist in Latin American Affairs at the Congressional Research Service, November 29, 2010, “Cuba’s Offshore Oil Development: Background and U.S. Policy Considerations,” online: http://assets.opencrs.com/rpts/R41522\_20101129.pdf

On the opposite side of the policy debate, a number of policy groups and members of Congress oppose engagement with Cuba, including U.S. investment in Cuba’s offshore energy development. A legislative initiative introduced in the 111th Congress, H.R. 5620, would go further and impose visa restrictions and economic sanctions on foreign companies and its executives who help facilitate the development of Cuba’s petroleum resources. The bill asserts that offshore drilling by or under the authorization of the Cuban government poses a “serious economic and environmental threat to the United States” because of the damage that an oil spill could cause. Opponents of U.S. support for Cuba’s offshore oil development also argue that such involvement would provide an economic lifeline to the Cuban government and thus prolong the continuation of the communist regime. They maintain that if Cuba reaped substantial economic benefits from offshore oil development, it could reduce societal pressure on Cuba to enact market-oriented economic reforms. Some who oppose U.S. involvement in Cuba’s energy development contend that while Cuba might have substantial amounts of oil offshore, it will take years to develop. They maintain that the Cuban government is using the enticement of potential oil profits to break down the U.S. economic embargo on Cuba.59

#### Free trade prevents multiple scenarios for world war and WMD Terrorism

Panzner-New York Institute of Finance-8

Michael, faculty at the New York Institute of Finance, 25-year veteran of the global stock, bond, and currency markets who has worked in New York and London for HSBC, Soros Funds, ABN Amro, Dresdner Bank, and JPMorgan Chase “Financial Armageddon: Protect Your Future from Economic Collapse,” pg. 136-138

Continuing calls for curbs on the flow of finance and trade will inspire the United States and other nations to spew forth protectionist legislation like the notorious Smoot-Hawley bill. Introduced at the start of the Great Depression, it triggered a series of tit-for-tat economic responses, which many commentators believe helped turn a serious economic downturn into a prolonged and devastating global disaster. But if history is any guide, those lessons will have been long forgotten during the next collapse. Eventually, fed by a mood of desperation and growing public anger, restrictions on trade, finance, investment, and immigration will almost certainly intensify. Authorities and ordinary citizens will likely scrutinize the cross-border movement of Americans and outsiders alike, and lawmakers may even call for a general crackdown on nonessential travel. Meanwhile, many nations will make transporting or sending funds to other countries exceedingly difficult. As desperate officials try to limit the fallout from decades of ill-conceived, corrupt, and reckless policies, they will introduce controls on foreign exchange. Foreign individuals and companies seeking to acquire certain American infrastructure assets, or trying to buy property and other assets on the cheap thanks to a rapidly depreciating dollar, will be stymied by limits on investment by noncitizens. Those efforts will cause spasms to ripple across economies and markets, disrupting global payment, settlement, and clearing mechanisms. All of this will, of course, continue to undermine business confidence and consumer spending. In a world of lockouts and lockdowns, any link that transmits systemic financial pressures across markets through arbitrage or portfolio-based risk management, or that allows diseases to be easily spread from one country to the next by tourists and wildlife, or that otherwise facilitates unwelcome exchanges of any kind will be viewed with suspicion and dealt with accordingly. The rise in isolationism and protectionism will bring about ever more heated arguments and dangerous confrontations over shared sources of oil, gas, and other key commodities as well as factors of production that must, out of necessity, be acquired from less-than-friendly nations. Whether involving raw materials used in strategic industries or basic necessities such as food, water, and energy, efforts to secure adequate supplies will take increasing precedence in a world where demand seems constantly out of kilter with supply. Disputes over the misuse, overuse, and pollution of the environment and natural resources will become more commonplace. Around the world, such tensions will give rise to full-scale military encounters, often with minimal provocation. In some instances, economic conditions will serve as a convenient pretext for conflicts that stem from cultural and religious differences. Alternatively, nations may look to divert attention away from domestic problems by channeling frustration and populist sentiment toward other countries and cultures. Enabled by cheap technology and the waning threat of American retribution, terrorist groups will likely boost the frequency and scale of their horrifying attacks, bringing the threat of random violence to a whole new level. Turbulent conditions will encourage aggressive saber rattling and interdictions by rogue nations running amok. Age-old clashes will also take on a new, more heated sense of urgency. China will likely assume an increasingly belligerent posture toward Taiwan, while Iran may embark on overt colonization of its neighbors in the Mideast. Israel, for its part, may look to draw a dwindling list of allies from around the world into a growing number of conflicts. Some observers, like John Mearsheimer, a political scientist at the University of Chicago, have even speculated that an “intense confrontation” between the United States and China is “inevitable” at some point. More than a few disputes will turn out to be almost wholly ideological. Growing cultural and religious differences will be transformed from wars of words to battles soaked in blood. Long-simmering resentments could also degenerate quickly, spurring the basest of human instincts and triggering genocidal acts. Terrorists employing biological or nuclear weapons will vie with conventional forces using jets, cruise missiles, and bunker-busting bombs to cause widespread destruction. Many will interpret stepped-up conflicts between Muslims and Western societies as the beginnings of a new world war.

### Off

#### Global oil production networks constitute an assemblage of military, economic, political, and social forms of domination. This set of arranges must be challenged in its specific instantiations by tracing the flows of production, distribution, and consumption.

Watts in 2012(Michael, Class of 1963 Professor of Geography and Development Studies at the University of California, Berkeley, where he has taught for over thirty years. A Guggenheim Fellow in 2003, he served as director of the Institute of International Studies from 1994 to 2004. His research has addressed food and energy security, rural development, and land reform in Africa, South Asia, and Vietnam. Over the last twenty years he has written extensively on the oil industry in West Africa and the Gulf of Guinea. The author of fourteen books and over two hundred articles, he has received awards and fellowships from such organizations as the Social Science Research Council, the MacArthur Foundation, the National Science Foundation, and the Guggenheim Foundation. His latest book with photographer Ed Kashi is *The Curse of the Black Gold* (powerHouse, 2008). Watts has consulted for a number of development agencies including OXFAM and UNDP, and has provided expert testimony for governmental and other agencies. Watts is chair of the board of trustees of the Social Science Research Council and serves on a number of boards of nonprofit organizations, including the Pacific Institute. “A Tale of Two Gulfs: life, death, and dispossession along two oil frontiers,” American Quarterly, Vol. 64, No. 3, September)

**A key starting point is to see oil and gas as a global production network with particular properties**, **actors**, **networks**, **governance structures**, **institutions**, **and organizations** (a global value chain in the industry argot) **but what is, in effect, a regime of accumulation and a mode of regulation**.[16](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/american_quarterly/v064/64.3.watts.html" \l "f16) Seen in this way, oil and gas is gargantuan on all counts. **The value of the recoverable oil and gas globally is perhaps $160 trillion** (more than the value of all equity markets and equal to the total value of all tradable financial assets); the value of the oil and gas market alone is over US$3 trillion. Assets of the entire industry now total over US$40 trillion. Close to 70 percent of all oil produced is traded (over 50 million barrels per day), accounting for the largest component in world trade. Not unusually, **over 1 billion barrels of oil can be traded in a day** on the New York Mercantile Exchange and the InterContinental Exchange, **much of this being "paper oil"** (never delivered physically as oil), which is to say part of the booming commodities futures market. By way of comparison, if Exxon were a country it would be twice as large as the GDP of Nigeria (a major oil producer and home to 150 million people) and comparable to Sweden; the largest five oil companies' collective revenues exceed the GDP of all of Africa.[17](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/american_quarterly/v064/64.3.watts.html" \l "f17) **The production network is held together materially by a global oil infrastructure with its own particular geography**. Close to 5 million producing oil wells puncture the surface of the earth (77,000 were drilled last year, 4,000 offshore); 3,300 are subsea, puncturing the earth's crust on the continental shelf in some cases thousands of meters below the sea's surface. There are by some estimations over 40,000 oil fields in operation. More than 2 million kilometers of pipelines blanket the globe in a massive trunk-network (another 180,000 kilometers will be built at a capital cost of over $265 billion over the next four years); another 75,000 kilometers of lines transport oil and gas along the sea floor. There are 6,000 fixed platforms, and 635 offshore drillings rigs (the international rig total for June 2011 is over 1,158, according to Baker Hughes).[18](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/american_quarterly/v064/64.3.watts.html" \l "f18) Over four thousand oil tankers move 2.42 billion tons of oil and oil products every year—one-third of global seaborne trade; over eighty massive, floating production and storage vessels have been installed in the last five years. **This petro-infrastructure also accounts for almost 40 percent of global CO2 emissions. All in all, there is nothing quite like it**. **[End Page 441]** **A** seemingly **unstoppable rush to discover and refine more of a resource that everyone agrees is finite feeds this oil hardware**, literally and figuratively. Gavin Bridge calls this **the technological imperative that manifests itself in the aggressive pursuit of economies of scale in production and refining, and in transportation.**[19](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/american_quarterly/v064/64.3.watts.html" \l "f19) **There is a dialectical interaction**, as he sees it, **between efforts to reduce unit costs (**by scaling up production) **and the scaling up of transportation (**to handle increased product volumes). **This** imperative **drives the oil frontier to the ends of the earth**, **or** more properly **a mad gallop to the bottom of the ocean**. Deepwater exploration is the new mantra (deepwater offshore production grew by 78 percent between 2007 and 2011). On August 2, 2007, a Russian submarine with two parliamentarians on board planted a titanium flag two miles below the North Pole. At stake were the lucrative new oil and gas fields—by some estimations 10 billion tons of oil equivalent—on the Arctic seafloor. What is on offer is a great deepwater land grab, which requires a vast floating and submersible infrastructure: very large crude carriers; the floating, production, storage, and offloading vehicles; massive submersible technologies linking umbilicals, risers, wellheads to floating production and storage devices; high-capacity production rigs and refineries capable of turning overnight 250,000 barrels of oil into 10 million gallons of gasoline, diesel, and jet fuel. **Overlaid on the oil and gas network is an astonishing patchwork quilt of territorial concessions. Spatial technologies and** spatial **representations are foundational to the oil industry**: seismic devices to map the contours of reservoirs, geographic information systems to monitor and meter the flows of products within pipeline, and of course the map to determine subterranean property rights. Hard rock geology is a science of the vertical, but when harnessed to the marketplace and profitability it is the map that becomes the instrument of surveillance, control, and rule. **The oil and gas industry is a cartographer's dream-space**: a landscape of lines, axes, hubs, spokes, nodes, points, blocks, and flows. As a space of flows and connectivity, these spatial oil networks are unevenly visible (subsurface, virtual) in their operations.[20](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/american_quarterly/v064/64.3.watts.html" \l "f20) Mitchell's exhortation **to "closely follow the oil" means tracing the links** between pipelines and pumping stations, refineries and shipping routes, road systems and automobile cultures, that is**, across the infrastructural networks, across the worlds of engineering and title deeds, into the charnel houses of finance and the military and thereby to discover "how a set of relations was engineered among oil, violence, finance, expertise and democracy."**[21](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/american_quarterly/v064/64.3.watts.html" \l "f21) **In seeing oil as an assemblage** and as a zone of political and economic calculation, **I want to emphasize the variety of actors, agents, and processes that** **[End Page 442]** **give shape to our contemporary iteration of hydrocarbon capitalism**: this is obviously **the supermajors, the** national oil companies (**NOCs**) and **the service companies** (Halliburton, Schlumberger) and **the** massive **oil critical infrastructures**, but also **the apparatuses of the petrostates** themselves, **the** massive **engineering companies and financial groups**, **the shadow economies** (theft, money laundering, drugs, organized crime), **the rafts of nongovernmental organizations** (human rights organizations, monitoring agencies, corporate social responsibility groups, voluntary regulatory agencies), **the research institutes and lobbying groups**, **the landscape of oil consumption** (from SUVs to pharmaceuticals), **and** not least **the oil communities, the military and paramilitary groups**, and the **social movements that surround the operations of**, and shape the functioning of, **the oil industry narrowly construed**. But this is only a start. **The financial sector is key both in terms of project financing but also as oil itself becomes a financialized asset** reflecting a radical change in the oil market itself in the last decade or so. **This opens the door to securitization, speculation, and the question of regulatory agencies and the lack thereof**. **These** governance **institutions include the commodity exchanges but also the newly emerging global governance mechanisms** such as the International Energy Forum. And not least for every barrel of oil produced, moved, refined, and consumed there are carbon emissions (and thereby carbon trading, carbon credits, offsets, and carbon markets), which is itself a complex market with its own politics and dynamics. **The connectivities between oil, finance, the military and defense industries, petrochemicals, and the new life science industries only hints at the circumference of this vast assemblage.** **The** oil **assemblage resembles**, in some respects, what Andrew Barry has called **a "technological zone,"** a space **within which "differences between technical practices, procedures or forms have been reduced, or common standards have been established**."[22](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/american_quarterly/v064/64.3.watts.html" \l "f22) Barry sees such a zone as containing or producing different and multiple spaces (some of which have no boundaries as such) through the operations of metrological (measurement), infrastructural (connection), and qualificatory (assessment) standards. To pursue the analogy, **an oil assemblage is what Mitchell calls a coordinated but dispersed set of regulations, calculative arrangements, infrastructural and technical procedures that render certain objects or flows governable.****[23](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/american_quarterly/v064/64.3.watts.html" \l "f23)An** oil **assemblage is a sort of vast governable, and occasionally very ungovernable, space.****[24](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/american_quarterly/v064/64.3.watts.html" \l "f24)** If the oil assemblage is a space of standardization, its operations, however, are always temporally and geographically contingent**. One of the assemblage's structuring forces, always constituted locally, is what I call the permanent frontier**. **[End Page 443]**

#### The alternative is a challenge to the ontological framework of neoliberalism – by breaking away from this political ontology can we introduce alternative means in the political arena including justice and solidarity.

Oksala in 2011(Johanna, Senior Research Fellow in the Academy of Finland research project is Philosophy and Politics in Feminist Theory at the University of Helsinki, “Violence and Neoliberal Governmentality,” *Constellations Volume 18, No 3)*

**If we accept my analysis of the relationship between neoliberalism and political violence, however, irrational violence appears to become the only meaningful form that violent resistance against neoliberalism can take. The implication of the specific relationship between neoliberalism and political violence is**, **paradoxically, that there can be no cost-effective and, in this sense, rational practices of violence that could function as genuine resistance against it**. Burning cars in rich neighbourhoods instead of poor ones would mean adopting the very political ontology one is attempting to question and transform: **all human behavior should not be reduced to cost-effective means, to an end. If we want to oppose neoliberalism not just as an economic policy, but also as a socio-political matrix, we have to challenge the ontological framework that explains all human behavior through the economic analysis of its costs and effects.** Some forms of behavior, such as violence, must retain an irreducibly moral and political meaning. **The paradoxical relationship between neoliberalism and violent resistance does not obviously imply that the only meaningful form of protest against neoliberalism is irrational violence. On the contrary, it should constitute a strong reason not to engage in violence, but to seek other ways of resisting**. While we have to accept that practical forms of resistance against neoliberalism have to consider the efficaciousness of their strategies and even apply strictly economic, cost-benefit analysis to some of their actions, **economic rationality should not form the framework for assessing violence as a form of resistance. We should question neoliberalism’s exclusive stake to rationality and introduce alternative means and ends to the political arena: justice, compassion, creativity and solidarity,** for example. Many of the peaceful protests against neoliberal hegemony – demonstrations, public performances and the occupation of public spaces – provide good examples of this. I am thus not promoting mindless, irrational violence, but I contend that **the economic irrationality of violence does not amount to its meaninglessness, not unless we have lost all frameworks other than the neoliberal for understanding social reality**. **The expressive and disruptive forces of violence are a genuine and sometimes appealing alternative to people disenchanted with the all-encompassing framework of cost-benefit analysis and the systemic, “rational” forms of violence compatible with** it. I also disagree with ˇ Ziˇzek’s claim that advanced capitalism is worldless in the sense that it contains no worldview. **Not unlike Nazism and communism neoliberalism contains an explicit worldview: it holds metaphysical assumptions about what human beings and societies are essentially like by maintaining a belief that human beings are always rational beings driven by natural self-interest.** This is not a problem, a lamentable manifestation of the human condition, but something to be affirmed because it is ultimately the engine for economic growth. Neoliberalism also advances values and political ideals for the optimal organisation of human societies: the maximal material wellbeing of the population must be the undisputed goal of all societies and it is achieved only by continuous economic growth. **The importance of free competition and the privileging of market mechanisms is thus not based solely on their economic rationality. They are understood as the means for a good life** where good life is understood to include both maximal wealth and freedom. Free markets guarantee that people have maximal choice in cheap products and services and are thus not only maximally wealthy, but also free. The prevalent characteristic of neoliberalism is not just the conviction that free markets provide the optimal organising mechanism for capitalist economies. More fundamentally, **the conviction is that they provide the optimal organising mechanism for the entirety of human life and social interaction**: the necessary conditions for political freedom and a morality based on individual responsibility.33 **The free market is thus not just an economic, but also a moral and political force**. It does not function simply as the most efficient means for allocating resources: it is the optimum context for achieving human freedom and happiness. **Not unlike Nazism and communism neoliberalism maps a cognitive space for individuals with very clear objectives and the means of achieving them**. Some would express the objective by saying that it is quite simply wealth – whoever dies with the most toys wins. **Some would say that the ultimate objective of any form of liberalism is freedom. That ultimately amounts to the same things, however, because “money is. . .the greatest instrument of freedom ever invented by man**.”34 And the best means for achieving wealth is unlimited competition in the free market. As Foucault saw it, the art of government developed by the Ordoliberals in and around the 1930s had become the programme of most governments in capitalist countries by 1979 when he delivered his lectures. **Since then this political ontology has become even more expansive and deeply ingrained.** It has circumscribed our everyday life in the last 30 years to the extent that it has not just been the dominant economic theory, **it has been constitutive of our life-world and ultimately of ourselves.** Its triumph does not mean that we have become a standardised, mass society of consumption and spectacle, as some social critics have insisted. It rather means that we live in a society that is oriented towards the multiplicity and differentiation of enterprises. **We have become entrepreneurs of our lives, competing in the free market called society. We compete in an ever-expanding range of fields, and invest in ourselves by enhancing our abilities and appearance, by improving our strategies of life coaching and time management.** Our life has become an enterprise that we must lead to success.**Within this framework irrational violence does not appear morally wrong or politically compromised: it is simply a losing strategy, and this, paradoxically, remains its appeal and its significance.**

#### Failure to confront the values and assumptions of neoliberal market rationality fortifies a socio-political structure founded on racism, sexism, classism, and anthropocentrism that makes planetary destruction and violence inevitable

Darder, 2k10[Antonia Darker, Professor of Education at the University of Illinois, Preface Author, Kahn, Richard, and Richard V. Kahn. Critical pedagogy, ecoliteracy, & planetary crisis: The ecopedagogy movement. Vol. 359. Peter Lang Pub Incorporated, 2010]

Darder—unless we confront the values and assumptions of neoliberal market rationality, a sociopolitical structure premised on racism, sexism, classism, and anthropocentrism makes planetary destruction and violence inevitable--

It is fitting to begin my words about Richard Kahn’s Critical Pedagogy, Ecoliteracy, and Planetary Crisis: The Ecopedagogy Movement with a poem. The direct and succinct message of The Great Mother Wails cuts through our theorizing and opens us up to the very heart of the book’s message – to ignite a fire that speaks to **the ecological crisis** at hand; a crisis **orchestrated by the** inhumane greed and **economic brutality of the wealthy**. Nevertheless, as **is** clearly **apparent**, none of us is absolved from complicity with the devastating destruction of the earth. As members of the global community, **we are all implicated in this destruction by the very manner in which we define ourselves**, **each other**, **and all living beings** with whom we reside on the earth. **Everywhere** we look **there are** glaring **signs of political systems and social structures that propel us toward unsustainability and extinction**. In this historical moment, the planet faces some of the most horrendous forms of “man-made” devastation ever known to humankind. **Cataclysmic “natural disasters” in the last decade have sung the environmental hymns of planetary imbalance and reckless environmental disregard**. **A striking feature of this ecological crisis**, both locally and globally, **is the overwhelming concentration of** wealth held by the ruling elite and their agents of capital. This environmental malaise is characterized by the staggering loss of livelihood among working people everywhere; gross inequalities in educational opportunities; an absence of health care for millions; an unprecedented number of people living behind bars; and trillions spent on fabricated wars fundamentally tied to the control and domination of the planet’s resources. **The Western ethos of mastery** **and supremacy over nature has accompanied**, to our detriment, **the unrelenting expansion of capitalism and its unparalleled domination over all aspects of human life**. **This hegemonic worldview has been** unmercifully **imparted through a host of public policies and practices that conveniently gloss over gross inequalities as commonsensical necessities for democracy to bloom**. **As a consequence**, **the liberal democratic rhetoric** of “we are all created equal” **hardly begins to touch the** international **pervasiveness of racism**, **patriarchy**, **technocracy**, **and economic piracy by the West**, all of which have fostered the erosion of civil rights and the unprecedented ecological exploitation of societies, creating conditions that now threaten our peril, if we do not reverse directions. Cataclysmic disasters, such as Hurricane Katrina, are unfortunate testimonies to the danger of ignoring the warnings of the natural world, especially when coupled with egregious governmental neglect of impoverished people. **Equally disturbing**, **is the manner in which ecological crisis is vulgarly exploited by unscrupulous and ruthless capitalists who see no problem with turning a profit off the backs of ailing and mourning oppressed populations of every species** – whether they be victims of weather disasters, catastrophic illnesses, industrial pollution, or inhumane practices of incarceration. **Ultimately**, **these constitute ecological calamities that speak to the** inhumanity and **tyranny of material profiteering**, **at the expense of precious life**. **The arrogance and exploitation of neoliberal values of consumption dishonor the contemporary suffering of poor and marginalized populations around the globe**. **Neoliberalism denies** or simply mocks (“Dill baby dill!”) **the interrelationship and delicate balance that exists between all living beings**, **including the body earth**. In its stead, **values of individualism**, **competition**, **privatization**, **and the “free market” systematically debase** the ancient **ecological knowledge** of indigenous populations, who have, implicitly or explicitly, rejected the fabricated ethos of “progress and democracy” propagated by the West. **In its consuming frenzy to gobble up the natural resources of the planet for its own hyperbolic quest for material domination**, **the exploitative nature of capitalism and its burgeoning technocracy has dangerously deepened the structures of social exclusion**, **through the destruction of the very biodiversity that has been key to** our **global survival** for millennia. Kahn insists that **this devastation of all species and the planet must be fully recognized and** soberly **critiqued**. But he does not stop there. Alongside, he rightly argues for political principles of engagement for the construction of a critical ecopedagogy and ecoliteracy that is founded on economic redistribution, cultural and linguistic democracy, indigenous sovereignty, universal human rights, and a fundamental respect for all life. As such, Kahn seeks to bring us all back to a formidable relationship with the earth, one that is unquestionably rooted in an integral order of knowledge, imbued with physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual wisdom. Within the context of such an ecologically grounded epistemology, Kahn uncompromisingly argues that **our organic relationship with the earth is** also **intimately tied to our struggles for cultural self-determination**, **environmental sustainability**, **social and material justice and global peace**. **Through a carefully framed analysis of** past disasters and current ecological crisis, Kahn issues an urgent call for a critical ecopedagogy that makes central explicit articulations of the **ways in which societies construct ideological**, **political**, **and cultural systems**, **based on social structures and practices that can** serve to **promote** ecological **sustainability and biodiversity or**, conversely, **lead us down a** disastrous **path of unsustainability and extinction**. In making his case, Kahn **provides a grounded examination of the manner in which consuming capitalism manifests** its repressive force throughout the globe, disrupting the very ecological order of knowledge essential to the planet’s sustainability. He offers an understanding of critical ecopedagogy and ecoliteracy that inherently critiques the history of Western civilization and the **anthropomorphic assumptions that sustain patriarchy and the subjugation of all subordinated living beings** – **assumptions that continue to inform traditional education discourses around the world**. Kahn incisively demonstrates how **a theory of multiple technoliteracies can be used to effectively critique the ecological corruption and destruction behind mainstream uses of technology and the media in the interest of the neoliberal marketplace**. As such, his work points to **the manner in which the sustainability rhetoric of mainstream environmentalism** actually **camouflages** wretched **neoliberal policies and practices that are left unchecked hasten the annihilation of the globe’s ecosystem**. True to its promise, the book cautions that **any anti-hegemonic resistance movement** that claims of social justice, universal human rights, or global peace **must contend forthrightly with the deteriorating ecological crisis at hand**, **as well as consider possible strategies and relationships that rupture the status quo and transform environmental conditions that threaten disaster**. **A failure to integrate ecological sustainability at the core of our political and pedagogical struggles for liberation**, Kahn argues, **is to** blindly and **misguidedly adhere to an anthropocentric worldview in which emancipatory dreams are deemed solely about human interests**, **without attention either to the health of the planet or to the well-being of all species with whom we walk the earth**.

### Spills

#### Turn-- Any steps towards normalization of relations destroys biodiversity – massive waves of tourism and lack of environmental enforcement

Conell, 09 – Research Assocaite at Council on Hemispheric Affairs (Christina, “The U.S. and Cuba: Destined to be an Environmental Duo?”, June 12, 2009, http://www.coha.org/the-us-and-cuba-an-environmental-duo/)//IK

After years of relying on government subsidies and protectionism, this rapid growth could generate irreparable shock waves through the economy. Oliver Houck, a professor at Tulane University who aided the Cuban government in writing its environmental protection provisions, said “an invasion of U.S. consumerism, a U.S.-dominated future, could roll over it (Cuba) like a bulldozer,” when the embargo ends. The wider Caribbean region has experienced water contamination, mangrove destruction and sewage problems due to large quantities of tourists and inadequate plumbing. Therefore, U.S. tourism regulations need to be in place in order to protect the precious ecosystem of the island and prohibit over development. Collaboration between the U.S. and Cuba would be mutually beneficial, as the U.S. could use Cuba as a laboratory of sustainable development and U.S. tourism would stimulate Cuba’s stagnant economy, if its negative impact could be controlled. Both countries must agree upon a mutual plan for development. The Environmental Defense Fund (EDF) has conducted research in Cuba since 2000, working with Cuban partners on scientific investigations and strategies for protecting coastal and marine resources. Operating under a special license from the United States government, EDF experts are collaborating with Cuban scientists on research projects aimed at ensuring that if Cuba taps offshore oil and gas reserves, it will be done in an environmentally concious way. The US should establish more partnerships like these as President Obama has the legal authority to institute far-reaching cooperation with Cuba on joint marine environmental projects. These partnerships should be implemented as the first step in creating an elaborate alliance for environmental protection between the two countries. If the embargo is lifted, symbols of meretricious American capitalism are likely to invade the once relatively isolated island. Opinion columnist Cynthia Tucker has commented on such matters: “Mickey Mouse is sure to arrive, bringing with him the aptly predicted full frontal assault of American culture and consumer goods,” suggesting that if Obama lifts the embargo, a functioning system of environmental protection supported by both the U.S. and the Cuban public must be present for the island to be protected. It is Cuba’s lack of development that makes the island attractive to tourists and although tourism boosts the economy, it also could have detrimental effects on the environment. If the embargo is lifted, strict development restrictions need to be in place in order to prevent further environmental exploitation. Currently, without a severe shift in enforcement of environmental laws and the formation of a hard-working U.S.-Cuba partnership, the Caribbean’s most biodiverse island will continue to be damaged. The key to a new dynamic in the U.S.-Cuba relationship might be to embark on a series of strategic actions that aim to establish a bilateral relationship for sustainable development and associated activities based on mutual respect and the autonomy of each country’s

sovereignty and traditions.

#### Cuban and non-US prevention efforts are sufficient now.

Richard Sadowski 2011 (is a Class of 2012 J.D. candidate, at Hofstra University¶ School of Law, NY. Mr. Sadowski is also the Managing Editor of Production of¶ the Journal of International Business and Law Vol. XI. “Cuban Offshore Drilling: Preparation and¶ Prevention within the Framework of the United¶ States’ Embargo” – ¶ Sustainable Development Law & Policy¶ Volume 12; Issue 1 Fall 2011: Natural Resource Conflicts Article 10 – http://digitalcommons.wcl.american.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1497&context=sdlp

Fears that Cuban offshore drilling poses serious environmental¶ threats because of the proximity to the United States and¶ the prohibition on U.S. technology transfer are overblown. Cuba¶ has at least as much incentive to ensure safe-drilling practices¶ as does the United States, and reports indicate that Cuba is taking¶ safety seriously.64 Lee Hunt, President of the Houston-based¶ International Association of Drilling Contractors, said, “[t]he¶ Cuban oil industry has put a lot of research, study and thought¶ into what will be required to safely drill,” and that “they are¶ very knowledgeable of international industry practices and have¶ incorporated many of these principles into their safety and regulatory¶ planning and requirements.”65 Thus, while the economic¶ embargo of Cuba restricts American technology from being utilized,¶ foreign sources have provided supplemental alternatives.66

#### US standards are met – solves the impact

Geman 12 (Ben, “Interior: Cuba-bound drilling rig ‘generally’ meets US standards”, 1/9, http://thehill.com/blogs/e2-wire/e2-wire/203161-interior-cuba-bound-drilling-rig-generally-meets-us-standards)

The deepwater drilling rig that Spanish oil giant Repsol will use for planned oil exploration off Cuba’s coast is getting a clean bill of health from U.S. officials. The United States has no regulatory authority over the drilling, but an Interior Department and Coast Guard team was invited to inspect the Scarabeo 9 rig by Repsol, a check-up that comes as planned drilling off Cuba’s coast draws criticism from several U.S. lawmakers. “The review compared the vessel with applicable international safety and security standards as well as U.S. standards for drilling units operating in the U.S. Outer Continental Shelf. U.S. personnel found the vessel to generally comply with existing international and U.S. standards by which Repsol has pledged to abide,” the U.S. agencies said in a joint statement Monday upon completion of the review. The U.S. team reviewed drilling equipment, safety systems such as firefighting equipment and the unit’s blowout preventer and other aspects of the rig. A number of U.S. lawmakers critical of the Cuban government have criticized Repsol’s planned project, noting it will bring revenues to the Cuban regime and that a spill could threaten nearby U.S. shores. More on that here, here and here. “The review is consistent with U.S. efforts to minimize the possibility of a major oil spill, which would hurt U.S. economic and environmental interests,” Interior and the Coast Guard said of the inspection, which occurred off the coast of Trinidad and Tobago.

#### Status quo solves oil spills – Coast Guard has response plans and inspections

Nerurkar and Sullivan 11 (Neelesh AND Mark P., "Cuba's Offshore Oil Development: Background and U.S. Policy Considerations," Congressional Research Service, 11/28/11, http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R41522.pdf)//AM

The Obama Administration has been making efforts to prepare for a potential oil spill in Cuban ¶ waters that could affect the United States. The U.S. Coast Guard has been working with state, ¶ local, and other federal agencies to ensure that area contingency plans covering Florida are ¶ adequate. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) in cooperation with ¶ the Department of the Interior’s Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) has run ¶ trajectory models in order to identify potential landfall areas along the U.S. coasts, information ¶ that is being used to enhance the area contingency plans.48 Since March 2011, the Coast Guard’s ¶ Seventh District in Miami has been working to develop an International Offshore Drilling ¶ Response Plan. As part of this effort, the Coast Guard hosted an inter-agency table top exercise in ¶ Miami on November 17, 2011, responding to a fictitious international spill off the coast of ¶ Florida.49 U.S. agencies have also engaged with officials from Repsol, which has provided information ¶ regarding its plans related to drilling and oil spill response. The company has offered U.S. ¶ agencies an opportunity to inspect the Scarabeo-9 oil rig. Both the Coast Guard and the ¶ Department of the Interior’s Bureau of Safety and Environmental Enforcement (BSEE) are ¶ planning to inspect the rig before it enters Cuban waters. According to U.S. officials, Repsol ¶ maintains that it will adhere to U.S. regulations and the highest industry standards when ¶ conducting its exploratory drilling in Cuban waters.50

#### Turn – the affs main mechanism—dispersants--- make the oil 52 times more toxic – new study shows they kill plankton and destroy the food chain

Peixe, 5/5 (Joao,“Dispersants make Oil Spills 52 Times More Toxic”, OilPrice.com, 2013, http://oilprice.com/Latest-Energy-News/World-News/Dispersants-Make-Oil-Spills-52-Times-more-Toxic.html)// IK

A new study, published in the journal Environmental Pollution, has found that the dispersants used to clean up oil spills actually make the entire situation much worse and cause far more damage to the environment than the crude oil itself. As part of the clean up proceedings for the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill more than 2 million gallons of the oil dispersants Corexit 9527A and 9500A were dumped into the Gulf of Mexico in order to break the oil up into tiny droplets; a move that is intended to speed up the degradation of the oil and prevent it from reaching shore. The study has worryingly discovered that when Corexit is mixed with oil it becomes up to 52 times more toxic than the original oil on its own. Terry Snell, a biologist at Georgia Tech and co-author of the study, said that “there is a synergistic interaction between crude oil and the dispersant that makes it more toxic.” The dispersant works in as much as it makes the oil effectively disappear, but the microscopic particles that are left are “more toxic to the planktonic food chain.” Snell explained that “the levels in the Gulf were toxic, and seriously toxic. That probably put a big dent in the planktonic food web for some extended period of time, but nobody really made the measurements to figure out the impact.” Plankton is the base food source of the ocean, the bottom of the food chain. If the population of plankton in the gulf is killed off enough then the population of larger animals will be effected, all the way up to whales. The dispersants put the oil out of site. ‘Out of sight, out of mind.’ The public forgot about the oil once they could no longer see it; but it doesn’t mean that it is gone, that the ocean is clean and safe for life.

#### Alt causes to reef destruction- 44% decline in 10 years caused by human stresses, pipes, cables, dredging, runoff pollution, snorkelers, boats, and overfishing

DEP, 11(“Threats to Southeast Florida Coral Reefs”, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, May 4, http://www.dep.state.fl.us/coastal/programs/coral/threats.htm)//TWR

Coral cover on many Caribbean reefs has declined up to 80 percent over the past three decades. Southeast Florida�s reefs, which are a part of the greater Caribbean/Western Atlantic reef province, are being monitored for diseases, bleaching and other problems associated with human activities. Monitoring data from 105 stations in the Florida Keys has revealed a 44 percent decline in coral cover from 1996-2005. Because corals are very slow-growing, this loss represents a serious and significant threat to local coral ecosystems. While reefs can withstand varying levels of natural disturbance, they may not be as resilient to human-induced stresses. In southeast Florida, coastal resources are under intense stress resulting from high population densities and coastal development. Large coastal infrastructure projects, such as the installation of pipes, cables and wastewater outfalls for public utilities, can contribute to shoreline erosion and can damage coral habitat through mechanical impacts or degradation of water quality. Beach nourishment projects, in which large volumes of sand are re-located from offshore to onshore, can cause severe impacts to reefs. Coral reef organisms may be smothered by sediments and reduced water clarity deprives corals of the light they require for photosynthesis by their symbiotic algae. Dredge and fill projects and construction of seawalls and docks can negatively impact seagrasses, mangroves and other benthic communities that are inter-connected with the coral reef ecosystem. These projects can directly impact corals by destroying them during construction, or they can result in indirect impacts, such as reducing the amount of available light when a new dock shades the seafloor. Runoff from residential, industrial, and agricultural areas containing fertilizers, silt, chemicals, debris, and other contaminants are carried through storm drains to Florida's waterways. Sewage discharges from waste treatment facilities, boats, and developed land areas contribute to coral diseases and death. Even treated sewage contains high nutrient levels which trigger algal blooms that smother reefs, and may also contain bacteria and viruses which threaten the health of both the marine environment and humans. Pollution from people who live many miles from the coast can destroy corals as liquids and solids eventually make their way downstream to the ocean through our numerous inland canals and waterways, and through groundwater transport.

#### US oil drilling/tech doesn’t solve – still risks spills

Quintero 12 Director of Latino Advocacy, Natural Resources Defense Council [NRDC] (Adrianna, "A New Cuban Crisis Threatens Florida's Coasts," 2/3/12, http://vocesverdes.org/a-new-cuban-crisis-threatens-floridas-coasts/)//AM

The risks of drilling are real and not limited to drilling done by countries who we don’t play well with. Yes, the dangers of a spill in Cuba are real and out of our hands, but even where U.S. drilling is concerned, the president’s [National Commission on the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and Offshore Drilling](http://www.oilspillcommission.gov/) concluded the oil industry lacked the kind of safety culture that could prevent another disaster. And even here, [the government lacks the authority and resources](http://switchboard.nrdc.org/blogs/fbeinecke/obama_offers_aggressive_drilli.html) necessary to police the industry. We cannot waste another opportunity to take measures to ensure the safety and well being of our communities by holding polluters and policy makers accountable.

#### Spilled oil disperses – bacteria break down droplets

Ross, 10 (Selena, “BP Experts: Everything You Know About the Oil Spill is Wrong,” AOL NEWS, 8-1-10, www.aolnews.com/gulf-oil-spill/article/gulf-oil-spill-cleanup-bp-consultants-discuss-what-they-see-as-misconceptions/19572133?icid=main|main|dl1|link5|http%3A%2F%2Fwww.aolnews.com%2Fgulf-oil-spill%2Farticle%2Fgulf-oil-spill-cleanup-bp-consultants-d)

There is no mass of Deepwater oil where we can't see it, and there are no traveling plumes of heavy oil miles away from the well head, the three experts say. "That would never happen, and all the monitoring that's been going on has been showing very low -- and decreasing -- concentrations of oil," Lewis says. **When oil is dispersed into tiny droplets, the droplets separate from each other and are diluted in the open ocean**, he explains. **They do not get weighed down and cannot rejoin each other under water. Bacteria break them down into carbon dioxide and water in a predictable way, and when they can't be found, it's because they are no longer there.** Lewis points to a huge eco-monitoring project started by the British government after the big Sea Empress spill was dispersed in 1996, Lewis says. "There were no effects the next year," he says. "**If the oil is dispersed at sea, you can go back a year later and you can't find it."**

### Relations

#### Carving out exemptions to the embargo doesn’t solve Cuban relations---it’s perceived as insufficient---and the embargo bans tech transfer which they can’t topically remove

Richard Sadowski 11, J.D., Hofstra University School of Law, Fall 2011, “IN THIS ISSUE: NATURAL RESOURCE CONFLICT: CUBAN OFFSHORE DRILLING: PREPARATION AND PREVENTION WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF THE UNITED STATES' EMBARGO,” Sustainable Development Law & Policy, 12 Sustainable Dev. L. & Pol'y 37, p. lexis

In 1996, during the Clinton administration, the Helms-Burton Act n13 was passed in an effort to prevent foreign companies from trading with Cuba. n14 The Helms-Burton Act also codified much of the embargo as well as restricted the power of the President to unilaterally remove the embargo. n15 President Obama recently eased restrictions through the Omnibus Appropriations Act of 2009 n16 and has planned even further changes. n17 The Cuban government applauded these new measures, but averred that the United States did not go far enough to ease the economic sanctions. n18 According to the Cuban Foreign Minister, Bruno Rodriguez, U.S. policy has, in fact, become more restrictive. n19 Indeed, these changes stop well short of ending the embargo n20 or even opening dialogue between the United States and Cuba. n21 Ultimately, trade between the United States and Cuba remains heavily restricted.¶ RESTRICTIONS RELEVANT TO CUBA'S OIL EXPLORATION¶ The embargo on Cuba has widespread and significant economic effects for both the United States and Cuba. Various provisions of the embargo impact Cuba's ability to obtain U.S. technology and to work with U.S. companies. n22 Additionally, TWEA prohibits U.S. oil exploration companies from dealing with Cuba by prohibiting the transfer of assets in which the Cuban government or Cuban nationals have an interest. n23¶ On September 9, 2009, Platte River Associates ("PRA"), a U.S. company, was fined for violating TWEA. n24 PRA sold oil and gas exploration software to the Spanish oil company Repsol n25 even though PRA was told that the software was being utilized for drilling in Cuban waters. n26 Describing the seriousness of the violations, United States Attorney David Gaouette explained that "[t]rading with the enemy is a serious crime, and in this case, a Colorado company has been rightfully held accountable for committing that crime." n27 PRA was sentenced to a fine of $ 14,500 for its violations. n28 This case exemplifies the extent of the embargo and the related laws to restrict Cuba's access to offshore-drilling technology.

#### Cuba empirically rejects U.S. disaster assistance – resents the greater damage done by the U.S. embargo

**Lacey, 8** – MA International Policy and Practice, George Washington University (Marc - “Cuba Rejects American Offer of Hurricane Aid” September 6, 2008 <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/09/07/world/americas/cubaforweb.html>) //EB

MEXICO CITY — The Cuban government turned down Washington’s offer of hurricane assistance Saturday, saying the best way for the United States to help Cuban victims of Hurricane Gustav would be for it to lift the economic embargo on the island.¶ Cuba said it had its own experts on the job while rejecting the State Department offer to send disaster specialists to assess the damages to the western Pinar del Rio Province and the Island of Youth.¶ On Wednesday, Thomas A. Shannon Jr., assistant secretary of state for Western Hemisphere Affairs, told the Cuban Interests Section in Washington that the United States would aid Cuban victims with $100,000 in immediate aid and more once the extent of the need was known. The aid, State Department officials said, would be sent through non-governmental organizations and not to the Cuban government.¶ But Cuba said that the trade embargo costs the island yearly damages that exceed the billions of dollars in destruction that it attributes to Hurricane Gustav. Cuba has accepted hurricane assistance from Russia, Venezuela and other allies. Such aid has frequently taken on a political dimension between Cuba and the United States over the years.¶ “The only correct and ethical action,” Cuba’s Foreign Ministry said in a statement, would be to end “the ruthless and cruel economic, commercial and financial blockage imposed against our Motherland for almost half a century.”

Their orozco card is in the context of Venezuela, not cuba, means no risk of Russian miscalc.

#### Single instances of action do not change international perceptions of the United States.

Fettweis 8 (Christopher – professor of political science at Tulane, Credibility and the War on Terror, Political Science Quarterly, Winter)

Since Vietnam, scholars have been generally unable to identify cases in which high credibility helped the United States achieve its goals. The shortterm aftermath of the Cuban Missile Crisis, for example, did not include a string of Soviet reversals, or the kind of benign bandwagoning with the West that deterrence theorists would have expected. In fact, the perceived reversal in Cuba seemed to harden Soviet resolve. As the crisis was drawing to a close, Soviet diplomat Vasily Kuznetsov angrily told his counterpart, "You Americans will never be able to do this to us again."37 Kissinger commented in his memoirs that "the Soviet Union thereupon launched itself on a determined, systematic, and long-term program of expanding all categories of its military power .... The 1962 Cuban crisis was thus a historic turning point-but not for the reason some Americans complacently supposed."38 The reassertion of the credibility of the United States, which was done at the brink of nuclear war, had few long-lasting benefits. The Soviets seemed to learn the wrong lesson. There is actually scant evidence that other states ever learn the right lessons. Cold War history contains little reason to believe that the credibility of the superpowers had very much effect on their ability to influence others. Over the last decade, a series of major scholarly studies have cast further doubt upon the fundamental assumption of interdependence across foreign policy actions. Employing methods borrowed from social psychology rather than the economics-based models commonly employed by deterrence theorists, Jonathan Mercer argued that threats are far more independent than is commonly believed and, therefore, that reputations are not likely to be formed on the basis of individual actions.39 While policymakers may feel that their decisions send messages about their basic dispositions to others, most of the evidence from social psychology suggests otherwise. Groups tend to interpret the actions of their rivals as situational, dependent upon the constraints of place and time. Therefore, they are not likely to form lasting impressions of irresolution from single, independent events. Mercer argued that the interdependence assumption had been accepted on faith, and rarely put to a coherent test; when it was, it almost inevitably failed.40

**Scientific cooperation and diplomacy with Cuba now**

**Machlis et al ’12**

Gary is Professor in the Department of Forest Resources at the University of Idaho, “U.S. Cuba Scientific Cooperation,” <http://www.tos.org/oceanography/archive/25-2_machlis.pdf> kk

Despite diplomatic nonrecognition, vast ¶ political differences, a long-standing ¶ trade embargo, and strict limitations on ¶ travel, **US-Cuban scientific collaboration is on the rise**. In December 2011, ¶ independent US scientists traveled to ¶ Havana, Cuba, for a series of scientific ¶ discussions with members of the Cuban ¶ scientific community. The American ¶ Association for the Advancement of ¶ Science (AAAS) and the Cuban Academy ¶ of Sciences facilitated the trip. One topic ¶ for discussion concerned emerging ¶ issues and opportunities in marine and ¶ related environmental sciences. Shared ¶ resources (e.g., Gulf of Mexico fisheries) ¶ and high connectivity between US and ¶ Cuban ecosystems via regional oceanic ¶ and atmospheric circulations underscore ¶ the importance of increased US-Cuban ¶ cooperation in this field.

#### Oil cooperation doesn’t solve relations

Bert and Clayton 12 US Coast Guard military fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations AND fellow for energy and national security at the Council on Foreign Relations (Melissa AND Blake, "Addressing the Risk of a Cuban Oil Spill," 3/7/12, Polivy Innovation Memorandum No. 15, http://www.cfr.org/cuba/addressing-risk-cuban-oil-spill/p27515?excerpt=0)//AM

However, taking sensible steps to prepare for a potential accident at an oil well in Cuban waters would not break new ground or materially alter broader U.S. policy toward Cuba. For years, Washington has worked with Havana on issues of mutual concern. The United States routinely coordinates with Cuba on search and rescue operations in the Straits of Florida as well as to combat illicit drug trafficking and migrant smuggling. During the hurricane season, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) provides Cuba with information on Caribbean storms.¶ The recommendations proposed here are narrowly tailored to the specific challenges that a Cuban oil spill poses to the United States. They would not help the Cuban economy or military. What they would do is protect U.S. territory and property from a potential danger emanating from Cuba.¶

#### No solvency for relations---Cuba doesn’t want it and doesn’t believe we’ll follow through

Anya Landau French 13, Director of the New America Foundation U.S. – Cuba Policy Initiative, 2/10/13, “Secretary Kerry: Will He or Won't He Take On Cuba?,” http://thehavananote.com/2013/02/secretary\_kerry\_will\_he\_or\_wont\_he\_take\_cuba

And, then there’s the Cuban government. As much as many in the Cuban government (particularly the diplomatic corps) want to reduce tensions with the United States and finally make real progress on long-standing grievances held by both sides, they aren’t desperate for the big thaw. Many U.S. analysts, including in government, speculate that this is because Cuba’s leaders don’t really want to change the relationship, that strife serves their needs better than would the alternative. That could be so, but there’s also a hefty amount of skepticism and pride on the Cuban side, as well. After so many decades and layers of what Cuba calls the U.S. blockade, Cubans are unwilling to have the terms of any ‘surrender’ dictated to them. In fact, they are bound and determined that there will be no surrender. They would argue, what is there to surrender but their government’s very existence, something the leadership obviously isn’t going to put on the table.¶ Many in the Cuban government question whether the U.S. would offer anything that truly matters to Cuba, or honor any commitments made. Arguably, the last deal the U.S. made good on was struck during the Missile Crisis of October 1963, and Cuba wasn’t even at the table for that. It’s a lesser known fact that the United States never fully implemented the 1994/1995 migration accords, which committed both nations to work to prevent migration by irregular means. The U.S. did stop accepting illegal migrants from Cuba found at sea, but it still accepts them when they reach our shores – thus dubbed our ‘wet foot, dry foot’ policy. And with our generous adjustment policy offering a green card after one year, the incentive to make the illegal trip remains largely in place.

#### Alt cause to relations – Alan Gross

Thale 11 (Geoff, Program Director for the Washington Office on Latin America, “Tug of War on U.S-Cuba Policy,” 4/6/11, http://www.wola.org/es/node/2429, MDM)

Carter insisted he wasn’t speaking on behalf of Washington, but his visit was read in Cuba as an attempt to open up channels for communication and contact. Carter’s productive trip signified a push toward improving relations between the two countries.¶ However, just two days after Carter’s return, the Administration took a step backwards. The State Department announced its intention to obligate $20 million to support very controversial “human rights and civil society” programs in Cuba. The State Department obligated funds under Section 109 of the Helms-Burton legislation, the stated purpose of which is to support groups on the island intent on regime change. So if Carter was signaling the possibilities of better relations, the State Department did just the opposite. Rather than opting for productive dialogue, the U.S. government’s announcement showed that hardliners still have a seat at the table in Washington policy making. The State Department’s timing also suspiciously looks like a gambit to undercut efforts to improve relations.¶ In a further twist of fate, it is these very “regime change” programs that landed U.S. citizen Alan Gross in jail well over a year ago, a point which has thrown a wrench in U.S.-Cuba relations. Part of the problem with the controversial “regime change” programs is that they actually put the people who work on them at risk. When he was apprehended in Cuba, Alan Gross was working for a private contractor that received millions of dollars from that Section 109 account. Under his subcontract, Gross was delivering satellite-linked communications equipment brought into the country without a customs declaration. According to the State Department, Gross was officially delivering equipment to Jewish groups on the island so that they could communicate with other Jewish communities abroad. Even though the U.S. government justifies these programs as necessary to help build civil society capacity in Cuba, the Havana Jewish community leaders, with whom Carter met, already have internet connections in the community center, and an active B’nai B’rith International Chapter. Those groups all denied any substantive contact with Gross.¶ These programs funded under Section 109 should be canceled – they’ve been plagued by scandals and allegations of patronage since they began in the 1990s, and most of the programs do more to provoke the Cuban government than they do to promote democracy. In times of budget constraint it is worth recognizing these programs are quite expensive as well and the U.S. government has spent more than $150 million on these programs over the last decade. The few effective programs – humanitarian support for the families of prisoners, some non-political training programs for journalists, and others – could be carried out under other U.S. government auspices and without the taint of the regime-change philosophy that lurks behind Section 109 funding. These concerns were underscored by Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman John Kerry (D-MA) who immediately announced that he would put a hold on spending the funds until a “full review” of the program has been conducted.¶ Ending or substantially modifying the program might signal to Cuba that the Obama Administration is serious about a new approach to Cuba, one that doesn’t take “regime change” as its starting point. And in the context of such a shift the likelihood that Alan Gross would be pardoned or paroled by Cuban authorities would increase.¶ Rather than canceling the program, though, the State Department announced new funding for the program only days after Carter’s trip to Cuba and his public call for Gross to be released. ¶ The Gross issue has stalled progress in other areas of U.S.-Cuban relations. In January the Obama Administration issued new rules to ease restrictions on travel to Cuba but those rules have still not been implemented, and it’s widely rumored that Gross’ continued detention is at least part of what’s holding them up.¶ It’s unfortunate that, at a moment when Carter’s visit worked to open some space for movement in U.S.-Cuban relations, the State Department announcement of new funding for “Cuba democracy” programs appears to be pulling in the opposite direction.

#### China is not drilling in Cuba—experts agree

Bolstad & Hall, 08 (Erika and Kevin G., “GOP claim about Chinese oil drilling off Cuba is untrue”, McClatchy Newspapers, Wednesday June 11th, <http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2008/06/11/40776/gop-claim-about-chinese-oil-drilling.html#storylink=cpy>)

WASHINGTON — As Congress has debated energy policy over the past several days, an unusual argument keeps surfacing in support of drilling off the U.S. coastline and in Alaska's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. Why, ask some Republicans, should the United States be thwarted from drilling in its own territory when just 50 miles off the Florida coastline the Chinese government is drilling for oil under Cuban leases? Yet no one can prove that the Chinese are drilling anywhere off Cuba's shoreline. The China-Cuba connection is "akin to urban legend," said Sen. Mel Martinez, a Republican from Florida who opposes drilling off the coast of his state but who backs exploration in ANWR. "China is not drilling in Cuba's Gulf of Mexico waters, period," said Jorge Pinon, an energy fellow with the Center for Hemispheric Policy at the University of Miami and an expert in oil exploration in the Gulf of Mexico. Martinez cited Pinon's research when he took to the Senate floor Wednesday to set the record straight.

#### No China conflict – no military use

Aliison & Blackwill 13 -- \*director of the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs and Douglas Dillon Professor at Harvard's John F. Kennedy School of Government AND \*\*Henry A. Kissinger Senior Fellow for U.S. foreign policy at the Council on Foreign Relations (Graham and Robert, 1/28/2013, "Beijing Still Prefers Diplomacy Over Force," http://www.cfr.org/china/beijing-still-prefers-diplomacy-over-force/p29892)

As China has become a leading export market for its neighbours, it expects them to be "more respectful", in Mr Lee's words. In public statements, China usually downplays the advantages its size begets, but in a heated moment at a 2010 regional security meeting, its foreign minister had a different message: "China is a big country and other countries are small countries and that is just a fact." Mr Lee has a phrase for this message: "Please know your place." Unlike free-market democracies, in which governments are unable or unwilling to squeeze imports of bananas from the Philippines or cars from Japan, China's government can use its economic muscle. As tensions mount over competing claims for contested territories, should we expect Beijing to use military force to advance its claims? From the perspective of the grand strategist, the answer is no – unless it is provoked by others. "China understands that its growth depends on imports, including energy, and that it needs open sea lanes. They are determined to avoid the mistakes made by Germany and Japan," Mr Lee says. In his view, it is highly unlikely that China would choose to confront the US military at this point, since it is still at a clear technological and military disadvantage. This means that, in the near term, it will be more concerned with using diplomacy, not force, in foreign policy. Henry Kissinger, the western statesman who has spent most quality time with Chinese leaders in the past four decades, offers a complementary perspective. As he has written, their approach to the outside world is best understood through the lens of Sun Tzu, the ancient strategist who focused on the psychological weaknesses of the adversary. "China seeks its objectives," Mr Kissinger says, "by careful study, patience and the accumulation of nuances – only rarely does China risk a winner-take-all showdown." In Mr Lee's view, China is playing a long game driven by a compelling vision. "It is China's intention," Mr Lee says, "to be the greatest power in the world." Success in that quest will require not only sustaining historically unsustainable economic growth rates but also exercising greater caution and subtlety than it has shown recently, in order to avoid an accident or blunder that sparks military conflict over the Senkakus, which would serve no one's interests.

#### Taiwan-China relations are high

Cole 12 -- Taipei-based journalist who focuses on military issues in Northeast Asia and in the Taiwan Strait (J. Michael, 9/3, "Taiwan Hedges its Bets on China," http://thediplomat.com/flashpoints-blog/2012/09/03/taiwan-hedges-its-bets-against-china/)

By a number of yardsticks, relations in the Taiwan Strait today are the best they’ve been in years, if not ever. But if a report released by Taiwan’s Ministry of National Defense (MND) on Friday is any indication, Taiwanese government officials don’t appear to be convinced that such détente will last for very long. Without doubt, the pace of normalization in relations between Taiwan and China, especially at the economic level, has accelerated dramatically since Ma Ying-jeou of the Chinese Nationalist Party (KMT) was elected in 2008, a process that is expected to continue with Ma securing a second four-year term in January. In addition to the landmark Economic Cooperation Framework Agreement (ECFA) signed in June 2010, the governments on both sides have inked at least 16 agreements touching on various aspects of cross-strait relations, including an agreement reached on Friday that will allow banks in Taiwan to clear renminbi transactions, a move that obviates the need for converting the currency into U.S. dollars before a transaction can be made. Beyond trade, visits to Taiwan by Chinese officials have become almost routine, a limited number of Chinese can now study at Taiwan’s universities, Chinese tourism to the island has boomed, and joint exercises by the countries’ respective coast guards are now held every other year since 2010, mostly for the purpose of sea-rescue operations in the waters off Taiwan’s Kinmen and China’s Xiamen.

#### No US-China war – economics

Shor 12 (Francis, Professor of History – Wayne State, “Declining US Hegemony and Rising Chinese Power: A Formula for Conflict?”, Perspectives on Global Development and Technology, 11(1), pp. 157-167)

While the United States no longer dominates the global economy as it did during the first two decades after WWII, it still is the leading economic power in the world. However, over the last few decades China, with all its internal contradictions, has made enormous leaps until it now occupies the number two spot. In fact, the IMF recently projected that the Chinese economy would become the world's largest in 2016. In manufacturing China has displaced the US in so many areas, including becoming the number one producer of steel and exporter of four-fifths of all of the textile products in the world and two-thirds of the world's copy machines, DVD players, and microwaves ovens. Yet, a significant portion of this manufacturing is still owned by foreign companies, including U.S. firms like General Motors. [5] On the other hand, China is also the largest holder of U.S. foreign reserves, e.g. treasury bonds. This may be one of the reasons mitigating full-blown conflict with the U.S. now, since China has such a large stake in the U.S. economy, both as a holder of bonds and as the leading exporter of goods to the U.S. Nonetheless, "the U.S. has blocked several large scale Chinese investments and buyouts of oil companies, technology firms, and other enterprises." [6] In effect, there are still clear nation-centric responses to China's rising economic power, especially as an expression of the U.S. governing elite's ideological commitment to national security.

### 2NC

#### ONTOLOGY MUST BE THE POINT OF DEPARTURE. ANY POLITICS FORMULATED WITHIN GLOBALIZATION IS NECESSARILY ATTACHED TO A SPECIFIC ONTOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

MURPHY IN 2K4(JOHN, PROF OF SOCIOLOGY @ UNIV OF MIAMI, GLOBALIZATION WITH A HUMAN FACE )

The process of development, now commonly referred to as globalization, has been analyzed in a variety of ways. The political, cultural, and eco­nomic aspects of globalization, for example, have been the focus of atten­tion of many books and articles for quite some time. What is missing, however, is a deeper level of analysis that Leonardo Boff believes is nec­essary to correctly understand social growth and the allocation of re­sources.1 In this chapter, this approach is referred to as an ontological assessment. Within this context of development, the term ontological refers to the base, or conceptual foundation, of a particular rendition of growth. No matter what theory is adopted, an image of how the social world operates is conveyed. And as part of this picture, questions are presupposed about the prospects for growth, who controls this process, the range of accept­able possibilities, and the source of all change. These considerations serve as the background assumptions that gradually begin to dictate how de­velopment will proceed. These precepts, in other words, establish the pa­rameters of the version of reality that is suggested, often quite subtly, by a particular theory of development. For this reason, these issues are re­ferred to as ontological or foundational. <P11>

#### Ontological examination is integral to understanding the very models that support neoliberal ideology

Oksala in 2011(Johanna, Senior Research Fellow in the Academy of Finland research project is Philosophy and Politics in Feminist Theory at the University of Helsinki, “Violence and Neoliberal Governmentality,” *Constellations Volume 18, No 3)*

**Political critics of neoliberalism often argue that at the heart of the model is the idea that the job of government is not to govern, because it must subcontract the task to the more efficientand generally superior private sector.** The political scientist Michel Wolfe, for example, has formulated this idea by comparing neoliberals trying to govern to vegetarian chefs trying to prepare a world-class boeuf bourguignon: if you believe that what you are called to do is wrong, you are unlikely to do it very well.15 Foucault’s analysis of neoliberalism as a form of governmental rationality questions this idea. The theoretical strength of his approach is that it construes neoliberalism not as lack of government, but as a specific governmental form and doctrine. **It is a “governmental regime” that is directed towards specific objectives and regulates itself through continuous reflection.** Foucault’s lectures analyse in detail the historical shift from classical liberalism to neoliberalism in order to highlight this. **His aim is to identify the difference between them in order to grasp neoliberalism “in its singularity.”16 His usage of “neoliberalism” is non-standard from the current point of view because he traces its earliest form to 1930s Germany.** The initial German form was represented by the proponents of the Freiburg School of economists such as Walter Eucken and Wilhelm Ropke, also called “Ordoliberals” after to the journal Ordo. It was strongly linked to the critique of Nazism and, after the War, to post-war reconstruction. The later, American form was the neoliberalism of the Chicago School, which was derived from the former but was in some respects more radical.17 For Foucault, **neoliberalism was not just the revival of classical liberalism after a period of socialist dominance, but involved a fundamental shift within liberalism itself: on the level of political ontology, neoliberalism effected a move away from naturalism.** 18 **It did not only introduce some refinements to the liberal economic doctrine, but more importantly, it introduced a new political ontology:** it was a form of anti-naturalism.Ordoliberals completely rethought the relations between economy and politics and, consequently, the whole of the liberal art of government. Foucault argues that classical liberalism was a much broader and at the same time much more complex phenomenon than a simple political doctrine advocating individual liberty. **Understood as governmentality, it was a form of “governmental naturalism.” Social reality had its own quasi-natural and self-regulating principles and dynamics. It was determined according to inevitable economic processes –** which Adam Smith famously called “the invisible hand” – **that could maximize the efficiency of production and promote social good when left to function uninterrupted.** While liberalism is thus politically associated with the idea of individual liberty manifested as juridical rights, classical economic liberalism emphasised, seemingly paradoxically, both the determinism and spontaneity of social reality. **Human beings, driven by natural self-interest, would spontaneously attempt to maximise their wealth. The mechanisms of the economic sphere would then, however, harmonize these natural and spontaneous self-interests in accordance with the deterministic laws of economics.** The sum total of individual tastes and talents in an open market determines correct prizes for goods and the correct prices guide resource allocation towards efficiency and stability.19 Foucault argues that a crucial change was the shift from exchange to competition as the principle of the market. In eighteenth century liberalism, the market was understood on the basis of free exchange between two partners who through this exchange establish the equivalence of two values. **The neoliberals,** on the other hand, **followed the development in liberal thought of the nineteenth century according to which the most important thing about the market was no longer exchange, but competition: not equivalence, but disparity. Only full and complete competition could ensure economic rationality through the formation of prices, which could measure economic magnitudes and regulate choices**.20 The Ordoliberals broke with the preceding tradition of liberalism, however, in denying that the politicalconsequence of unlimited competition should be the principle of laissez-faire. **There could be no intervention on economic processes as such, but the government had to intervene on the fundamental conditions of the market. Economy was like a game that had to be left to follow its own course, but only after the government had set its rules**.

#### \*The role of the ballot is to suspend the epistemic and ontological frame of neoliberal modernity – this allows for discussions of trans-modernity to challenge formations of the state, culture, and economy imposed on Latin America.

Escobar in 2010(Arturo, Kenan Distinguished professor of Anthropology at UNC – Chapel Hill, “Latin America at a Crossroads: Alternative modernizations, post-liberalism, or post-development?” Cultural Studies, Vol. 24, No. 1, January)

Deeply enmeshed in the history of Western modernity since the Conquest, the¶ region known as Latin America and the Caribbean could be poised at the edge¶ of epochal changes. Current assessments of these changes range from sheer¶ reformism to a radical rupture or a bifurcation point. It is of course too early¶ to tell whether the transformations examined here will amount to an epoch of¶ changes within the cultural-political space defined by Euro-modernity, or a¶ move forward towards a veritable change of epoch a Pachakuti to lean once¶ more on Rafael Correa’s inaugural speech formulation. If one is to heed the¶ opinion of right wing think-thanks in Washington and in the region, the Left¶ turn is already nearing its end and a decided return to modern values against¶ the ‘barbarism’ of the last decade is in sight.42¶ During the period of neo-liberal reforms, the transformation of the¶ State led to the spatiality of decentralization (political reform), multiculturalism (cultural reform), and flexibilization of the economy (market¶ reforms, often leading to reprimarization). These reforms sheltered the¶ cultural and spatial constructs of the modern nation-state, with all their¶ forms of violence against cultures and places; it further entrenched the¶ regime of the individual; and it made of nature an even more abstract and¶ remote entity to be mercilessly appropriated for the sake of a globalized¶ extractivist model. The 1999-2009 decade has seen important challenges to¶ these processes in some countries at the level of both the State and social¶ movements and, perhaps most productively, at their nexus (such as in the¶ case of the Constitutional reforms in Ecuador and Bolivia); this has included¶ important efforts to rethink the State in terms of pluri-nationality, societies¶ in terms of interculturality, and economies in terms of combinations of¶ capitalist and non-capitalist forms.¶ Fernando Caldero´n (2008) has suggested a useful typology of regimes:¶ Conservative modernization (e.g. Me´xico, Peru´, Colombia); pragmatic¶ reformism (e.g. Brazil, Chile, Uruguay); popular nationalism (Venezuela,¶ Argentina); and indigenous neo-developmentalism (Bolivia, Ecuador). To this,¶ we must add a fifth, more radical, possibility, still to be named, but which¶ combines features of post-capitalist, post-liberal, and post-statist societies that¶ some social movements in the countries discussed here embody and are¶ beginning to theorize. The most interesting cases might arise at moments when¶ the State/social movement nexus is capable of releasing the potential for¶ imagination and action of autonomous social movements, as perhaps happened¶ in Bolivia for a brief period around the election of Evo Morales.¶ For the case of Venezuela, the Socialismo del Siglo XXI seems to be laying¶ down elements for a more diverse society and economy; given the current¶ dynamics, it might be too early to tell whether this will lead to a post-capitalist¶ future; to move forward on this path would require that the Bolivarian¶ Revolution question the developmentalist oil imaginary that is still dominant¶ and for the State and the PSUV to lessen authoritarian tendencies and be more¶ open to the autonomous organizing efforts from the popular sectors, women,¶ Afro-descendants, and indigenous groups. As Lander put it, the question of¶ how to imagine a different society, a post-capitalist society, is still to be¶ articulated explicitly and effectively and collectively discussed.¶ Ecuador constitutes a courageous example of alternative development,¶ with important socialist and ecological undertones, yet it still seems to be¶ largely framed within a modernizing perspective. The alternative modernity¶ that might come about as a result of the State-led transformation is already a¶ significant accomplishment, one that could be radicalized by welcoming more¶ decidedly the proposals of indigenous peoples and nationalities, AfroEcuadorian groups, environmentalists, and women’s groups. This is particularly important in terms of moving forward with the articulation of plurinationality and interculturality envisioned by these groups, one that could¶ effectively contribute to transforming the structures of coloniality at social,¶ political, cultural and epistemic levels. Only then would the revolucio´n¶ ciudadana and the revolucio´n intercultural move in the same direction.¶ Finally, Bolivia might be moving along the lines of a post-liberal, postdevelopmentalist alternative to modernity, if one takes into account certain¶ views and proposals put forth by intellectuals and activists working with¶ organized peasant, indigenous, and poor urban communities. At play in¶ periods of intense mobilization were non-liberal and non-capitalist ‘modes of¶ self-regulation of social-coexistence’ (Gutie´rrez Aguilar 2008, p. 18) based on¶ communal logics that overflowed the parameters of liberalism. At some¶ moments during the 20002005 period, what was obtained was una sociedad en¶ movimiento that enacted the practices of una sociedad otra. Whereas the¶ conditions for the continued activation of this society in movement seems to¶ have changed over the years with the MAS government, they are by no means¶ completely closed down and the mobilizations and uprisings may re-emerge at¶ any moment (as it has been happening in Oaxaca and Chiapas, and with the¶ indigenous Minga in Colombia).¶ Latin America is stirring up a new politics of the virtual, of worlds and¶ knowledges otherwise; it can be said that this is a task that it fulfills for the¶ entire world, and perhaps the most overarching reading of the conjuncture.¶ We have attempted to read this politics of the virtual most directly from the¶ actions of states and social movements; it can also be read from the reactions to¶ it, and from those aspects and moments in which the project wavers and¶ stumbles. Besides the fierce defense of established orders by the nuevas derechas,¶ or new right wings, the tensions and contradictions of the transformative¶ projects are enormous. Because of the historical weight of liberalism, the State¶ is more equipped to control or govern, rather than release, the energies of¶ social movements. Similarly, the sturdy sedimentation of capitalist and modern¶ practices means that these keep on fueling the hegemony of particular ways of¶ organizing the economy (capitalist markets), culture (e.g. the individual), and¶ society. The peculiar spatialities of liberalism can now be readily seen, yet the¶ ‘new geometries of power’ that could support non-liberal formations seem if¶ not difficult to imagine, impossible to implement, as in the case of the defense¶ of ‘departmental autonomies’ by the Bolivian elite; states and movements¶ claim to work for justice yet the struggle for difference and equality invariably¶ falters when it comes to women and often concerning indigenous and Afrodescendant groups pointing at the need to decolonize patriarchal and racial¶ relations as a central element of any project of social transformation. Overall¶ the development model is such that it continues to wreak havoc on the natural¶ environment due to its dependence on accumulation fueled by the exploitation¶ of natural resources (e.g. hydrocarbons, soy, sugar cane, African oil palm).¶ Finally, those movements that most clearly bring into light a politics of the¶ virtual are often those most explicitly targeted for repression (as in Colombia,¶ Mexico, and Peru), or most eagerly seduced into participating in the¶ progressive State projects, perhaps abdicating their most radical potential.43¶ Yet the historical possibilities gleaned from the discourses and actions of¶ some movements and, to a lesser extent, states are also real. We end with¶ some questions in this regard. Can non-liberal logics (e.g. ‘communal’) reach a¶ stable expansion of their non-capitalist and non-state practices? Can the¶ practices of economic, ecological, and cultural difference embedded in¶ relational worlds be institutionalized in some fashion, without falling back¶ into dominant modernist forms? Can communal and relational logics ever be¶ the basis for an alternative, and effective, institutionalization of the social? Can¶ the new non-statist, post-capitalist and post-liberal worlds envisioned by the¶ Zapatista, the World Social Forum, the Oaxacan and many other social¶ movements be arrived at through the construction of local and regional¶ autonomies? And can these alternatives find ways to co-exist, in mutual respect¶ and tolerance, with what until now have been the dominant, and allegedly¶ universal, (modern) forms of life? A measure of success would imply the¶ emergence of that ever elusive goal of genuinely plural societies. As we saw,¶ the social movements of subaltern groups are better prepared to live within the¶ pluriverse than those groups which until now have benefited the most from an¶ alleged universal cultural and social order.¶ To talk about ‘alternatives to modernity’ or transmodernity thus means: to¶ disclose a space of thought and practice in which the dominance of a single¶ modernity has been suspended at the epistemic and ontological levels; where¶ Europe has been provincialized, that is, displaced from the center of the¶ historical and epistemic imagination; and where the examination of concrete¶ decolonial and pluriversal projects can be started in earnest from a deessentialized perspective. Alternatives to modernity point to forms of¶ organizing economy, society, and politics - formas otras - zzthat offer other, if¶ not better, chances to dignify and protect human and non-human life and to¶ reconnect with the stream of life in the planet.¶ A final question insinuates itself: Can the emergent cultural-political¶ subjects in Latin America reach an activated and stable condition of alterity¶ capable of re-constituting socio-natural structures from within, along the lines¶ of decoloniality, relationality and pluriversality?

#### Neoliberalism creates its own crises through a drive for profit—environmental destruction, climate change, resource wars, and nuclear conflict all threaten the survival of the planet—reclaiming the political sphere through the alternative is critical – Justifies Chinese expansionism.

Boggs 12– doesn’t think we cede the political

(Carl, *Ecology and Revolution: Global Crisis and the Political Challenge* pg 1-13, dml)

The global ecological crisis, **rapidly approaching a point of no return**, **threatens planetary survival** at a time when countervailing forces have so far been unable to resist, much less overturn, the powerfully destructive forces at work. The crisis **intersects with**, and reinforces, virtually **every challenge human beings face**, from chaotic **weather patterns** to the **depletion of natural resources**, the spread of **poverty** worldwide, the erosion of public infrastructure, impending **agricultural disasters**, and the likelihood of **widening military conﬂict**. **The underlying cause is globalized corporate power**, now hell-bent on commodifying and dominating every community, workplace, cultural space, and natural habitat on the planet. Fragile ecosystems face increasing threats while the ruling interests and their propagandists justify the perpetual growth machine as **vital to social progress** and material prosperity. Although warfare between and within nations has long appeared as a normal state of global affairs, perhaps the most devastating war is the one being waged by humans against nature. Opposition to the looming global catastrophe **can make little headway until it** **breaks the tightening hold of a power structure** that valorizes nothing so much as the limitless pursuit of wealth, resources, and hegemony on a world scale--and the time is growing short. The argument set forth in the following pages is that the modern crisis demands an **uncompromising radical politics** oriented to **qualitatively new modes of production and consumption** across the globe.¶ The world is currently experiencing the biggest and deepest upheavals that ecosystems have endured for millennia—a product of sustained industrial development through more than two centuries. Thanks to **independent scientiﬁc work from dozens of countries**, questions about the underlying sources of the ecological crisis have been **deﬁnitively answered**: **the major villain is human activity** in the form of greenhouse emissions from fossil fuels, augmented by waste and destruction endemic to the world capitalist system. Even if this merciless assault were to end abruptly—not likely, given the scope and momentum of the corporate growth apparatus—vast environmental changes set in motion long ago are already sufﬁcient to melt all planetary ice in a matter of decades, with irreversible consequences. As of this writing (late 2011), attempts to reverse the global crisis have been **so tepid**, so half-hearted, so begrudging as to make **little difference to immediate global prospects**; corporate and government **business-as usual goes on**, above all in the leading industrial nations that bear most responsibility for the crisis. According to well researched scientiﬁc reports sponsored by the United Nations and major universities, melting glaciers could boost world sea levels by three feet in just a few decades, wreaking havoc on coastal areas, dozens of cities, the world economy, weather patterns, food production, public health, and, most probably, the prospects for democratic governance and international peace. Even more disturbing, if most or all ice on earth does eventually melt, sea levels could rise well beyond three feet, with outcomes too nightmarish to imagine. The ﬁrst ten years of the twenty-ﬁrst century were in fact the hottest on record, reflecting a phase of climate change already linked to extended droughts, ﬂoods, perilous storms, and vector-borne diseases, problems likely aggravated by ongoing rainforest devastation.¶ The planet has moved from 280 ppm (parts per million) greenhouse emissions in the 1880s, as the industrial revolution was taking off, to a staggering 390 ppm in 2010-an upward trajectory that, unfortunately, shows no indication of abating in the midst of full-scale corporate globalization and widespread political paralysis. A National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) 2011 report found that global-warming related pollution (carbon, methane, nitrous oxide, CFC ll, and CFC 12) rose by 1.5 percent from 2009 to 2010, a far steeper rise than had been expected by the International Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), sponsored by the United Nations, and many independent scientists.‘ According to the NOAA Annual Greenhouse Gas Index, moreover, total emissions had increased by 29 percent since 1990. The world pumped 564 million additional tons of carbon alone into the atmosphere from 2009 to 2010, with the United States and China far outdistancing all other national sources—well beyond the worst-case scenario outlined by the IPCC. The Carbon Dioxide Information Analysis Center, run by the U.S. government, announced that greenhouse gas emissions jumped by 6 percent from 2009 to 2010, flat surpassing earlier projections.‘ All reports identiﬁed a small group of usual suspects: fossil fuels, coal-ﬁred plants, petrochemical and related industries, and commercialized agriculture.‘ They further noted that, despite noble promises to solve the problem of climate change, **little effective political action had been undertaken**.¶ Such terrifying scenarios, reforms or no reforms, mean that the fearsome tipping point—a global threshold of no return—is probably not too distant. As the crisis escalates, moreover, ecological ramiﬁcations **will be impossible to separate from** **parallel disasters in the economy, politics, social life, and international relations**. Even if all nations were to urgently address the challenges at hand, humanity would still need hundreds if not thousands of years to return the oceans, waterways, air, soil, forests, and planetary atmosphere back to healthy, livable, and sustainable preindustrial levels. But as essentially casual responses and timid solutions at Rio de Janeiro (1992) and Copenhagen (2009) have shown, such readiness for action by national and world leaders is unfortunately nowhere in sight. As of this writing (late 2011), the rather moderate agenda set for the UN-sponsored Climate Change Conference at Durban, South Africa, did not inspire much cause for optimism.‘¶ The crisis is sure to be felt most immediately in the realm of agriculture and food production, threatened by hotter temperatures, shrinking arable land, long-term droughts, massive ﬂooding, falling water levels, soil erosion, and resource-wasteful animal farming. The question of how, with intensiﬁed global warming, the world will be able to feed a population of at least nine billion by the year 2050 **has yet to be addressed** by any major government or political organization. Food shortages will become extreme, fueling such disasters as famines, epidemics, and social dislocations, with tropical areas most severely hit. World grain production, having peaked in the early 1980s, is declining at the very moment global demand is rising sharply. Most countries can anticipate a 5 percent or more drop in agricultural output within the next decade, setting in motion a worldwide desperate search for imported foodstuffs—where in fact such imports are available. More than three decades of intensifying global warming has meant declining worldwide yields of corn (by 5.5 percent) and wheat (by 3.8 percent), a trend sure to bring more shortages, increased hunger, and higher prices.‘ As Lester Brown points out, the world‘s irrigated land area tripled between 1950 and 2000 but has expanded little since then.° Water shortages, already severe, will further aggravate both food and health challenges. Food riots erupted in scattered parts of the world during 2008 and 2009, anticipating a future norm when shortages mount and prices skyrocket. (Worldwide food prices had already increased by 80 percent between 2005 and 2008, a hint of deeper trends at work.) These challenges mount with the emergence of food as a major commodity within the global casino economy, as Wall Street banks and investment ﬁrms seek billions in proﬁts while scarcity and hunger afﬂict tens of millions of people. This situation is exacerbated by the growth of meat-based agriculture and the East-food economy, especially in the industrialized societies, as some 80 percent of grains are currently fed to livestock while meat production as a whole devours three times more soil, water, and fossil fuels than cost-effective plant based food systems. (In the United States nearly 60 percent of all farmland is devoted to beef production, which also consumes roughly half‘ of all water for human purposes.) The expansion of large-scale, centralized agribusiness, a source of vast waste and pollution—when added to the repercussions of global warming—could itself push the crisis far beyond what has been projected.¶ Imminent water scarcity is a salient case in point. By 2010 several multinational corporations were vying to turn water resources into a proﬁt-making commodity, overturning nearly 2000 years of history during which water had been protected within the public domain. Water shortages are destined to grow as capitalist markets with global demand outstripping supply—drive up prices, denying millions of people access to a resource most needed for agriculture, transportation, industry, the public infrastructure, indeed every realm of human activity. With global water consumption doubling roughly every 20 years, climate patterns becoming more chaotic, aquifers being depleted, and pollution contaminating more lakes, rivers, and oceans, privatization will allow controlling business and banking interests to ﬁx prices at whatever the market can tolerate, **further accelerating the path toward ecological ruin**.7¶ With the crisis intensiﬁed by resource shortages-—ﬁrst in energy but also in timber, water, scarce metals, and even land—the world can expect **sharpening national conﬂict** accompanied by heightened military spending, a ﬂourishing arms trade, spreading civil strife, and new outbreaks of warfare. U.S. geopolitical designs in the Middle East, a region laden with petroleum and other resources, could be read as **an opening chapter in the looming era of resource wars**. Michael Klare argues that the end of the Cold War has brought natural resource priorities to the forefront of U.S. foreign policy and military planning.‘ As is well known, the United States today spends as much on military force and worldwide deployments as all other nations combined, with bases scattered across more than 100 countries and plans afoot to modernize nuclear weapons and militarize outer space. These conditions, naturally, coincide with moves by rising powers (China, India, Brazil, Mexico, Venezuela, etc.) to **strengthen their own arsenals** as they seek leverage (and perhaps deterrence) in a conﬂict-ridden world. While such countries look to expand their military and possibly even nuclear capabilities, often at the expense of social needs, **terrorist groups could thrive** in a context of blowback as the most powerful nations elevate their arms spending and geopolitical ambitions. International treaties—for example, prohibitions against military aggression, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the ban on space militarization, international Criminal C0urt—could be **reduced to scraps of paper**. In this Hobbesian atmosphere, trends toward militarism, economic competition, political chaos, and ecological deterioration could push the global crisis to new levels.¶ If a politics of radical change needed to meet the global challenge nowadays seems remote or utopian, **that is to be expected**: alternatives to the world capitalist system are presently **weak and fragmented**, and what enclaves of opposition exist in the industrialized countries typically lack political leverage, cohesion, and durability, not to mention critical mass. Some liberal and progressive forces have mobilized enough resources to win limited reforms, but few have the capacity to disrupt business-as-usual and none pose a serious threat to the power structure. No anti-system movements or parties exist with much scope or permanence, and that includes a multiplicity of “green” tendencies in Europe and elsewhere. Political impasse is of course hardly unique to environmental politics: long-standing human goals such as disarmament, containing nuclear proliferation, abolishing poverty, eradicating serious diseases, and extending democratic politics, for example, are no closer to realization today than they were several decades ago. In the aftermath of an earlier worldwide collapse of socialist politics and the more recent spread of right-wing ideology in the United States and Europe, oppositional forces have stalled or retreated, with anticapitalist initiatives effectively countered within the political and media establishments. The tragedy is that while radical alternatives end up thoroughly discredited, they **are the sine qua non of averting planetary catastrophe**. At the same time, history does show that even limited, tenuous popular victories can set in motion **far-reaching change**, often in the face of seemingly impregnable power structures as in the eases of South Africa, the former Soviet Union, and Eastern Europe. The Zeitgeist of political retreat could be more difﬁcult to defend as ﬁssures and cracks in an outwardly sturdy corporate -military structure widen and global capitalism reaps more and more of its own harvest.¶ World events since the early 1980s have fueled a steady rightward shift: the Reagan presidency, Soviet collapse and end of the Cold War, U.S. military interventions in the Middle East, business and ﬁnancial deregulations, 9/11 and its aftermath, intensiﬁed globalization, and a tightening corporate stranglehold over the mass media. Both Chris Hedges and Tariq Ali recently observed that American liberalism now stands corrupted and eviscerated, perhaps best illuminated by the steady retreat of the Barack Obama presidency; **no political force** **now blocks the path of ever-expanding corporate power**.’ Meanwhile, U.S. global power retains its hegemonic aspirations despite widespread talk of imperial decline, helped along by ideological justifications stemming from the post-9/11 war on terrorism. Despite contradictions endemic to the world system, the power of capital (backed by military force and transnational structures like the international Monetary Fund and the World Bank) had by the early years of the twenty-first century penetrated more extensively across the planet. Integrated corporate domination helps perpetuate a general mood of futility, disillusionment, and cynicism: if ecological crisis demands **radical intervention**, the prevailing ethos works in **just the opposite direction**—toward a settling in of **normal economic and political routines**. With socialism historically discredited as the ideological matrix of oppositional polities, moreover, sources of radical change now become more difficult to locate than in the past. Liberalism, as mentioned, is far too embedded in the power structure to ﬁll the ideological void.¶ Despite the familiar requiem for socialism, it seems useful nonetheless to resurrect Rosa Luxemburg’s famous dictum—“socialism or barbarism”—though now in a rather different guise. The same imperative was appropriated several decades ago by European radical theorist Cornelius Castoriadis in his early post-World War ll writings." Both Luxemburg and Castoriadis would presumably agree that the grim but unavoidable choice today, put starkly, is between radical change and planetary collapse. The corporate-driven world system follows an indelible pattern of **perpetual growth**, **maximum deregulation**, and **endless resource consumption**—agendas **bereft of ethical precepts** and fully at odds with sustainable development. As the leading economic and military power—and the main source of the environmental crisis—the United States is uniquely positioned to help reverse the crisis: if an ecological politics fails to gain traction in American society, then worldwide hopes are likely crushed. Yet for Washington elites looming disaster nowadays elicits mostly formulaic responses mixed with outright denial, as the power structure moves to relegitimate itself on an archaic foundation of neoclassical economics and “free-market” bromides taken from nineteenth-century theory.“ As oligopolistic power expands, the ideological tum toward free enterprise, privatization, and extreme individualism coexists with real-life authoritarian trends. The rebirth of traditional liberalism (read: modern conservatism), a product of early capitalism, more accurately signals a profound turn toward ideological escapism rooted in the ﬁctions of a self-regulating economy, rugged self-reliance, and small-town America.¶ This contention might seem puzzling at a time when ideological volatility and social conﬂict appear on the upswing, with vibrant grassroots movements said to oppose “big government,” establishment politicians facing harsh attacks, and congressional debates ﬁlled with angry name-calling. Electoral battles have grown more heated, nasty, and bitterly fought out, well-funded lobbies are increasingly aggressive, ideologically driven think tanks and foundations thrive, and the mass media is saturated with vituperative exchanges over such issues as immigration, gay marriage, health care, taxes, and public spending. In this context, environmental organizations proliferate around centers of governmental activity, **pushing modest reforms** while supposedly dedicated to saving the earth and “sustainable development.” Critics like Thomas Frank and Robert Kennedy, Jr., have shown that many such groups have been **cynically bought off and neutralized** by the monied intervention of corporate lobbies." Some grassroots oppositional movements have gained headway since the early 1990s, including “anti-globalization” protests that ﬁrst surfaced in Seattle, immigrants-rights actions, and large-scale peace demonstrations before and just after the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq. Smaller movements, based in local communities and college campuses, appear from time to time and often manage to thrive. Popular mobilizations fought right-wing efforts to destroy public labor unions and their bargaining rights, as in Wisconsin and elsewhere during early 2011, with popular agitation reaching wider sectors of society, tapping into the mood of anger and resentment without, however, evolving into a broader political formation. Much the same could be said of the militant Wall Street Occupied movement that spread from New York City to dozens of American cities and abroad in late 2011. In fact no oppositional tendency has yet adopted an efficacious political strategy based in durable organization and methods **adequate to sustaining a transformative presence** mainly outside the established parties. What **typically occurs** within the dominant public sphere—elections, legislation, interest group lobbying, media debates—**sidesteps** **much-needed debates over corporate, ﬁnancial, and military power**. Historical sources of anti-system opposition – anarchism, socialism, Communism, the new social movements, Green politics—have been marginalized or expunged from American political culture, which turns more ideologically parochial and narrow with each passing year. Nowadays even progressives have distanced themselves from those venerable legacies, convinced they could never generate transformative politics.¶ As American society accelerates its slide into a rationally administered order, consolidated elite power coexists with high levels of mass alienation, social fragmentation, and revulsion against “government intervention” (aside from the military, intelligence, and law enforcement). The result is **a perpetual shrinkage of politics** as citizen participation, public discourse, and social governance erode. Sources of general disempowerment are scarcely difﬁcult to locate: concentration of corporate and ﬁnancial power, bureaucratization, economic globalization, lobby stranglehold over elections and the legislative process, workplace authoritarianism, and the narcotizing influence of commercialized media culture. As the system takes on heightened oligarchic and global features, decision making further gravitates toward a tiny governing clique along lines of what C. Wright Mills identiﬁed several decades ago in his classic, The Postwar Elite." The postwar expansion of U.S. global power, augmented by antidemocratic features of the war economy and security-state, has drained vast human, technological, and material resources away from public goods and services. U.S. imperial ambitions depend on sustained economic growth, exorbitant levels of military spending, worldwide intelligence and surveillance capabilities, and global armed forces deployments, all legitimated by superpatriotism that lies at the core of American exceptionalism. Empire becomes intelligible to mass publics insofar as it is **organically linked** to a **common, routine “way of life” embedded in daily existence**. Despite episodic tremors that might disturb or threaten the political establishment, the reality of Empire in all its institutional and material resources **remains beyond political debate,** its accountability to citizens purely formal. As ideologically driven American leaders steer the nation—possibly the world—toward a new phase of “barbarism,” political opposition is routinely **channeled into safe venues**; oligarchical power trumps social change at every turn. This is less a matter of speciﬁc institutional arrangements like the two party system, winner-take-all electoral districts, and gerrymandered representation than of the systemic corruption and diminution of politics itself. Since the ancient Greeks, politics has been understood by philosophers as central to human existence, the foundation of public governance, community life, citizen participation, and creative statecraft. Theorists as diverse as Aristotle, Rousseau, Machiavelli, Marx, and Lenin viewed political discourse and action as indispensable to collective identities, the public interest, and social change. It was Aristotle who ﬁrst embraced politics as a central arena of public interaction, vital to the sustenance of social life." Little of this remains in the United States today, **despite all the ritual celebrations of freedom, democracy, and citizenship.¶** With the widening scope of elite power, American politics **allows little space for badly needed social reforms**, much less radical change, as corporations, banks, and their lobbies set limits to policy choices and decisions within the two-party stranglehold. Money effectively determines most electoral outcomes, corporate and military lobbies shape congressional legislation, and the same interests colonize such regulatory bodies as the Environmental Protection Agency, Food and Drug Agency, Tennessee Valley Authority, Bureau of Mines and Minerals, and Federal Communications Commission. With rare exceptions, senators and representatives depend on oil, coal, and natural gas largesse, as well as insurance, pharmaceutical, and banking money, for reelection. In Congress, legislation not palatable to business interests is usually defeated: growth and proﬁts **easily prevail over environmental and other social priorities**. With planetary survival in question, multinational giants like ExxonMobil, Microsoft, AT&T, Citibank, and British Petroleum—-villain of the 2010 Gulf oil disaster—-operate with relative impunity, subject to loosened or poorly enforced regulations, laws, and ethical constraints. In shameless protection of these interests, American politicians wind up as scientiﬁc and environmental “skeptics,” with Republicans especially deriding climate change as a liberal fairy tale, at a time when weather-related disasters—droughts, ﬂoods, tornados, hurricanes, et cetera—were becoming the most widespread, fearsome, and costly in U.S. history. Many academics as well, often reliant on corporate largesse for their “research,” have joined the denial frenzy. One example: Professor Roy Spencer, a scientist at the University of Alabama, has concluded from his work on climate change that, while heat continues to build up in the atmosphere, it escapes just as quickly and thus poses no threat.“ In an illuminating investigative report, Naomi Klein, writing in the Nation, describes at length the global-warming denial machinations at the right-wing Heartland Institute, which held its sixth International Conference on Climate Change in late 2011. Conference delegates were motivated by one all-consuming interest: to reject the scientiﬁc consensus that human activity is responsible for warming the planet. The deniers were highly imaginative in their concerns, some believing that climate change is a plot to steal American freedoms and democracy, others convinced that it is simply “a stalking horse for National Socialism,” yet others taking the view that it is President Obama’s scheme to deliver the United States over to some form of Communism. What apparently connected everyone at the conference, however, was deep fear that political efforts to confront the ecological crisis will be threatening to capitalism, to what delegates understood to be “the American way of life.” it is this innately anticapitalist thrust of ecological politics, Klein aptly notes, that American ultraconservatives seem to grasp in a way that generally eludes liberals and progressives. It is this awareness, more than empirical data regarding climate change, that lies at the heart of warming denial."¶ In the midst of a tenacious economic crisis, moreover, both politicians and mass publics remain ﬁxated on material concerns, as issues like taxation, ﬁscal deﬁcits, and public debt rise to the surface. One result of this ﬁxation is that American public opinion in response to the threat of global warming has shifted remarkably in just a few years: surveys reveal a broad turning away from preoccupation with climate change, no doubt in response to both the economic downturn—reinforced by the capacity of Republicans to steer public debates toward matters of “austerity”—and the aforementioned growing culture of denial fueled by big-business interests.¶ Corporate power similarly works against prospects for global intervention, as shown by depressing results at the Copenhagen world summit in December 2009. The environmental gathering of 190 nations ended without binding agreements to restrict carbon emis-sions, the most inﬂuential delegates preferring voluntary accords without speciﬁc national and international targets—and no legal treaties to force governments and corporations away from their standard modus operandi. Some $30 billion was earmarked to assist poor countries in defending against the worst effects of climate change, at best a temporary palliative. After 15 climate summits and 20 years of scientiﬁc warnings about imminent ecological disaster, with irrevocable evidence that the planetary tipping point is near, the ethos at Copenhagen—exempliﬁed by the U.S. delegation—was astonishingly relaxed, devoid of any sense of urgency or recognition that “market“ devices are utterly inadequate to so much as mitigate global warming. In fact Copenhagen, like the 1992 Rio failure, did nothing more than reafﬁrm commitment to the very neoliberal model that **must be jettisoned** if the modem crisis is to be solved.¶ This is the place to emphasize that the capitalist obsession with “economic growth,” central to neoliberal ideology as well as the vast majority of environmental movements ﬁxated on “limits to growth” or “no growth,” is **riddled with outlandish ﬁctions**, distortions, and myths. A qualitatively new (nondestructive, minimally wasteful, sustainable) model of human progress inevitably poses the question of precisely **how growth is measured** and interpreted. As it stands, the “growth” mania represents a cover for uneven development, which happens to coincide with further exploitation, social inequality, and environmental ruin. It is offered as something of an economic (and political) ﬁx like the election campaign rhetoric of ﬁscal stability, “peace,” and “family values.” On the other side, calls for drastically reduced growth or “**no growth**” by environmentalists not only undercut popular appeals behind ecological polities as they seem to urge a regimen of harsh austerity and hardship, but **replicate the very myths of neoliberal discourse**. In reality the present “growth” system reproduces immense amounts of waste, destruction, inequality, and imbalance, all hidden beneath a fetishism of “free markets,” “free trade,” and aggregate measures of gross domestic product (GDP). Viewed thusly, the “growth” regimen bears **little relationship to the actual quality of life that general populations experience**: standard economic indicators of aggregate and quantitative “growth” aim to measure what matters most for people’s everyday lives, as they are derived from **outmoded calculations** of the overall production and distribution of goods while failing to measure that speciﬁc content of those goods. By stripping away the (false) relationship between corporate-deﬁned “growth” and general social well-being, an eco- logical outlook calls attention to heightened living standards that can be achieved by dramatically reducing GDP and, with it, shifting toward a **vastly more egalitarian form of consumption**, greater attention to the generation of public goods and services, demilitarization leading to social conversion, and a greatly lessened carbon footprint on the global habitat. Familiar measures of “growth” conceal untold amounts of waste and destruction in the resources devoured by corporate superproﬁts, a lopsided emphasis on “private” over “collective” modes of consumption, a grossly dysfunctional energy system, a debilitating permanent war economy, a meat-based agriculture and fast-food system, and a top-heavy, parasitic ﬁnance capitalism. While generating increased proﬁts and wealth for a small elite, conventional “growth” agendas promise **nothing so much as material, social, and environmental impoverishment on a world scale.¶** It follows that even modest reductions in systemic waste and destruction could mean dramatic cuts in GDP along with markedly increased living standards for the general population. More extended, deeper changes would of course allow for giant steps toward economic rationality and environmental sustainability. From this standpoint, GDP turns out to be a mirage, a misleading indicator of wealth, wellbeing, and social development. In settings where resources are the most unevenly distributed, as in American society, GDP levels (nearly $15 trillion for the United States in 2010) are even more distorted. The corporate-state obsession with “growth” therefore ends up significant primarily as an elite maneuver for superproﬁts and legitimation. At the same time, the deep-ecology choice between “growth” and “no growth” is false as it takes official GDP measures uncritically, at face value. Human needs can be much better satisﬁed with **qualitatively fewer resources** (perhaps half of existing levels) while extensively reducing destructive societal footprints on the natural habitat. (References throughout this book to “limits to growth,” often in passing, as part of an ecological politics should be understood from this standpoint.)¶ Ecological radicalism depends above all **on a vigorous retrieval of politics**—a theme more fully explored in Chapter 5. As escalating anger over unemployment, poverty, deteriorating working conditions, eroding health care, and political disempowerment widens, resultant ideological shifts can turn rightward or, where leftward, end up **devoid of the political strategy** needed to win governmental power. Movements in the United States since the 1960s have most **often remained pre-political** or evolved into interest group liberalism, consistent with the American tradition of quick, instrumental results within a business-oriented culture. The antiwar, immigrants-rights, and global justice movements of the past two decades have largely followed a pre-political (or indeed antipolitical) trajectory. Eric Hobsbawm long ago observed that modern history is replete with pre-political or “primitive” types of rebellion: social banditry, millenarianism, urban riots, Luddite insurrections, and so forth." While some of these forms were assimilated over time into “modern” party structures (social democratic, Communist, Green), others succumbed to localism and isolation before eventually departing the historical scene. To **wrest power from elites** owning vast power and wealth and ready to defend their class privilege by any method available, social movements have **little choice but to pursue high levels of political articulation**—that is, to become modem in both the Marxian (transformative) and Weberian (power-wielding) sense of historical efﬁcacy

#### The oil frontier is not as simple as the technological access to increased production – it’s the forefront of an assemblage that historically has been involved in mass acts of racist violence against the periphery such as the terrorists the aff mentions for the sake of profit – turns case by creating the terrorists threats they identify

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**At roughly 10 p.m. on April 20, 2010, mud and water shot up and out of the derrick of BP's drilling rig Deepwater Horizon**, located in deepwater in the Gulf of Mexico (GOM), and was followed shortly by a massive explosion instantly converting the rig into a raging inferno. Located almost fifty miles off the coast of southern Louisiana, Deepwater Horizon sank two days later to the ocean floor, resting one mile below the sea's surface. As the rig sank, it ruptured the risers (the marine drilling riser connects the floating rig to the subsea wellhead), and a mixture of oil and gas, under extreme pressure, was released into the warm and biologically rich waters of the Gulf. By mid-May 2010, the Macondo well discharge was hemorrhaging at a rate of over 200,000 gallons per day; surface oil covered 3,850 square miles. When it was all over almost 5 million barrels had been released and 35 percent of the Gulf Coast affected. **Rarely noted** during the crisis **was the long and deep history of spills and blowouts in the Gulf, and the** systematic **destruction of the Gulf coastline, especially in the Mississippi delta**, over the previous century.[25](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/american_quarterly/v064/64.3.watts.html" \l "f25) **In the midst of the Deepwater Horizon catastrophe**, Royal Dutch **Shell released a report on its activities in Nigeria,** the jewel in the crown of the West African Gulf of Guinea, **an oil-producing region of global significance and a major supplier of high quality "sweet and light**" crude to U.S. markets.[26](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/american_quarterly/v064/64.3.watts.html" \l "f26) During 2009 **Shell confirmed that it had spilled roughly 14,000 tons of crude oil into the creeks of the Niger delta**, the heart of Nigeria's oil economy. In other words, **in** ***one*** **year, a** ***single*** **oil company (**Shell, incidentally, currently accounts for roughly one-third of Nigerian national output) **was responsible for 4.2 million gallons of spilled oil**; in 2008 the figure was close to 3 million gallons. In related figures released in April 2010, the Federal Ministry of the Environment released a tally sheet of 2,045 recorded spill sites between 2006 and 2009. Since the late 1950s when oil became commercially viable, over seven thousand oil spills have occurred across the Niger delta oil fields. Cumulatively **over a fifty-year period**, 1.5 million tons (**4 billion gallons**) of crude oil **has been discharged in an area roughly one-tenth the size of the federal waters of the GOM.** As an Amnesty International report put it, this spillage is "on par with [an] Exxon Valdez [spill] every year."[27](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/american_quarterly/v064/64.3.watts.html" \l "f27) Since 1960, to put it more concretely, each acre of the Niger delta has been the recipient of 40 gallons of spilled crude oil. **These two instances of petrocalamity**—each centered on exploration and production at different points in the global value chain but with common points of reference in the history of the Black Atlantic—**provide an opportunity** **[End Page 444]** **to explore the instabilities and contradictions in the oil assemblage**. **Both are** oil **frontiers**, understood not simply as a territory peripheral to, or at the margins of the state in some way, but **as a particular space—**at once political, economic, cultural, and social—**in which the conditions for a new phase of** (extractive) **accumulation are being put in place** (the establishment, in short, of the conditions of possibility for a new phase of capital accumulation). In the world of big oil, **a frontier has a specific set of connotations. A geological province**, a large area often of several thousand square kilometers with a common geological history, becomes a petroleum province when a "working petroleum system" has been discovered.[28](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/american_quarterly/v064/64.3.watts.html" \l "f28) **A commercial petroleum system** (or "play") **consists of several core features**: a source rock with rich carbon content and a geological depth capable of converting organic carbon to petroleum; a sedimentary reservoir rock with sufficient pore space to hold significant volumes of petroleum and permeability to permit petroleum to flow to a well bore; a nonporous sedimentary rock as effective barrier to petroleum migration; and a structural trapping mechanism to capture and retain petroleum. **Once these preconditions are met, the oil frontier comes to life in the play**. **The discovery of a petroleum field**—a play with commercial potential—**triggers a process of appraisal and development,** namely, drilling many new wells to confirm the extent and properties of the reservoirs and fluids and to determine whether the configuration warrants further investment. **The development of the initial fields in a new province is replete with technical uncertainties that collectively shape the ultimate volume of oil that can be recovered.** The properties of reservoir rock, the fluids it contains, and the fluid dynamics in the rock are key, but so too are the fluids that vary in their composition, specific gravity, and viscosity. As Peter Nolan and Mark Thurber point out,[29](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/american_quarterly/v064/64.3.watts.html" \l "f29) uncertainties around each of these field variables translate into uncertainty in ultimate recovery volumes, peak production, the life of the field, and so on. **The frontier**, in sum**, refers to the spatiotemporal dynamics in which fields,** in a petroleum province, **are discovered, developed, and recovered**; the process from so-called primary reserve creation to tertiary recovery from existing "mature" reservoirs. **With the development of** one or more **commercial fields, a frontier becomes "proven**" and some uncertainties are reduced, which often induces an influx of new entrant companies that were deterred when entry barriers were high, which includes state companies and smaller independents. **Another frontier emerges**—a function of new technologies and aging reservoirs—**as aging oil fields attract investments through tertiary recovery**. But the idea of the frontier captures something else, namely, a process, covering many decades, through which the industry has seen the continual discovery, **[End Page 445]**exploitation, and extension of the oil frontier from onshore sedimentary basins through shallow offshore basins and into the deep and ultradeepwater basins. **Recent and emergent frontiers include the challenges of very deep Arctic water and the commercialization of vast resources of unconventional oil and gas like Canadian tar sands and the U.S. oil and gas shales**. The frontier within and between provinces is thus permanent and dynamic, both geographically expansionary and, as it were, involutionary. **Frontiers are** customarily **seen as spaces** "**beyond the sphere of the routine action of centrally located violence-producing enterprises,"** in which typically land and property rights are contested, the rule of law is in question, and **frontier populations (often racialized and excluded because of the coercive forms of capital accumulation in train) inhabit a zone in which "violence and political negotiation [are] . . . at the center of social and economic life**."[30](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/american_quarterly/v064/64.3.watts.html" \l "f30) **Frontiers**, as I deploy the term for oil**, possess all of these qualities rather than be confined to the technical relations of resource exploitation (**as the industry understands frontiers). **The permanent frontier marks the ongoing recursive construction of new spaces of accumulation** (whether the discovery of first oil in the 1950s in Nigeria or the explosion of offshore oil development off coastal Louisiana after 1938) and the creation of the conditions of possibility for the local operation of the oil assemblage.[31](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/american_quarterly/v064/64.3.watts.html" \l "f31) **Oil frontiers have their own temporalities and spatialities**—shaped naturally by technological considerations unique to oil—**but like frontiers everywhere, questions of access to and control of land, property, the state as a prerequisite for accumulation is key**. As a territorial resource, **oil is constantly in the business of creating new**—and refiguring old—**frontiers**; complex **processes of dispossession**, **compromise**, **violence**, **and engagement mark them**. As a technologically dynamic industry, the frontiers so created are "deep, shifting, fragmented and elastic territories."[32](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/american_quarterly/v064/64.3.watts.html" \l "f32) Eyal Weizman's extraordinary account of the Israeli occupation of Palestine comes close to what I have in mind: The dynamic morphology of the frontier resembles an incessant sea dotted with multiplying archipelagoes of externally alienated and internally homogenous . . . enclaves. . . . [It is] a unique territorial ecosystem (in which) various other zones—political piracy, barbaric violence, . . . of weak citizenship—exist adjacent to, within or over each other.[33](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/american_quarterly/v064/64.3.watts.html" \l "f33) **These oil frontiers are** textbook **cases of** what Henri Lefebvre calls **the "hyper-complexity" of global space in which social space fissions and fragments, producing multiple, overlapping, and intertwined subnational spaces with their own complex internal boundaries and frontiers**.[34](http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/american_quarterly/v064/64.3.watts.html" \l "f34) **[End Page 446]**

#### Lifting the embargo would only turn the island’s political and economic sphere over to neoliberal elites impoverishing the country – the aff’s solvency is predicated upon a flawed understanding of human behavior.

Lambie in 2010(George, Lecturer in Business and Law at De Montfort University, “The Cuban Revolution in the 21st Century,” Page 245-247)

For those who believe in a neo-liberal solution to the island’s¶ predicament, which forms by far the largest component of external¶ opinion, reforms simply signal the inevitable birth pangs of the¶ market, in which a nation of individuals is seeking freedom to¶ engage in private enterprise backed by a representative democracy¶ (Centeno & Font 1997; Domínguez 1996). In this context, local¶ initiatives in agricultural production and so on are seen in terms of¶ self-help, not participation. Given the above views, it is assumed that¶ the acquisitive and self-seeking nature, which Cubans are presumed¶ to share with all other human beings, can no longer be held back¶ by state manipulation and oppression. From this perspective, it was¶ the favourable trade and aid relationship with the CMEA which¶ allowed the Castro government to project the illusion of socialist¶ ‘development’ and rising living standards, and thus to buy the¶ political acquiescence of the Cuban people. The conclusion is that¶ Cuba will have to face economic ‘realities’, and can no longer deal¶ with problems by turning to ideology. For example, referring to¶ the Rectification Campaign, Eckstein (2003:77) states, ‘there were¶ underlying economic reasons for reforms rooted in the domestically¶ orientated economy that the state justified ideologically in the name¶ of rectification’. Such thinking, and the ‘realities’ it identifies, are¶ themselves not ideologically neutral however, but based on untested¶ and unproven assumptions about human behaviour. The only sense¶ in which they are ‘real’ is that they concur with a dominant mode¶ of thought and a prevailing economic system, which will inevitably¶ effect, but need not necessarily determine, Cuba’s development.¶ In practice, the difficulty with the market prescription, and with¶ the establishment of representative democracy and political pluralism¶ as experienced in most of the Caribbean and in Central and South¶ America, is that it does not seem to have brought improvements¶ in the standards of living of the masses and, in contrast to Cuba,¶ the concept of growth with equity has been abandoned. One could¶ argue that with the end of the US embargo, capital would flood¶ into Cuba and stimulate growth; however, the island’s ‘Cinderella’¶ status may not last for long. The current advantages it offers to¶ investors in the form of a skilled workforce, viable exports and¶ tourism, once exploited and exhausted, would leave Cuba little¶ opportunity but to compete with very low-wage economies like¶ Haiti and Vietnam. It is also worth remembering, as indicated in¶ Chapter 3, that in the pre-revolutionary period Cuba received a¶ vast amount of US investment in proportion to the rest of Latin¶ America, but this did not resolve the problem of inequality; indeed.¶ it exacerbated it. As we have seen in Chapter 1, it is also clear that¶ under globalisation it is difficult, if not impossible, to maintain¶ nationally orientated strategies in an increasingly integrated world.¶ The imperative of global competition for foreign direct investment¶ and markets serves to enrich those local groups that are linked to¶ the circuits of transnational accumulation, whose interests are often¶ distinct from the majority of the national population.¶ Moreover, democracy in the region is weak. In Chapter 2, it was¶ argued that neo-liberalism has shifted power away from the state¶ and to non-elected agencies that represent the interests of capital.¶ The move from an international system of nation-states to a trans¶ nationalised matrix of accumulation has weakened the economic¶ and political control of nations over their resources, which are¶ increasingly managed on a globalised level. Now, a transnational¶ elite and their representative agencies make many of the decisions¶ that affect individual countries, instead of leaving those choices to¶ national constituencies. In Cuba, a neo-liberal solution would also¶ divert participation into the market, in which it (participation) would¶ lose its function as a process of interaction between organisations¶ and individuals. Political parties would become defenders of¶ free-market ideology and ‘representative democracy’. Given such¶ a scenario, the revolutionary ideals of Cuba as an independent,¶ nationalist and equitable nation would dissolve, as the economy and¶ society were refashioned to suit the needs of international capital¶ and the emerging elites in a new class structure. As this book was¶ being finalised in June 2010, the world was facing the second wave¶ of a global financial and economic crisis, which began in 2008¶ with the failure of underlying assets to support an overleveraged¶ banking system. Why should Cuba now buy tickets for a train that¶ has been derailed and is unlikely to be put back on track in the¶ foreseeable future?

#### Predictions of solvency based on economic calculations fail

**Bifo 11** – Whit Whitmore’s pen name

(Franco “Bifo” Berardi, *After the Future* pg 64-66 (of my copy), dml)

Economics became a science when, with the expansion of capitalism, rules were established as general principles for productive activity and exchange. But if we want these rules to function we must be able to quantify the basic productive act. The time-atom described by Marx is the keystone of modern economics. Calculating the time necessary for the production of a commodity makes possible the regulation of the entire set of economic relations. But when the main element in the global productive cycle is the unforeseeable work of the mind, the unforeseeable work of language, when self-reproducing information becomes the universal commodity, it is no longer possible to reduce the totality of exchanges and relations to an economic rule. Drucker continues: In any system as complex as the economy of a developed country, the statistically insignificant events, the events at the margin, are likely to be the decisive events, short range at least. By definition they can neither be anticipated nor prevented. Indeed, they cannot always be identified even after they have had their impact. (Drucker 1989: 166) Economic science is founded on a quantitative and mechanistic paradigm that could comprehend and regulate industrial production, the physical manipulation of mechanical matter, but is unable to explain and regulate the process of immaterial production based on an activity that can’t easily be reduced to quantitative measurements and the repetition of constants: mental activity. Due to the new technologies, Jacques Robin (1989: 39) explains how even the concept of productivity fails to resist the challenge raised by the new realities like growth without job creation. With the new technologies the majority of production costs are determined by research and equipment expenses that actually precede the productive process. Little by little, in digitalized and automated enterprises, production is no longer subjected to the variations concerning the quantity of operational factors. Marginal cost, marginal profits: these bases of neoclassical economic calculations have lost a good part of their meaning. The traditional elements of salary and price calculation are crumbling down. Mental work is not computable in precise and predictable terms like the work performed by an industrial worker. Therefore, the determination of value – the keystone of classical economy both as a science and as daily economic practice – becomes aleatory and indefinable. “Realist” economies (the economies based on the relationship to a computable amount of labor time) were governed by their goals: a naïve goal of producing use value for the satisfaction of specific needs, or a subtler goal of valorization as the increase of invested capital. Now, instead, it is impossible to explain our economies on the basis of their goals, whether we identify them with the intentions of certain individuals or certain groups or with the goals of an entire society. The economy is governed by a code, not by its goals: Finality is there in advance, inscribed in the code. The order of goals has simply ceded its place to a molecular play, as the order of signified has yielded to the play of infinitesimal signifiers, reduced to their aleatory commutation. (Baudrillard 1993a: 59) In Baudrillard’s vision, the economy therefore appears as a hyperreality, a simulated, double, zz and artificial world that cannot be translated in terms of real production. Consequently, economic science can no longer explain the fundamental dynamics governing humanity’s productive activities; nor can it explain their crisis. Economics has to be replaced by a global science whose characteristics and field of inquiry are still unknown: a science that would be able to study the processes of formation of Cyberspace, i.e. the global network of signs-commodities.