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#### The aff’s reformation to the political economy can’t be separated from the narrative of neoliberal success. Unspoken, but ever present, is the appeal of the American Dream that entices and assimilates the most privileged Asian populations as junior partners to whiteness. As

Overall, in the pro-Liang mobilization, what might be read as a moment of acculturation, in which the Chinese American subject moves toward American cultural citizenship through civic participation and immersion in racial minority discourse, needs historical and transnational articulations. The American Dream is not just about crafting the American nation-state as an exceptional place upholding democracy and freedom; it is an imperialist ambition. These ideologies indeed travel across national borders as transnational capital moves through geopolitical spaces, demanding an open market and culturally equipped consumers, building a parasitic ideological relation between the two nations. The neoliberal form of the Asian American body politic is fused with the model minority ethics of hard work and deservingness, as well as anti-Blackness, and it treats any political outcry against racialized state violence as a performance of political correctness.**[[1]](#footnote-1)**

#### This parasitic citizenship required by appeals to economic freedom, competition, and the American Dream produces both inter and intramural violence for a taste of conditional freedom. The rampant nationalism spurred by Liang’s shooting of Gurley demonstrates how racial and political crises can be coopted for conservative means

Liu 18 (Wen, Assistant Professor of women’s gender and sexuality studies at the University of Albany, “Complicity and Resistance: Asian American Body Politics in Black Lives Matter,” October 2018, Journal of Asian American Studies, Volume 21, Number 3)

This racial antagonism between Asian and African American communities, which resulted in accumulated transnational geopolitical conflicts, reached a peak in the aforementioned incident of Liang’s shooting and killing of Gurley in November 2014. This incident, occurring during the height of the BLM protests in Ferguson, became a controversy in the movement. The controversy was raised and then became a division between African and Asian Americans but also within Asian American communities because Liang, a young Chinese American man, was the first among all police officers indicted, the others all white, who had abused police powers in the line of duty resulting in the deaths of many unarmed and innocent Black people. It became apparent to Asian Americans that the government was using Liang as a scapegoat to try to alleviate the national racial “crisis” highlighted by BLM activists and their demands to reform and abolish the police system built on the practices and ideology of white supremacy. This targeting of an inexperienced Asian American officer offended many Chinese Americans. Within a few months of the incident, two large-scale rallies and several press conferences were mobilized in support of Liang by Chinese American business leaders and local politicians, who accused the city’s indictment of officer Liang as racist. This seemingly defensive mobilization against Liang’s indictment was quickly appropriated by conservative elites and politicians and turned into an offensive, anti-Black critique of BLM’s racial justice vision. I identified four distinct discursive strategies that the pro-Liang groups adopted to turn BLM’s critique of the state’s racism via police violence into racism against Chinese Americans: racial victimology, ethnic empowerment and deservingness, the American Dream, and anti-Blackness. These discursive strategies allowed the proLiang groups to shift the attention away from BLM’s broader demand for racial justice and toward intergroup Asian-Black conflicts. Racial Victimology The pro-Liang coalition mobilized Chinese immigrant communities not only in New York City and its surrounding suburbs but also transnationally. An online petition for the White House opposing Liang’s indictment started by a Chinese American community member quickly reached almost 120,000 signatures.27 Within a day of the announcement of the court, tens of thousands of dollars were donated to the campaign to withdraw Liang’s indictment from Chinese people of all classes—restaurant workers, beauticians in hair salons, business managers, lawyers, and retired elders, and so on.28 Meanwhile overseas, the Chinese Communist Party’s (CCP) central propaganda newspaper, People’s Daily, not only reported the incident but also condemned the U.S. government as “unjust” and argued that “the US legal system still has a long way to go,”29 implicating that the unequal treatment of Chinese Americans crushed the fantasy of egalitarian multiculturalism in the United States. Due to the wide-scale response and interests in the case, a self-proclaimed “civil rights” organization called Coalition of Asian American for Civil Rights (CAACR) was quickly formed after the incident. The coalition organizers, mostly Chinese American businessmen, saw this as a chance to inject rarely visible Asian American agendas into mainstream politics and strengthen the community’s ties with the police and the state. Thousands of Chinese American protestors gathered on the lawn of Cadman Plaza in Brooklyn, waving American flags and bilingual signs in support of Liang on April 26, 2015. The crowd largely consisted of middle-aged, first-generation Chinese Americans and their young children. Many people wore red clothes as a symbol of Chinese national pride. Although the event was set as a protest against the “unjust treatment” of the state and many were chanting “No Scapegoats!” along with the organizers on the stage, the tone of the event was strangely celebratory. Some families brought picnics and speakers to play Chinese music in the park, as if it was an extension of the Lunar New Year celebration that had happened earlier in the month. Due to the sheer amount of people present in the crowded space, it was difficult to hear the speeches from the politicians and business leaders on the main stage. The political content of the rally was not clear to me in the first place. My conversation with a Chinese woman in her thirties from a New Jersey suburb confirmed at least one segment of ambiguous political motivation of the participants, as she admitted that she wasn’t familiar with the details of the Liang-Gurley case. The reason she had decided to come was because a message in her WeChat group encouraged people to show up to demonstrate “Chinese unity.” The themes of Chinese unity and pride seemed collectively shared among the participants, who expressed a sense of urgency to show up and to “not get looked down on by the Americans,” in other words, the mainstream society that they felt had silenced their political views for too long. The reason that the mobilization was successful and effective should not be attributed to the significance of the Liang-Gurley case alone but be examined in the context of a cumulative organizing effort within Chinese communities. Several precursor events contributed to the turnout at Liang’s rallies. First, in October 2013, on the Jimmy Kimmel Live segment “Kids Table Government Shutdown Show,” ABC aired an episode in which four children were discussing how the United States should solve the problem of its massive national debt to China. One child suggested that the government should build a big wall, and another six-year-old child laughed and said, “kill everyone in China.”30 The remarks infuriated Chinese American communities, a group of whom sent a petition to the White House’s “We the People” online initiative to demand that the U.S. government investigate ABC’s racial hatred.31 It reached a hundred thousand signatures in the three weeks following the show’s airing. Although the White House used the argument of free speech to deflect the demand, a new online network of Chinese Americans was built and carried a sense of political purpose to challenge racism against Chinese communities in the United States and abroad, unaffiliated with the existing nonprofit structure of Asian American network formed after the civil rights movements, galvanizing a new Chinese American collective identity of racial victimhood.32 Second, this insurgent political consciousness of middle-aged Chinese Americans, traditionally thought of as silent in American mainstream politics, was mobilized due to their desire to preserve their children’s educational privileges in higher education, as many institutions now do not consider Asian American a protected racial category. A coalition of Asian American groups filed suits against Harvard and several other Ivy League universities in 2015 and 2016 regarding their racial quotas in admission processes.33 While progressive affirmative action activists have been adapting the category of Asian American to argue that not all Asian Americans fit into the high-achieving stereotype, especially when Pacific Islanders and Southeast Asian Americans are considered, the complaints around higher education admission from Chinese American communities in recent years are primarily based on the ideology of meritocracy regardless of one’s race. This demand is about eliminating the Asian racial category as a protected class that is no longer needed. A color-blind racial rhetoric packaged in discourses of rights and justice has emerged in conservative Chinese American communities. These two political mobilizations together became the background driving forces for a solidified Chinese American subjectivity in the Liang Gurley case, built upon a form of racial victimology. The Chinese protestors, particularly the leadership, called out the state’s scapegoating tactic against Liang and labeled the incident “racial discrimination,” “unfair treatment,” and “selective treatment,” as many white officers have killed innocent people and have not been charged with manslaughter. Signs depicting Martin Luther King and speeches about the killing of Vincent Chin in the 1980s were highlighted in the rallies in March and April 2015, each drawing thousands of Chinese American participants. Ethnic Empowerment and Deservingness Whereas the deaths of Gurley and many other Black victims of police violence were not fairly addressed by the state or mainstream media, many Chinese publications in the United States portrayed the Chinese American mobilization in a unilateral celebratory tone. World Journal and Sing Tao Daily called the pro-Liang movement, which started in New York and spread across major U.S. cities, a “historical” phenomenon and the “largest” Chinese American gathering in the United States, showing an “unprecedented unity” and “solidarity” as well as a “mature and rational” image of the community.34 The Asian American rhetoric from the civil rights movement was largely appropriated to manufacture a united front of the Chinese American body politic as racial victim and, again, a legible racial minority deserving of institutional access and apology. This celebratory narrative of the newly emerged Chinese American “political unity” quickly became a political opportunity for Chinese elites to form a “rainbow coalition” with local Republican politicians, Asian and white, seizing the moment to condemn the current Democratic government and form stronger ties with the city’s police department. For instance, Joseph Concannon, a white retired NYPD captain, failed Senate and city council candidate, and president of the Tea Party–aligned Queens Village Republican Club, was a major force behind the pro-Liang rallies. Concannon, along with other Chinese American Republicans including Phil Grim and Doug Lee as well as qiaoling (僑領), overseas Chinese business leaders, worked together to push for their antipolice reform agendas as means to not only undermine the government of the more liberal-leaning mayor Bill de Blasio but also unite Asian American voters for the upcoming local elections, as voter registration forms passed through the rally crowd. In the March 9, 2015, “Support Your Local Police” rally to protest the indictment of Liang, Concannon implicitly condemned BLM activists as “racial arsonists” and “professional agitators” who were “turned loose” under de Blasio’s leadership.35 He and other Republican politicians addressed the Chinese American community as the “natural ally” for the pro-police and conservative agendas. A right-wing alliance developed between conservative Chinese and white Americans, who share a deep investment in preserving class privileges and status, in the name of “racial justice.” Far from being cross-racial solidarity, this alliance is white assimilation in disguise. Although securing Asian American voter blocks seemed to be the rainbow coalition’s primary motive in participating in the pro-Liang rally, for many of the Chinese American participants, it was a rare opportunity to express pride in their long-overlooked ethnic and national identity. This intensified sentiment of Chinese nationalism became salient to me in the rally on April 26. Whereas the coalition leadership was drawing from a more multicultural, pan-Asian discourse to put forth their demands to drop Liang’s charges, the conversations I had with the participants emphasized that Chinese people should stand up for themselves and not to get “harassed” or “put down by the Americans” anymore—meaning not only the white Americans who occupy a superior position in society but also other racial minorities, particular Blacks, whose demands seem to be taken more seriously by the state. The Liang incident becomes another classic example of how Asian Americanness is lifted up to perpetuate model minority success in order to deny the institutional access of other marginalized racial subjects such as in the affirmative action debate. It is ironic that the coalition leadership monopolized the representation of “Asian Americans” as a way to reappropriate the current racial crisis for ethnic-nationalist concerns, as the coalition was composed of only Chinese American and white leaders. The discourse of Asian racial victimology was mostly present in the official rhetoric of the Chinese American leaders, but to the participants, especially for the first-generation immigrants, it was more of an issue about Chineseness. Their urgency to stand up and join the rally was to express political power as a people to the American public after decades of being silenced as a racialized population. The American Dream The discourses of the American Dream were everywhere in the pro-Liang rallies. Chinese American families waved American flags while marching across the Brooklyn Bridge on April 26, 2015. The American anthem played before the speeches. Interestingly, the participants, who were largely native Chinese speakers, seemed uninterested in the American anthem, and hardly anyone sang along. Most of the participants, Chinese families with young children, gathered in small groups to take pictures with the American flags given to them by the coalition leaders. Any pedestrian who just happened to walk by that day would have had difficulty recognizing this gathering as a “political protest,” as many participants treated the event more like a social celebration. Some participants were waving heart-shaped signs with the Chinese letter “love” (愛) in red along with the American flags. A thick, impenetrable, and totalizing force of Chinese nationalism was forged during the event. The collective political narrative of Chinese ethnic empowerment superseded the more nuanced ways the participants understood the Liang-Gurley incident. At one point the redness of the American flags and the redness from the participants’ signs, clothes, and banners, which symbolized Chinese unity, merged in the scene. It became clearer and clearer to me, as I marched “ethnographically” with the crowd, that the American Dream was aligned with an equally powerful, affective Chinese Dream and a neoliberal transnational dream of class advancement that requires exclusion and stratification of the classed and racial Other. As a queer Taiwanese American observer in the march, my otherness was indeed quite apparent. Despite being ethnically Han, my queerness and nonconforming gender expressions drastically singled me out from the crowd of middle-aged parents and their young children. When I spoke to the march participants, my Taiwanese Mandarin accent was also quite distinct from that of the Chinese mainlanders. I felt as though I was a “race traitor” and consciously distanced myself from the crowd so that they would not recognize my ulterior emotions. At the same time, I recognized the very flexible capacity of my Asian Americanness that blended in the collective expression of Chinese American body politic to the non-Chinese spectators, yet my queerness continued to signify a stance of dissidence and protest—an opposition to the American and the Chinese ideal. However, without the presence of other dissidents, my race and ethnicity were quickly absorbed and territorialized by the collective body politic in the event—the ambiguous yet powerful signs of Chineseness, masking in total consensus by the bodies, the chants, the redness everywhere on participants’ signs, banners, and clothes. The collective political narrative of Chinese ethnic empowerment supersedes the more nuanced ways the participants understood the Liang-Gurley incident. The U.S. flag in the event symbolized not only allegiance to the state but an aspiration to become successful as Chinese people in the United States. During my fieldwork on the bridge, another middle-aged Chinese woman told me that she had brought her son to the rally because she wanted him to “learn democracy” in order to be “successful in this country.” As much of the Chinese press that covered the pro-Liang mobilization as a historical event has shown Chinese solidarity and Chinese people’s capacity to participate in civic actions in a “mature and rational” manner,36 the subjectivity that emerged in these events was less about a demonstration of American patriotism and more about Chinese modernity and desire for a new nation as a people. As the previous Asian American assimilationist politics in the post–civil rights period emphasized American national and cultural identity, that is, a liberal racial ideology of national belonging, the pro-Liang coalition expressed a qualitatively different kind of national belonging grounded in a moral and cultural ethic of economic advancement and civic respectability, as well as in a dream of Chinese modernity. Aihwa Ong has defined neoliberalism as a technology of governance that rearticulates the social criteria for citizenship for the purpose of optimizing the effects of the market and demoralizing economic activities.37 Citizenship is thus no longer strictly attached to national identification but defined by economic productivity. In short, the participants’ desire for U.S. nationalism is less about being seen as “Americans” and more about a longing for continual economic prosperity and political opportunities for their communities and their next generations. Similarly, the discourse around Liang’s “unfair” indictment focused not on his unequal treatment as an “American” but on how the promise of model minority advancement was temporarily shattered by a state-inflicted racial crisis.

#### Asian Americans are at a political crossroad. Historically apathetic, the new waves of Anti-Asian violence have created new waves of political hope and energy for Asian communities. BUT that political hope is not neutral – central to the appeal to assimilation is also the appeal to reinforce the systems of militarism and violence that have torn our communities apart. From Asian Americans donating nearly $100,000 to the Proud Boys after the capital riots[[2]](#footnote-2) to supporting affirmative action lawsuits,[[3]](#footnote-3) the chase for the “good Asian American Life” AND the fear of being the perpetual foreigner constitutes a wounded attachment that demands permanent hierarchies.

#### US Antitrust isn’t a domestic attitude, it’s an international structure that coerces and condemns other nations into a continual state structural adjustment. Competition bleeds outward and mutates developing nations into a deformed image of Empire that will never be cared for.

Waked 16 (Dina I. Waked, Assistant Professor of Law at Sciences Po Law School, “Adoption of Antitrust Laws in Developing Countries: Reasons and Challenges,” 2016, Journal of Law Economics and Policy, Vol. 12.2)

The unprecedented spread of antitrust laws in the 1990s raises the question of why did developing countries adopt competition laws in the 1990s and not before? Further, why did so many of them suddenly become interested in competition law adoption? There is no simple answer, except to say that competition laws were not considered an important addition to their arsenal of laws up until the 1990s. One reason was that many countries had provisions either in their penal codes, civil codes, or commercial legislations dealing with competition law issues before formally adopting legislation that is solely concerned with competition matters.8 This made them less interested in adopting particular laws dealing with competition, seeing that they had general provisions in other legislation dealing with the same issues. Then why did so many suddenly become interested in these kind of laws in the 1990s? It is simplistic to argue, yet probably true, that many countries were entering trade agreements in the 1990s that made the adoption of competition law a prerequisite to the implementation of the trade deals.9 These treaties were either trade agreements creating free trade zones or part of structural programs that intended to open up the developing world economies and facilitated the entry of foreign entities that considered a competition law a necessity and guarantee for their work abroad, in particularly in a developing country. More generally, the 1990s are considered the era where developing world countries started to put an end to their former protectionist policies that were either inspired by communist or socialist regimes or simply by efforts to industrialize and strengthen national champions and local producers. The 1990s introduced the new era of international trade, encouraging foreign direct investment, and membership in regional trade agreements or the World Trade Organization (WTO). With the emergence of many of these structural changes, open door policies and participation in world trade relations, competition laws were suddenly prescribed as necessities to fa-cilitate much of the impending changes.10 It is important to understand the role played by the WTO and other international organizations in encouraging and often requiring new members to adopt these laws in order to understand the surge in the developing world.11 Similarly, the role played by the EU in encouraging new members and trade partners to adopt competition law is even more straightforward.12 Adopting these laws seemed to many as the missing link to assure growth and development.13 Therefore, one could argue that one of the main factors that led to the widespread adoption of competition laws across developing countries is the push exercised by supranational bodies. Another factor is the overwhelming evidence these international bodies were presenting to developing countries illustrating a positive relationship between adopting a competition law and development. Competition laws appeared to be the missing link needed to usher in prosperity and growth. The pressure by international bodies and the development hopes that adopting competition laws carried are discussed in more detail next. A. The Push by International Bodies to Adopt Competition Laws International and supranational bodies have considered competition laws essential for economic reforms. Ever since competition laws were discussed as part of the agenda of the negotiations to establish an International Trade Organization (ITO) after World War II, competition laws were considered a vital requirement for needed reforms. The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) upheld the rhetoric of the ITO and included competition issues and restrictive business practices in a “best endeavor” clause.14 However, the GATT did not require the adoption of specific provisions dealing with the treatment of private restrictive business practices (RBPs).15 Therefore, the members of the WTO could freely adopt their own national competition laws so long as they did not infringe the principle of nondiscrimination.16 The General Council of the WTO created a Working Group in April 1997 on the Interaction Between Trade and Competition Policy. This Working Group strongly called on developing countries to adopt competition rules in the face of the global merger wave underway and the structural changes taking place within the developing countries as a result of their liberalization and free trade policies.17 The WTO's focus on competition law adoption is due to the widely believed interaction between competition policies and the expansion of free trade.18 Effective free trade policies require, next to the withdrawal of trade barriers, the elimination of obstacles originating from private restraints resulting from abuse of dominance, monopolization, import and export cartels, horizontal and vertical restraints, and other issues considered to be competition law violations.19 To achieve these results, the WTO urged developing countries to adopt competition rules, often US or EC type competition policies, while encouraging for time lags in the introduction of these different aspects of competition rules to be able to efficiently implement them. One can explain the WTO’s continuous attempt to influence, encourage, and facilitate the adoption of competition legislation in developing countries by its aspirations towards harmonizing competition laws to one day usher in universal competition policies under its umbrella.20 The WTO is repeatedly encouraging agreements on core antitrust principles as a first step towards the achievement of this goal.21 When developing countries adopt rules similar to those in more developed countries, the attempt at harmonization seems more realistic and at the same time the effects of global anticompetitive conduct with relation to trade can be better tackled. If laws adopted in developing countries were fundamentally different from those in the advanced world, the ability of the developed countries to protect their interests from anti-competitive practices in developing countries would be limited. Thereby, not only would similar competition laws encourage more effective free trade, but would also give a sense of security for FDIs and MNCs working in developed countries. One can also argue that it would give the host developing country more teeth to prosecute prohibitive conduct emanating from local or foreign entities, and to challenge harmful global mergers. The WTO is not alone in encouraging competition law adoption across the developing world. Several international financial institutions consider a competition policy dimension when evaluating country risk necessary for lending purposes.22 For example, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the International Development Association (IDA) look at a country’s competition policy when assessing the situation of borrower countries before deciding to allocate the funds needed.23 A classic example is the case of Indonesia, where the country was required by the IMF to adopt a competition law in return for rescue money.24 It is worth noting that the first conditionality appeared in a World Bank industrial sector adjustment loan to Argentina in 1991.25Also, the United Nations and the OECD played a role in pushing for the adoption of competition laws across developing countries. Both institutions have adopted and promoted non-legally enforceable “codes of conduct” to prevent anticompetitive practices.26 The United Nations has also set up, under the rubric of the United Nations Commission for Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the United National Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UNESCWA), several projects and initiatives that assist developing countries in the design and implementation of their competition policies.27 The increased interest of international and supranational bodies with regard to encouraging adoption of competition laws in the developing world originated in the wave of neoliberal reforms as part of the Washington consensus, which resulted in privatization and liberalization across developing countries. Some of the goals of these reforms were to put an end to government monopolies and governmental intervention in the economy through liberalizations and privatizations. However, the result of the wave of privatization was that government monopolies were simply replaced by private monopolies yielding the same anti-competitive effects.28 For the past two decades or more, the World Bank Group and other development organizations have encouraged developing and emerging market economies to adopt pro-competition measures such as trade and investment liberalization, privatization, and economic deregulation. These initiatives have been aimed primarily at reducing public sector policy-based barriers to entry, regulatory costs, and delays that unnecessarily constrain private sector economic activity . . . . They are, however, insufficient— they are complementary to but do not substitute for an effective competition law-policy. They do not address the private sector restrictive business practices that can significantly impede competition. Unchecked, anticompetitive practices by dominant and politically connected firms and vested interest groups can capture or significantly reduce the benefits that accrue from competition . . . . Competition does not arise or sustain itself automatically. The competitive process needs to be maintained, protected, and promoted to strengthen the development of a sound market economy. 29 Similar rhetoric was reproduced over and over, not only by these international organizations, but also by lawyers, economists, and policy makers. The result was that adopting competition rules became a priority on the agenda of economic growth in many less developed countries, who pushed forward with the help or pressure of various supranational institutions. Some countries, however, resisted the push to adopt competition laws and continued to prefer concentration to competition. They, thereby, had less of a drive to adopt competition laws based on their own initiatives. Others felt the need to adopt competition laws and to drive their markets towards the perfect competition ideal. Part of this desire was their belief in the rhetoric presented to them, but also due to the increased cross-border influences of anti-competitive practices,30 especially their import of cartel-affected goods.31 Trading partners have also requested the adoption of antitrust laws as a condition for signing free trade agreements.32 For example, the EU has been extremely active in the process of spreading its competition law to developing countries. This is to the extent where “some argue that today the EC competition law is the dominant model of competition law in the world.”33 Treaties, such as the Accession Agreements signed by Eastern European countries to join the EU34 or the Euro-Mediterranean partnership agreements signed by various non-European Mediterranean countries and the EU, oblige the signatories to adopt competition laws modeled on Article 101 (formally 81) and 102 (formally 82) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU).35 One of the studies on the adoption competition laws across countries suggests that “the impetus for adopting antitrust laws appears related to the imposed guidelines of supranational bodies, in particular the requirements of the European Union.”36 One reason why the EU has been actively involved in shaping the competition laws of developing countries could be the fact that the EU is an important trading partner and, therefore, it is eager to trade with countries that have similar laws. Another reason could be its race with the US on issues relating to harmonization of competition rules, whereby its influence on the competition laws of developing countries is an attempt to diffuse its laws, which could push the balance in its favor when negotiations on harmonized rules are underway. It is also worth noting that the EU is not the sole entity to require the adoption of competition laws in its bilateral trade agreements with developing countries. Many Free Trade Agreements have endorsed similar requirements, where parties to these agreements are required to have a domestic antitrust regime in place as one of the main conditions before entering into the agreement.37 Other bilateral and regional free trade agreements have also included chapters on competition policy.38 Finally, several nongovernmental organizations have also advocated the adoption of these laws and promoted assistance to countries in their implementation phases.39B. Development Hopes Associated with Adopting Competition Laws Development hopes have been crucial in the spread of competition laws. The direct impact of adopting competition laws on prosperity, economic growth, and development is often the reason furnished by these international institutions for developing countries to adopt these laws. The heightened interest in competition law adoption “suggests competition law is widely seen as a desirable and worthwhile economic policy.”40 Competition policy has often been regarded as a building block of economic development. A paper of the WTO Working Group described that: The specific benefits that have been attributed to such policy include promoting an efficient allocation of resources, preventing/addressing excessive concentration levels and resulting structural rigidities, addressing anti-competitive practices of enterprises . . . enhancing an economy’s ability to attract foreign investment and to maximize the benefits of such investment, reinforcing the benefits of privatization and regulatory reform initiating and establishing a focal point for the advocacy of pro-competitive reforms and a competition culture.41 The United Nations has also advocated, on many instances, that competition policy is a key ingredient for growth and development of nations.42 The same position has been taken by the OECD. One of its publications based on a survey of OECD members and non-members asserts that: There are strong links between competition policy and numerous basic pillars of economic development. . . . There is persuasive evidence from all over the world confirming that rising levels of competition have been unambiguously associated with increased economic growth, productivity, investment and increased average living standards.43 These kinds of assumptions are often backed by empirical studies showing that adopting competition laws lead to higher competition intensi-ties,44 which is automatically read to mean higher growth levels. The microeconomic fields of industrial organization and endogenous growth present ample material to show how competition is positively associated with growth. For example, one study argued that competition rules help sustain two of the fundamental ingredients of “economic growth: namely competitive markets and a sound legal system.”45 Another study stressed the fact that the adoption of competition policy is “positively correlated with the intensity of competition.”46 A further empirical study using multi-country regression analysis to explore the correlation between competition and growth rates found a “strong correlation between the effectiveness of competition policy and growth.”47 This study also illustrated that the effect of competition on growth is more than that of “trade liberalisation, institutional quality, and a general favourable policy environment.”48 This, however, was found to be predominantly true for Far Eastern countries and less so for other developing countries.49 Other proponents of the relationship between adopting competition laws and development argue that competition rules are a precondition to the implementation of successful privatization, especially if the goal of privatization is not the substitution of government monopolies by private ones.50 Similarly, another study concluded that liberalization alone does not lead to development since “non-tariff barriers to trade will replace tariffs that trade liberalization removes because of the political power of rent-seeking special interest groups.”51 Some also suggest that having competition legislation will deter corruption in transition economies, where “government bodies have tremendous power to affect the competitive process when they issue licenses, permits, franchises, and subsidies.”52 When these economies adopt competition laws some of the powers of government officials might be curbed and their responsiveness to bribes in order to facilitate illicit economic privileges might be reduced. This is assuming that the enforcers of the competition laws will not themselves be susceptible to bribes to avoid antitrust enforcement. Moreover, competition policy is considered essential for developing countries as a tool to increase foreign direct investment (FDI), which is considered essential for growth.53 Adopting antitrust laws creates a more transparent framework that increases investors’ reliance on the economy and reduces transaction costs.54 These are only some of the studies testing the relationship between competition law and development. It is important to note that most of the above-mentioned studies either test the correlation between adopting competition laws and development or between a proxy called “effectiveness of anti-monopoly policy”55 and development. This is drastically different from studying the relationship between enforcing the competition laws and development. The latter should be the measure used to ascertain whether competition laws lead to development or not. Studying enforcement instead of adoption will not necessarily lead to the same conclusions. Regardless, developing countries have found the promises of development and growth associated with the adoption of competition laws too hard to ignore. International organizations and academic studies presenting the positive relationship between competition laws and development were made readily available to developing countries. The studies have shown persuasive conclusions that developing countries eagerly accepted. At the same time, these nations encountered numerous challenges, some structurally due their own positions as developing countries and some related to the discourse that competition laws lead to development and growth. Both of these challenges are discussed next. III. THE OTHER SIDE OF THE COIN: CHALLENGES TO ANTITRUST ADOPTION This section addresses some of the recurrent challenges articulated in adopting a competition law. Some of these challenges are due to the idiosyncratic nature of developing countries, yet others are more general critiques to the merits of competition laws. A. Limited Resources Need Not Be Wasted on a Costly Competition Regime Developing countries face numerous challenges with regard to adopting and enforcing competition rules. At the outset, enacting competition legislation was not always considered a priority on their reform agendas. This is due to the high costs and low returns associated with adopting these rules compared to other reform-oriented policies, such as removing trade restrictions. One of the common arguments is that trade liberalization yields far greater prosperity than adopting laws that attack restraints of trade. The advocates of trade liberalization, as a substitute for antitrust, argue that the mere removal of trade obstacles, such as tariffs and barriers to entry, will effectively discipline domestic producers in transition economies.56 They support the notion that “[f]ree trade is, consequently, the best antitrust policy.”57 Also, the argument that “[f]ree trade stimulates wealth creation and development, and in a small country it makes antitrust concerns largely irrelevant,”58 has been made to caution against adoption competition laws. Another argument in favor of trade liberalization is that the limited public resources of transition economies would produce better outcomes if invested in initiatives improving the flow of goods. For example, improvement in infrastructure would give consumers access to an increased number of sellers.59 Similarly, it is argued that economic policy and competition law enforcement divert the scarce resources away from more important priorities on the path to reform and development. The famous quote from one of the fierce opponents to imposing competition laws on transition economies, Paul Godek, is worth noting: “[e]xporting antitrust to Eastern Europe is like giving a silk tie to a starving man. It is superfluous; a starving man has much more immediate needs. And if the tie is knotted too tightly, he will not be able to eat what little there is available to him.”60 B. Plenty of Reforms to Accommodate a Competition Enforcement Apparatus Are Needed Related to the criticism of spending scarce resources on adopting and enforcing competition laws is the claim that developing countries need also acquire, reform, or implement administrative apparatuses, effective judiciary and appeal systems, independent investigating authorities, and expertise.61 Most developing countries lack the aforementioned necessities to enforce antitrust laws. To improve the chances of effective antitrust implementation, developing countries need serious reforms in these areas. These are all costly endeavors that would deplete their resources further. In addition to these challenges, developing countries face further obstacles to competition enforcement due to the lack of data collection, which is especially necessary to define market shares. This is evident by the lack of effective “Statistics Offices” in public administrations that provide this information.62 The weakness of professional associations and consumer groups are also considered challenges that stand in the way of creating awareness and a competition culture that are essential to facilitate the smooth spread and implementation of these laws.63 Given these drawbacks in developing economies, what is ultimately feared is that the enforcement authority to be set up will not be able to apply the competition rules. It will lack the necessary funding, technical staff, and supporting environment to effectively enforce the law. It is also often argued, that in a developing country, an administrative body will often lack the necessary independence that is arguably critical for antitrust enforcement.64 C. Corruption, Government Intervention and Crony Capitalism Hamper Effective Competition Policy One of the critical challenges that face developing countries is the already high level of government interference in the economy, which is by default increased further when a competition law is adopted and enforced. The government intervention includes government-erected barriers to enter or exit the market,65 government monopolies, the various forms of subsidies granted by governments to loss-making enterprises,66 and government politicization of the administrative authorities in force of applying and enforcing the law. In most developing countries, governments play an active role in regulating and setting bureaucratic measures to be followed by firms to enter or exit the market, resulting in many instances in rigid barriers that cannot be surpassed. This in turn leads to rent-seeking behavior, cronyism, corruption, and favoritism.67 Adopting a competition law is arguably adding another layer of bureaucratic red tape that needs to be surpassed for firms to operate effectively. Similarly, this criticism amounts to the fear that competition policy will be a tool to provide disguised government control and hamper the growth of the often-fragile private sector. Developing countries also portray a unique political economy, where often government interests and those of the business elite are one and the same.68 This casts serious doubt on whether competition law enforcement will not be selectively used to create further obstacles to those players that are not part of this favored club. It may only entrench the powers of the incumbent firms and those that pay the highest rewards to the government apparatus.69 It is often argued that developing economies are enmeshed in a “Kafkaesque maze of control”70 where large family owners use their influence to limit competition and obtain finances from the government to alter the game in their favor.71 The poorly functioning capital markets in many developing countries furthers the concentrated ownership of the local elite even more. The fear is that incumbent firms use their rents to pay for such selective and biased enforcement, which can often not be matched by new entrants and small firms who want a piece of the pie.72 Incumbent firms want to maintain the status quo and resist any potential changes that might lower their influence and position in the market.73 Given this political economy “[a]ntitrust policies affected by political considerations may, however, come with a large price tag attached.”74 One of which is that “interest groups will follow their incentives and shift resources into monopolization through government protection. Lobbying the government for protection may be highly substitutable for organizing cartels.”75 In other words, producers and incumbents will now invest their rents in lobbying the government to continue their monopoly positions. Rodriguez and Williams argue that “the gain to interest groups of establishing cartels or price-fixing schemes are outweighed by simply soliciting preferential treatment from the state.”76 This implies that “antitrust may cause inefficiencies that are worse than the allocative losses that it is designed to defend against.”77 Such bureaucratic capture is assumed to make enforcers not able to serve the public interest.78 Nonetheless, arguments using interest group theory to qualify antitrust enforcement are not without their own critiques.79 Adding high levels of corruption to the mix, it is predictable that empowering the governments in developing countries with a competition law will lead to even more corruption spent to alter the game in the favor of the local elite and friends of the government at the expense of overall welfare. Such political and bureaucratic resistance is arguably among the main problems facing developing countries in terms of implementing their competition laws and creating a competition culture.8

#### Historic use of antitrust was signaled as the “cure-all” for an increasing racialized fear of communism in Asia and the Middle East. From Hayek’s preaching of the “competition ideal” to the amendment of the Clayton Act,[[4]](#footnote-4) antitrust was repurposed for combatting the growing Red and Yellow Scare. Even now, Biden preaches

Biden 21 https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches-remarks/2021/07/09/remarks-by-president-biden-at-signing-of-an-executive-order-promoting-competition-in-the-american-economy/

Let me close with this: Competition works. We know it works. We’ve seen it works when it exists. Fair competition is was what made America the wealthiest, most innovative nation in history. That’s why people come here to invent things and start new businesses. In the competition against China and other nations of the 21st century, let’s show that American democracy and the American people can truly outcompete anyone. Because I know that just given half a chance, the American people will never, ever, ever let their country down. Imagine if we give everyone a full and fair chance. That’s what this is all about. That’s what I’m about to do.

#### The debate community avoids discussing Anti-Asian racism like the plague…

#### Asian debaters are expected to assume a restrained and calm ethos in round because their emotions are pathologized. When docility is expected, deviant behavior gets marked as too aggressive or unprofessional.

#### China has been a major part of each college resolution for the past three years, but people still can’t pronounce President Xi. Those are the same people who are the first to dock speaker points from Asian debaters for vocal inflections, tonal shifts, and accents that dance past white ears. Furthermore, every core neg argument the past four years outlined in topic papers have included iterations of Chinese deterrence that demonstrate a consistent and desired effort to make Sinophobia a stable and predictable research item.

#### Aff’s fear of contamination is proven on the level of form when they don’t disclose the aff

#### As a communicative activity, debate must be held accountable for implicit, and asymmetric rhetorical protocols that maintain orientalist logics that predetermine what conversations are noted as valuable.

#### Aff creates a culture of implicatory denialism that simultaneously emboldens Anti-Asian violence while pushing it to the side as either unimportant or justified. Intervening at the level of debate is important to correct for baked-in bias.

Roche 20 (Gerald Roche, Anthropologist and Senior Research Fellow in the Department of Politics, Media, and Philosophy at La Trobe University, “The Epidemiology of Sinophobia,” January-April 2020, <https://madeinchinajournal.com/2020/02/17/the-epidemiology-of-sinophobia/>)

Since the outbreak of the novel coronavirus (COVID-19), numerous reports have described a rise in Sinophobia and anti-Asian racism around the world, with occurrences being reported in Australia (Young 2020), France (BBC 2020), Canada (Miller 2020), and many other countries (Rich 2020). This racism started online. Commentators zoomed in on single incidents—like a video of a Chinese influencer eating a bat in Palau, Micronesia, a few years ago—and generalised them to moralised population traits and visions of cosmic retribution. This logic suggested that the virus was caused by disgusting eating habits and poor hygiene, and that people making these ‘lifestyle choices’ deserved to become sick, suffer, and die. How could so many people, unable to find Wuhan on a map and completely unqualified to make any claims about the origin and spread of viruses, feel so confident in making these judgements? In a 1985 article subtitled ‘Towards an Epidemiology of Representations’, the anthropologist Dan Sperber provides us with a way of better understanding this phenomenon. Sperber asks why some ideas circulate, and stick, better than others. His answer, in part, is that this happens because they are evocative. They resonate with, and bring to mind, other representations we are already familiar with. So, when the images of bat-eating circulated online, they evoked pre-existing representations of Chinese people, and Asians in general. This enabled commentators to feel confident in claiming to understand the etiology of the virus and, in doing so, dismiss the suffering of the affected people while even suggesting they actually deserved it. We might call the sum-total of these representations, which demote Asian lives to a plane of insignificance, ‘white supremacy’. — We need to understand this broader context of white supremacy, and the way it has produced hostile indifference to people trapped in the virus outbreak, to appreciate why the reaction of some ‘China watchers’ (journalists, academics, and others), has been so problematic. In response to the rising incidences of anti-Asian racism, these commentators have attempted to downplay or dismiss the significance of this phenomenon. Some have claimed that racism is not ‘the real issue,’ or have suggested that choosing to analyse and discuss Sinophobia is intellectually lazy. Others have claimed that denunciations of Sinophobia are only valid if they also denounce the harms of the Chinese state, such as the Xinjiang concentration camps. None of these people deny the existence of Sinophobia, but they do dismiss its significance. We can therefore label their claims ‘implicatory denialism’, a term introduced by Stanley Cohen in the book States of Denial: Knowing about Atrocities and Suffering (2013). Implicatory denialism, he states, does not involve the denial of facts, but ‘[w]hat are denied or minimized are the psychological, political, or moral implications that conventionally follow’ (Cohen 2013: 8). Understanding why this sort of denialism is a problem does not require us to understand the motivations, intentions, or rationalisations of people who engage in implicatory denialism. Racism is structural, and so are its impacts. It does not matter what people intend, it matters what impact they have. So, we need to ask who this denialism harms and helps, and how. — To begin with, downplaying racism helps racists. In an atmosphere of pervasive white supremacy, racists love seeing people in positions of authority say that racism is not important. These statements act as a form of dog-whistle politics. Racists are emboldened by authority figures suggesting that people talk about race too much. And as the philosopher Jennifer Saul (2018) points out, these dog-whistle effects can occur whether it is the speaker’s intention or not. In addition to empowering racists and contributing to an atmosphere of white supremacy, denialism impacts people who are targeted by Sinophobia. Responding to claims of racism with implicatory denialism sends a clear message that certain people’s lived experiences are not important. ‘Yes, you are suffering, but let’s focus on the REAL issue.’ Some people seem to understand that they are sending this message when they engage in implicatory denialism. To avoid the interpretation that they are wilfully compounding someone’s suffering, they may package their statements in formulations such as ‘I don’t mean to downplay anyone’s suffering but…’ Once again, Jennifer Saul (2019) provides us with a useful term to describe this pragmatic strategy: she calls it a ‘fig leaf’, capturing the way that it acts as woefully insufficient means of concealment. — We can further think about how statements of implicatory denialism harm targets of Sinophobia by comparing them to slurs, as described by Jane Hill in her book The Everyday Language of White Racism (2008). For both slurs and implicatory denialism, the impact of the speech acts comes from their historicity, not from speakers’ intentions. They evoke both a collective history of subordination and individual experiences of lived discrimination. Like slurs, acts of denialism evoke a history. In this case, it is a history of other denials, of the sort used to uphold ‘colourblind racism’, which is the idea that racism is something that was overcome decades ago and has since ceased to exist as a meaningful social force. Eduardo Bonillo-Silva, in his book Racism Without Racists (2018), provides a vivid description of the rhetorical contortions that are needed to maintain this view. At the centre of these rhetorical manoeuvres is denial; denying the existence or significance of racism is central to maintaining it. Therefore, reacting to accounts of Sinophobia with implicatory denialism not only negates the reality of racialised suffering, but also makes it clear that the commentator will allow that suffering to continue, by stifling anti-racist speech. This empowers racists, upholds white supremacy, and compounds the suffering of people facing Sinophobia. — We should do everything we can to stop the spread of coronavirus and to help alleviate the suffering of people who have contracted it. But we need to realise that for most of us, our capacity to do either thing will be limited. What we can do is intervene in the spread of Sinophobia and anti-Asian racism where we are, and in the contexts where our speech acts are heard and interpreted, and help alleviate the suffering of those around us.

#### Thus, vote neg for the affirmation of transnational Asian praxis. Movements are growing and connecting at a greater rate than ever for anticolonial futures. The conglomeration of COVID, accelerating racial violence, and economic inequality put us in a unique position to break away from norms that have brought us to this present crisis. The only question is if you’re willing to not fear contamination by reaching out and grasping for a new and better future in this round.

Liu 20 (Wen, Assistant Professor of women’s gender and sexuality studies at the University of Albany, “Internationalism Beyond the ‘Yellow Peril’: On the Possibility of Transnational Asian American Solidarity,” 2020, UC Santa Barbara Journal of Transnational American Studies)

In the midst of a global pandemic and social upheavals, how will transnational Asian–Black solidarity take shape? Currently living in Taipei, Taiwan, I am involved in an emergent circle of diasporic Asian radicals who write and organize around the vibrant left-leaning movements in Taiwan and Hong Kong and seek to build international solidarity based on a critique of both US and Chinese imperialism. This new activist milieu that has been described as “transnationally Asian”5 not only rejects Asian American assimilationist politics and the narrow focus of liberal international politics around democracy and human rights, but also actively seeks cross-national and cross-racial points of racial encounters and challenges the orthodox Western leftist takes on social movements that often defer to a reductionist binarism of “capitalism versus communism.” For example, a Hong Kong activist was excluded from participating in a BLM solidarity event hosted by the Sunrise Movement, an American youth–led climate organization, due to some US leftists’ Twitter commentaries that misrepresented Hong Kong’s protests against Beijing’s increasingly harsh conditions of authoritarian control as being funded by the US military. Writers from Lausan, a leftist Hong Kong press, have condemned such mischaracterization of Hong Kong’s ongoing mass movement as merely manipulated by US imperialism and, instead, insisted on the importance of building alliances between Hong Kong’s struggle against authoritarianism and BLM’s vision of police abolition.6 From this single case, one can understand that building transnational solidarity is complex and arduous work, both conceptually and practically. It requires us to maneuver from one ideological trap to another across geopolitical contexts and locally specific historical conditions. While transnational iteration is emancipatory and necessary to achieve a genuine form of Asian–Black solidarity, it must be built on a bidirectional and bifocal analysis instead of merely relying on the US-centric epistemology of what constitutes leftist politics. By seeking transnationalism from the West toward the non-West and not vice versa, it’s easy to fall into the logic of Western “China apologists” or neo-Cold War logic, dismissing the interasian conflicts that also have global ramifications. To put it in another way, as China criminalizes Hong Kong’s fight for fundamental democratic rights and implements mass arrests of young activists under the National Security Laws,7 a progressive Asian American politics must not only be focused on racial relations domestically but challenge multiple forms of Empire beyond the borders of the US. Only through this multidimensional transnational praxis can we begin to see the underlying mechanisms that allow BLM activists from Minneapolis to Seattle to adopt Hong Kong protesters’ strategies against the police. 8 These possibilities for alliance among “transnationally Asian” activists include protesters in Hong Kong and the US using umbrellas and tennis rackets to protect themselves from tear gas, the joint coalition between Taiwanese indigenous organizations and Black Lives Matter Taiwan calling out racism,9 and Singaporeans debating whether to topple their colonial monuments.10 Our current shared struggles against the rapid right-wing turn of global hegemonies do not draw lines between the simple binaries of “East vs. West,” “white vs. Black,” or “authoritarianism vs. democracy,” but underscore the interconnected fights against the militarized police state, neoliberal capitalist order, Han supremacy, and the continued impacts of Euro-American coloniality. The “yellow peril” may have been a useful metaphor describing the shared racialization of the Asian body against white supremacy and US imperialism; the politics of internationalism in the present conditions requires a much more nuanced analysis of interregional geopolitics across the transpacific. The possibility of transnational Asian American solidarity must be situated beyond the framework of “one united race against one empire.” Indeed, the fast growing infection and mortality rates of Covid-19 show that the virus cannot be simply contained by national borders, and our racial critique must also be extended transnationally. When a disease is racialized, it not only exposes the racial inequalities built in the global public health infrastructures but also how mechanisms of national security require the domination of subjects who are deemed to be “outsiders.” Rather than falling into a nationalistic blame game based on the Cold War logic—choosing sides between one empire (the US) and another (China)—the pandemic requires us to engage in the racial justice and antinativist struggles in our different localities as well as hold one another’s movements accountable to an internationalist vision of collective survival.

### CP

#### CP Text: Jach’a marka jisk’a qanqa di istadus unidus.

#### J’ani amuyu

Morrison 93 (Toni, The Nobel Prize in Literature 1993 Lecture, Toni Morrison is an American novelist, essayist, editor, teacher, and professor emeritus at Princeton University. Morrison won the Pulitzer Prize and the American Book Award in 1988 for Beloved. <http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/literature/laureates/1993/morrison-lecture.html>)

Speculation on what (other than its own frail body) that bird-in-the-hand might signify has always been attractive to me, but especially so now thinking, as I have been, about the work I do that has brought me to this company. So I choose to read the bird as language and the woman as a practiced writer. She is worried about how the language she dreams in, given to her at birth, is handled, put into service, even withheld from her for certain nefarious purposes. Being a writer she thinks of language partly as a system, partly as a living thing over which one has control, but mostly as agency - as an act with consequences. So the question the children put to her: "Is it living or dead?" is not unreal because she thinks of language as susceptible to death, erasure; certainly imperiled and salvageable only by an effort of the will. She believes that if the bird in the hands of her visitors is dead the custodians are responsible for the corpse. For her a dead language is not only one no longer spoken or written, it is unyielding language content to admire its own paralysis. Like statist language, censored and censoring. Ruthless in its policing duties, it has no desire or purpose other than maintaining the free range of its own narcotic narcissism, its own exclusivity and dominance. However moribund, it is not without effect for it actively thwarts the intellect, stalls conscience, suppresses human potential. Unreceptive to interrogation, it cannot form or tolerate new ideas, shape other thoughts, tell another story, fill baffling silences. Official language smitheryed to sanction ignorance and preserve privilege is a suit of armor polished to shocking glitter, a husk from which the knight departed long ago. Yet there it is: dumb, predatory, sentimental. Exciting reverence in schoolchildren, providing shelter for despots, summoning false memories of stability, harmony among the public. She is convinced that when language dies, out of carelessness, disuse, indifference and absence of esteem, or killed by fiat, not only she herself, but all users and makers are accountable for its demise. In her country children have bitten their tongues off and use bullets instead to iterate the voice of speechlessness, of disabled and disabling language, of language adults have abandoned altogether as a device for grappling with meaning, providing guidance, or expressing love. But she knows tongue-suicide is not only the choice of children. It is common among the infantile heads of state and power merchants whose evacuated language leaves them with no access to what is left of their human instincts for they speak only to those who obey, or in order to force obedience. The systematic looting of language can be recognized by the tendency of its users to forgo its nuanced, complex, mid-wifery properties for menace and subjugation. Oppressive language does more than represent violence; it is violence; does more than represent the limits of knowledge; it limits knowledge. Whether it is obscuring state language or the faux-language of mindless media; whether it is the proud but calcified language of the academy or the commodity driven language of science; whether it is the malign language of law-without-ethics, or language designed for the estrangement of minorities, hiding its racist plunder in its literary cheek - it must be rejected, altered and exposed. It is the language that drinks blood, laps vulnerabilities, tucks its fascist boots under crinolines of respectability and patriotism as it moves relentlessly toward the bottom line and the bottomed-out mind. Sexist language, racist language, theistic language - all are typical of the policing languages of mastery, and cannot, do not permit new knowledge or encourage the mutual exchange of ideas. The old woman is keenly aware that no intellectual mercenary, nor insatiable dictator, no paid-for politician or demagogue; no counterfeit journalist would be persuaded by her thoughts. There is and will be rousing language to keep citizens armed and arming; slaughtered and slaughtering in the malls, courthouses, post offices, playgrounds, bedrooms and boulevards; stirring, memorializing language to mask the pity and waste of needless death. There will be more diplomatic language to countenance rape, torture, assassination. There is and will be more seductive, mutant language designed to throttle women, to pack their throats like paté-producing geese with their own unsayable, transgressive words; there will be more of the language of surveillance disguised as research; of politics and history calculated to render the suffering of millions mute; language glamorized to thrill the dissatisfied and bereft into assaulting their neighbors; arrogant pseudo-empirical language crafted to lock creative people into cages of inferiority and hopelessness. Underneath the eloquence, the glamor, the scholarly associations, however stirring or seductive, the heart of such language is languishing, or perhaps not beating at all - if the bird is already dead.

#### Red Cloud once said: “I have become tired of speaking. When I saw the treaty and all the false things in it I was mad. […] The Great Spirit will not make me suffer because I am ignorant. They will put me in a place where I will be better off than in this world.”[[5]](#footnote-5)

Belcourt 17 (Billy-Ray Belcourt is from Driftpile Cree First Nation. He is a PhD student in the Department of English and Film Studies at the University of Alberta. “The Optics of the Language: How Joi T. Arcand Looks with Words.” 8-29-17. <https://canadianart.ca/features/optics-language-joi-t-arcand-looks-words/> //shree)

What did Bushby see? In his formulation, “one” brings into focus a sinister optic, where “optic” is the lens or filter by which one looks and from this looking ropes what is seen into an encounter humming with all sorts of potential. Bushby’s is an optic that mediates the interpellative call “one” seeks to enact—it is a part of the grammar of settler horror. “One” is thus a modality by which we, the ante-Canada, those of us who bear that which is prior to and beneath Canada, are racialized and roped into a representational field where all things, like trailer hitches, can be put to violent use. We cannot survive in the visual register of “one.” Words are worldly; not just in the sense that they proliferate and float up into the sky and become cloud-like. Words world too. Words like “one” incubate death-worlds (see Achille Mbembe’s 2003 essay “Necropolitics”) inside which those of us who look like Kentner are made to inhabit modes of enfleshment that fix the stares of the grim reapers of the present. On the other hand, some of us recruit words in the name of something like freedom. We might call this duality the double-bind of enunciation. How do we refuse a savage call to being with a more spacious one? Joi T. Arcand is a photo-based artist and industrial sculptor from Muskeg Lake Cree Nation, and she knows that words, that letter forms, shapes and glyphs, “change the visual landscape,” that they are how we go about practicing new ways of looking. Words are emotional architectures, and Arcand calls hers “Future Earth.” In her 2015 book The Argonauts, Maggie Nelson tends to a debate about whether words do or do not potentiate. She takes up a claim of a partner’s that words do nothing but nominalize, and what is left unnamed is subject to a host of horrors. Nelson, however, holds out more hope for words; she contends that they are “good enough,” that how one speaks makes all of the difference and that words can, following Deleuze, incite “the outline of a becoming.” Bushby’s angered vocalization of a genre of non-being—where “one” is the refusal of a name and the humanity that comes with it—is evidence of the terrible mechanics of language. But, it is in opposition to this linguistic state of killability, this metaphysics and rhetoric of coloniality, that Arcand articulates a grammar of subjectivity vis-à-vis the time and space of a native future. Here on Future Earth is a series of photographs that Arcand produced in 2010. In a phone interview, Arcand explained to me that this is where her photo-based practice and her interest in textuality synched. Arcand wants us to think about these photographs as documents of “an alternative present,” of a future that is within arm’s reach. For this series, Arcand manipulated signs and replaced their slogans and names with Cree syllabics. By doing this, Arcand images something of a present beside itself and therefore loops us into a new mode of perception, one that enables us to attune to the rogue possibilities bubbling up in the thick ordinariness of everyday life. Arcand wanted to see things “where they weren’t.” Hers is not a utopian elsewhere we need to map out via an ethos of discovery. Rather, Arcand straddles the threshold of radical hope. She asks us to orient ourselves to the world as if we were out to document or to think back on a future past. That is, Arcand rendered these photographs with a pink hue and a thick, round border, tapping into what she calls “the signifiers of nostalgia.” Importantly, these signifiers are inextricably bound to the charisma of words, to the emotional life of the syllabics. The syllabics are what enunciate; they potentiate a performance of world-making that does not belong to the mise-en-scene of settlement. It is this mise-en-scene of settlement that Arcand conjures to then obliterate, which is to say that her photographs evince a prairie world that is crowded with meaning, meaning that belongs differently to the logic of terra nullius (that a place exists without history or politics prior to European settlement) and to myths of Indian savagery and degeneracy. It is against this system of signs that Arcand opens the prairies up to radical resignification. It is where we build a future atop the decayed remains of coloniality. Perhaps Here on Future Earth visually captures the tempos of “Indian time,” which is always a scene of errant temporality. Indian time is less about the absence of rhythm and more about an inability to fix or to analytically hold up the rhythmic as a mode of feral movement itself. Words like “one” are spun such that they stomp us into the rut of social death. But: Indian time evinces an otherwise kinetics. In Here on Future Earth, this kinetics is energized by the textual, by the stories that they tell, and their visual culture. The modified signs exploit our ability to look; that we see them and conceptualize them as out of place or untimely is how we transport ourselves to a different time, to a place governed by Indian time. The syllabics themselves map a visual field. This is what Arcand calls “the optics of the language.” It is around these words that sociality orbits. This thematic persists in Arcand’s latest project, a set of large neon signs that light up Cree words like keyam. For Arcand, all of her engagements with the Cree language are partly elegiac. She is mourning language loss, but puts this negative affect to rebellious use to signify a world-to-come. Like the syllabics in Here on Future Earth, the bright signs prop up affective structures for a time and place where our relations to Cree are not always-already bound up in performances of grief. In one sign, Arcand translates the English phrase “I don’t have the words” into Cree. “I don’t have the words” is a paradoxical speech act; it uses words to announce their absence. These signs are installed in gallery spaces where Arcand’s work is commissioned; one was recently installed at the second gesture of the Wood Land School at the SBC Gallery of Contemporary Art in Montreal, another outside the Walter Phillips Gallery in Banff. These signs interrupt the visual terrain of the gallery, as if welcoming onlookers to a new world, to a new geographic form. The signs something like kinship around a common wordlessness in the service of a new world-making praxis. These photographs and signs, then, are all relics of a future past. They emerge from something of an anthropological interest in a future-in-the-present, in the affects of Indian time. Arcand thus writes the world wrong so that she can write it anew.

## Case

#### The legal poverty threshold still condemns people to bare life – punish 1AC vagueness (especially cuz it’s new!) in relation to being able to solve any of their impacts

Hickel 2/13 (Jason Hickel, Anthropologist, author, fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, taught at the London School of Economics, University of Virginia, Goldsmiths, and University of London, and on the Executive Board of Academics Stand Against Poverty, “An Open Letter to Steven Pinker (and Bill Gates),” 02/13/2019, <https://jacobinmag.com/2019/02/steven-pinker-global-poverty-neoliberalism-progress?fbclid=IwAR2HWSJ1Nd5rz3W9-_YWXX6jy0ErUXcXfAKT9m9GsdOPrwcH9-2LZ1x5OXE>) KVA

The point of my piece was that the story of global poverty is more complex than you and Gates have been willing to acknowledge, and the data do not support your narrative about neoliberal globalization. Let me elaborate on my key points here, to clear up any confusion, while also addressing your specific comments. First, the long-term poverty graph (1820 to present) developed by Max Roser and recently tweeted by Bill Gates is misleading and has little empirical legitimacy. There are a few reasons for this. Real data on poverty has only been collected since 1981, by the World Bank. It is widely accepted among those who research global poverty that any data prior to 1981 is simply too sketchy to be useful, and going back to as early as 1820 is more or less meaningless. The data for 1820–1970 comes from a source (Bourguignon and Morrisson 2002) that draws on the Maddison database on world GDP. That data was never intended to assess poverty, but rather the distribution of GDP — and that for only a limited range of countries. Data for the Global South is particularly thin, and there is very little that exists for prior to 1900. The data is not robust enough to draw meaningful conclusions about what was happening to people’s livelihoods during the colonial period. It is important to recognize that the graph mixes two very different measures. The measure for 1820–1970 is based on estimates of GDP per capita, with only rough guesses about household share, and takes little if any account of the goods and resources that people may have acquired from their land, from trees, from forests, from rivers and the sea, and in the form of gifts from relatives. We might try to speculate about the share of GDP that the poorest people had, but that’s very different from telling us anything very useful about poverty. By contrast, the World Bank’s measure is based on surveys that seek to assess household income and, wherever possible, consumption of all non-monetary goods. These two disparate measures cannot be united into a single long-term trend and cannot be used to draw confident conclusions. Roser’s graph might make for nice social media, but it’s not rooted in science. In fact, uniting the two methodologies is misleading in both directions. (1) By using GDP per capita from 1820–1970, it likely understates the resources that households had at their disposal in comparison to the representation of the later period, and (2) By including total consumption from 1981 onward it likely overstates people’s “income” in comparison to the representation of the earlier period. The only way to construct a legitimate long-term graph would be to use a single consistent indicator. While data on GDP per capita alone is not regarded as a robust way of assessing poverty, it is at least available (if too patchy to be useful) for the whole period. But in such a graph the falloff in poverty since 1981 would not be nearly as steep, as it would not count non-monetary transactions. Alternatively, we could wait until someone devises a reasonable method for measuring poverty in terms of household consumption since 1820. But in the meantime, I think it’s wise to refrain from making claims about long-term poverty trends that lack empirical validity. You say: “Hickel’s picture of the past is a romantic fairy tale, devoid of citations or evidence.” On the contrary, as the above makes clear, it is the graph of the past on which you so glibly rely that is devoid of meaningful evidence. As to my actual claims about the past, my argument was straightforward. I simply pointed out that we cannot ignore the fact that the period 1820 to circa 1950 was one of violent dispossession across much of the Global South. If you have read any colonial history, you will know colonizers had immense difficulty getting people to work on their mines and plantations. As it turns out, people tended to prefer their subsistence lifestyles, and wages were not high enough to induce them to leave. Colonizers had to coerce people into the labor market: imposing taxes, enclosing commons and constraining access to food, or just outright forcing people off their land. You ask for citations. Here are some you might try: Sven Beckert’s Empire of Cotton, Ellen Wood’s The Origin of Capitalism: A Longer View, Mike Davis’s Late Victorian Holocausts, Adam Hochschild’s King Leopold’s Ghost, and of course Karl Polanyi’s The Great Transformation. The process of forcibly integrating colonized peoples into the capitalist labor system caused widespread dislocation (a history I cover in The Divide). Remember, this is the period of the Belgian labor system in the Congo, which so upended local economies that 10 million people died — half the population. This is the period of the Natives Land Act in South Africa, which dispossessed the country’s black population of 90 percent of the country. This is the period of the famines in India, where 30 million died needlessly as a result of policies the British imposed on Indian agriculture. This is the period of the Opium Wars in China and the unequal treaties that immiserated the population. And don’t forget: all of this was conducted in the name of the “free market.” All of this violence, and much more, gets elided in your narrative and repackaged as a happy story of progress. And you say I’m the one possessed of romantic fairy tales. The Maddison database on which you rely might tell us what the dispossessed gained in GDP per capita (eventually), but it does not tell us whether those gains offset their loss of lands, commons, supportive communities, stable local economies. And it tells us nothing about what Global South economies might be like today had they been free to industrialize on their own terms (take the case of India, for instance). Let me be clear: this is not a critique of industrialization as such. It is a critique of how industrialization was carried out during the period in question. If people had willingly opted into the capitalist labor system, while retaining rights to their commons and while gaining a fair share of the yields they produced, we would have a very different story on our hands. So let’s celebrate what industrialization has achieved — absolutely — but place it in proper context: colonization, violence, dispossession, and all. All we gain from ignoring this history is ignorance. Now, to the present period. You say that the “massive fall of global extreme poverty” is simply a neutral fact of the data. But here again the data on this is more complex than you have ever acknowledged (I collaborated with Charles Kenny to review the basics here). The narrative that you and Gates peddle relies on a poverty line of $1.90 per day. You are aware, I’m sure, that this line is not a neutral phenomenon, handed down by the gods or given in nature. It was invented by people, is used for particular ends, and is hotly contested both inside and outside of academia. Most scholars regard $1.90 as far too low to be meaningful, for reasons I have outlined in my work many times (see here and here). See Reddy and Lahoti’s withering critique of the $1.90 methodology here. Here are a few points to keep in mind. Using the $1.90 line shows that only 700 million people live in poverty. But note that the UN’s Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) says that 815 million people do not have enough calories to sustain even “minimal” human activity. 1.5 billion are food insecure and do not have enough calories to sustain “normal” human activity. And 2.1 billion suffer from malnutrition. How can there be fewer poor people than hungry and malnourished people? If $1.90 is inadequate to achieve basic nutrition and sustain normal human activity, then it’s too low — period. It’s time for you and Gates to stop using it. Lifting people above this line doesn’t mean lifting them out of poverty, “extreme” or otherwise. Remember: $1.90 is the equivalent of what that amount of money could buy in the US in 2011. The economist David Woodward once calculated that to live at this level (in an earlier base year) would be like thirty-five people trying to survive in Britain “on a single minimum wage, with no benefits of any kind, no gifts, borrowing, scavenging, begging or savings to draw on (since these are all included as ‘income’ in poverty calculations).” That goes beyond any definition of “extreme.” It is patently absurd. It is an insult to humanity. In fact, even the World Bank has repeatedly stated that the line is too low to be used in any but the poorest countries, and should not be used to inform policy. In response to the Atkinson Report on Global Poverty, they created updated poverty lines for lower-middle-income ($3.20/day) and upper-middle-income ($5.50/day) countries. At those lines, some 2.4 billion people are in poverty today — more than three times higher than you would have people believe. But even these figures are not good enough. The USDA states that about $6.70/day is necessary for achieving basic nutrition. Peter Edwards argues that people need about $7.40 if they are to achieve normal human life expectancy. The New Economics Foundation concludes that around $8 is necessary to reduce infant mortality by a meaningful margin. Lant Pritchett and Charles Kenny have argued that since the poverty line is based on purchasing power in the US, then it should be linked to the US poverty line — so around $15/day. The literature on this issue is now vast and nuanced — I have only scratched the surface here — and yet you pretend it doesn’t even exist. That is intellectually irresponsible, and an inadequate approach to scholarship. You say: “The level at which one sets an arbitrary cutoff like ‘the poverty line’ is irrelevant — the entire distribution has shifted, so the trend is the same wherever you set it.” Not so fast. In fact, the story changes quite a bit — and you know it. If we use $7.40 per day, we see a decline in the proportion of people living in poverty, but it’s not nearly as dramatic as your rosy narrative would have it. In 1981 a staggering 71 percent lived in poverty. Today it hovers at 58 percent (for 2013, the most recent data). Suddenly your grand story of progress seems tepid, mediocre, and — in a world that’s as fabulously rich as ours — completely obscene. There is nothing worth celebrating about a world where inequality is so extreme that 58 percent of people are in poverty, while a few dozen billionaires have more than all of their wealth combined. That’s proportions. Don’t get me wrong: proportions are an important indicator — and we should pay attention to it. But absolute numbers are equally important. In fact, that is the metric that the world’s governments first agreed to target in the Rome Declaration in 1996, the precursor to the Millennium Development Goals. The goalposts were shifted to proportions in the following years, which created the impression of faster progress. But really now it’s a moot point: if the goal is to end poverty, what matters is absolute numbers. Certainly that’s what matters from the perspective of poor people themselves. And if we look at absolute numbers, the trend changes completely. The poverty rate has worsened dramatically since 1981, from 3.2 billion to 4.2 billion, according to World Bank data. Six times higher than you would have people believe. That’s not progress, in my book — that’s a disgrace. It is a crushing indictment of our global economic system, which is clearly failing the majority of humanity. Your claims about global poverty intentionally skate around this fact. Again, that is not responsible scholarship. But what’s really at stake here for you, as your letter reveals, is the free-market narrative that you have constructed. Your argument is that neoliberal capitalism is responsible for driving the most substantial gains against poverty. This claim is intellectually dishonest, and unsupported by facts. Here’s why. The vast majority of gains against poverty have happened in one region: East Asia. As it happens, the economic success of China and the East Asian tigers — as scholars like Ha-Joon Chang and Robert Wade have long pointed out — is due not to the neoliberal markets that you espouse but rather state-led industrial policy, protectionism, and regulation (the same measures that Western nations used to such great effect during their own period of industrial consolidation). They liberalized, to be sure — but they did so gradually and on their own terms. Not so for the rest of the Global South. Indeed, these policy options were systematically denied to them, and destroyed where they already existed. From 1980 to 2000, the International Monetary Fund and World Bank imposed brutal structural adjustment programs that did exactly the opposite: slashing tariffs, subsidies, social spending, and capital controls while reversing land reforms and privatizing public assets — all in the face of massive public resistance. During this period, the number of people in poverty outside China increased by 1.3 billion. In fact, even the proportion of people living in poverty (to use your preferred method) increased, from 62 percent to 68 percent. (For detailed economic data and references to the relevant literature, see Chapter 5 of The Divide.) In other words, the imposition of neoliberal capitalism from 1980 to 2000 made the poverty rate worse, not better. Since 2000, the most impressive gains against poverty (outside of East Asia) have come from Latin America, according to the World Bank, coinciding with a series of left-wing or social-democratic governments that came to power across the continent. Whatever one might say about these governments (I have my own critiques), this doesn’t sit very well with your neoliberal narrative. But there is something else that needs to be said here. You and Gates like to invoke the poverty numbers to make claims about the legitimacy of the existing global economic system. You say the system is working for the poor, so people should stop complaining about it. When it comes to assessing such a claim, it’s really neither absolute numbers nor proportions that matter. What matters, rather, is the extent of global poverty vis-à-vis our capacity to end it. As I have pointed out before, our capacity to end poverty (e.g., the cost of ending poverty as a proportion of the income of the non-poor) has increased many times faster than the proportional poverty rate has decreased (to use your preferred measure again). By this metric we are doing worse than ever before. Indeed, our civilization is regressing. Why? Because the vast majority of the yields of our global economy are being captured by the world’s rich. As I pointed out in the Guardian piece, only 5 percent of new income from global growth goes to the poorest 60 percent of humanity — people living on less than $7.40/day. You have neither acknowledged this as a problem nor attempted to defend it. Instead you just ignore it, I suppose because it undermines your claims about how well the economy is working for poor people. Here’s how well it’s working: on our existing trajectory, according to research published in the World Economic Review, it will take more than one hundred years to end poverty at $1.90/day and over two hundred years to end it at $7.40/day. Let that sink in. And to get there with the existing system — in other words, without a fairer distribution of income — we will have to grow the global economy to 175 times its present size. Even if such an outlandish feat were possible, it would drive climate change and ecological breakdown to the point of undermining any gains against poverty. It doesn’t have to be this way, of course. We can end poverty right now simply by making the rules of our global economy fairer for the world’s majority (I describe how we can do this in The Divide, looking at everything from wages to debt to trade). But that is an approach that you and Gates seem desperate to avoid, in favor of a blustering defense of the status quo. You say, “The drastic decline in extreme poverty is corroborated by measures of well-being other than income that are correlated with prosperity, such as longevity, child mortality, maternal mortality, literacy, basic education, undernourishment, consumption, etc.” Yes, life expectancy, mortality, and education have improved — this is fantastic news that we should celebrate! But, a few things: (1) You can’t make an argument about poverty by pointing to something else entirely. Consumption is increasing, yes. But that’s not what’s at stake here. What’s at stake is whether consumption is increasing enough to raise people out of poverty. (2) I’ll be the first to agree that income and consumption are not the only measures of well-being. But one reason they are absolutely crucial is because they allow us to assess inequality in the distribution of world resources. A higher life expectancy among the poor is no justification for condemning them to a tiny and ever-shrinking share of global income. That is not a morally defensible position. (3) In your work you have invoked gains in life expectancy and education as part of a narrative that seeks to justify neoliberal globalization. But here again that’s intellectually dishonest. What contributes most to improvements in life expectancy are in fact simple public health interventions (sanitation, antibiotics, vaccines), and what matters for education is, well, public education. Indeed, the countries that have been most successful at this are those that have robust, free health care and education. Don’t forget that the US has worse infant mortality than Cuba. (4) As for hunger, your claim here relies on a methodology used by the FAO after 2012 that has been widely criticized by scholars. The hunger-reduction narrative depends on a calorie line that — like your $1.90 poverty line — is too low to support normal human activity, ignores the impacts of food price crises, and tells us nothing about nutrient deficiencies. I cover this in detail in the second half of this paper. According to the FAO’s earlier methodology, both the number and proportion of people in hunger was higher in 2009 than in 1995 — another trend that you glibly ignore.

#### No empirical link between antitrust enforcement and inequality

Wright et al. 18 Wright: University Professor and Executive Director, Global Antitrust Institute at Scalia Law School; Jonathan Klick: Professor of Law, University of Pennsylvania; Rybnicek: Senior Associate, Freshfields, Bruckahus Deringer LLP; Elyse Dorsey: Attorney Advisor to Commissioner Noah Phillips, United States Federal Trade Commission. The views expressed herein are our own and do not reflect the views of the Federal Trade Commission or any of its Commissioners. Jan M. Rybnicek “Requiem for a Paradox: The Dubious Rise and Inevitable Fall of Hipster Antitrust” https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\_id=3249524

E. Is Lax Antitrust Causing Economic Inequality?123 The Hipster Antitrust movement has also attributed increasing economic inequality to a supposed trend of lax antitrust enforcement. Such weak application of the antitrust laws has allegedly allowed an abundance of anticompetitive mergers, monopolistic conduct, and other exclusionary and collusive behavior. In turn, that has contributed to the stratification of wealth toward the corporate shareholders and executives and away from lower socio-economic levels of society. Many proponents of the Hipster Antitrust movement have suggested that non-conduct specific factors such as implications of effects on economic inequality should be considered in antitrust analysis. For example, Lina Khan provides some observations of the potential redistributive effects of increasing concentration in emerging multi-sided platform markets.124 Khan suggests that Amazon’s market power, which she purports to be almost 50 percent of all ecommerce, allows the company to squeeze suppliers and potentially cause instability in the economy.125 Although it seems as though Amazon could benefit consumers by lowering prices, predatory pricing concerns loom large in her analysis. In a paper proffering similar arguments, Khan and Sandeep Vaheesan argue that market power contributes to economic inequality, economic power often translates into political power, the scope of the antitrust law became narrower during the Reagan Administration that permitted large corporations to dominate, and that antitrust laws can be utilized to fix economic inequality.126 Concerns about inequality have prompted policy suggestions across a multitude of policy areas.127 In these discussions, adjustments to antitrust policy have been raised as a mode to combat increasing economic inequality. Even though explicit goals aimed at economic redistribution have not been a primary motivation in the development of U.S. competition law, there is some evidence that distributional concerns play a role in antitrust analysis. For example, the Horizontal Merger Guidelines explain that the antitrust agencies are willing to give weight to arguments provided by merging parties that a merger will reduce costs and result in higher output only to the extent those gains are passed on to final consumers and result in an increase in producer surplus.128 As opposed to competition law in many other countries, a non-existent institutional preference for more firms as opposed to fewer does imply that distribution among producers is not among the concerns in U.S. antitrust law. Indeed, antitrust’s history includes a significant period of time in which the goals of the enterprise were considered significantly broader than economic welfare, including protection of “small dealers and worthy men,” and expressed an explicit preference for smaller firms.129 Critics of the current welfare-based approach to antitrust law are calling for antitrust to return to this earlier era and explicitly take into account distributional concerns.130 1. Explicit and Implicit Empirical Claims About Antitrust and Inequality Even though the relationship between antitrust enforcement and increasing economic inequality has not been definitively established, a number of economics and legal scholars have pointed to increased antitrust enforcement as a way to ameliorate increasing economic inequality. For example, Jonathan Baker writes, “[t]he exercise of market power also probably contributes to economy-wide inequality because the returns from market power go disproportionately to the wealthy. Increases in producer surplus from the exercise of market power (the wealth transfer) accrue primarily to a firm’s shareholders and its top executives, who are wealthier on average than the median consumer. In a recent year, the top 1 percent of the wealth distribution held half of stock and mutual fund assets, and the top 10 percent held more than 90 percent of those assets. Unionized workers in the past may have been able to appropriate some of the profits from the exercise of market power, but with the decline of private-sector unionization, this possibility now has limited practical importance.”131 Baker overstates his empirical case somewhat with respect to the effects of increased market power on wealth inequality because the empirical results he cites carve out pension and retirement accounts (which presumably benefit from increased firm profits) and life insurance (the value of which will improve as investment performance improves, at least in the case of whole life insurance). These excluded categories are more broadly held than stock and non-retirement mutual fund assets. Nevertheless, Baker’s argument largely stands, though his assertion that increased antitrust enforcement would combat increasing economic inequality is asserted without any empirical support. At a minimum, for example, Baker’s point relies on the Panglossian assumption that antitrust enforcement is accurately targeted at firms with market power, which is a questionable assumption. **There is significant historical evidence that antitrust enforcement in practice includes false positives** – that is, enforcement resulting in prohibiting conduct that does not involve the anticompetitive exercise or acquisition of market power.132 Antitrust enforcement can also be used as a tool by firms with market power to entrench it by disadvantaging rivals.133 As discussed, Furman & Orszag take a more empirical approach, arguing that “a rising share of firms are earning super-normal returns on capital…workers at those firms are both producing and sharing in those super-normal returns, driving up wage inequality…the high returns to labor and capital at those firms reduces labor mobility by discouraging workers from leaving firms that earn higher rents.”134 In support, Furman & Orszag provide evidence that returns of S&P 500 firms have become more skewed over time. Furman & Orszag also outline that the return on invested capital has also become highly skewed at least since the 1990s. While such evidence suggests some implications, there is no implication of antitrust concerns because these results could be indicative of firms engaging in greater risk-taking or the presence of superior products.135 Furman & Orszag use metrics that bear little resemblance to actual antitrust markets, and do not provide any evidence that increases in antitrust enforcement would actually reduce these metrics, much less have any discernable effect on levels of economic inequality. Marc Jarsulic et al. also point out that income inequality is rising. They argue that firms with “dominant market power” raise prices and earn supra-normal economic rents while simultaneously lower the real incomes of consumers.136 Jarsulic et al. argue that rent extraction in the U.S. economy is on the rise because of “unchallenged market power.”137 Jarsulic et al. outline other undesirable results, including higher barriers to entry for new firms, stifled innovation, degraded product quality, reduced prices paid to workers and suppliers, and increased influence with government officials.138 To reverse these effects, the authors argue that the antitrust laws can be employed, but have not been deployed vigorously enough over the last few decades. Sean F. Ennis, Pedro Gonzaga, and Chris Pike take a calibration approach to examine the effect of increasing concentration on inequality.139 Their calibration model makes the following assumptions: 1) “Market power for each country can be approximated by the difference between the average mark-up (across all sectors) in the country and a minimum mark-up that reflects the best-practices of most competitive economies”; (2) “The marginal propensity to save from increased income arising from lower prices is constant across wealth groups.”140 The authors assert that “this assumption simplifies the solution to the model, but does not prevent the average saving rate from varying across wealth groups”; (3) “Market power gains are distributed in proportion to the current net wealth distribution.” According to Ennis et al., “this reflects the observations that corporate income and capital gains are distributed via business ownership, so that those with the largest wealth shares…will, in proportion, receive the largest share of the profits”; and (4) “The price of different baskets of goods will be inflated by market power in an equal percentage.”141 According to the authors, “this implies that product for the poor and products for the wealthy will be equally affected by market power. To the extent that the poor are more exposed to monopolization, the model provides conservative, lower-bound estimates.”142 Based on their study, Ennis et al., conclude that market power may contribute significantly to economic inequality; “violations of competition law, government-created barriers to entry or natural monopolies may be significant sources of market power”; the authors “do not suggest that competition law and policy should specifically target inequality” instead they “suggest that reduced inequality is a beneficial by-product of government actions and policies to reduce illegitimate market power.”143 Although these commentators uniformly suggest that increased antitrust enforcement could have beneficial effects on inequality, **none directly examine this proposition using empirical data**. The underlying economic logic of the claims that lax antitrust has resulted in increased inequality is fairly simple. In the absence of antitrust enforcement, firms gain market power, reduce output, raise prices, and generate monopoly profits, which enrich shareholders. Because shareholders tend to live in the top end of the wealth and income distributions, inequality increases. Further, because of rising prices, those in the lower end of the distributions (where a greater fraction of income and wealth are devoted to consumption) are made relatively worse off, increasing welfare inequality as well. The question is whether this simple account of the problem is correct. **There is little systematic empirical evidence of a link between antitrust enforcement and inequality**. Below are some preliminary empirical analyses of the effect of antitrust enforcement on measures of inequality. Regardless of whether we examine income, wealth, or (in our view, the more relevant) consumption distribution, there is no evidence that metrics of enforcement are related to inequality. While these results do not guarantee that increased antitrust enforcement could not affect inequality, they do suggest that proposals for increased enforcement to address inequality concerns are premature and potentially misguided.

#### Wealth concentration – newest Census data goes neg

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**Newly released data** on concentration ratios from the U.S. Census Bureau’s 2017 Economic Census provides a way to assess claims about increasing concentration by comparing it to 2002 data. The U.S. Census Bureau released the concentration of largest firms for 2017 on December 3, 2020.2 **The data largely rebuts these claims**: Just 35 of 851 industries (4 percent) were highly concentrated, with the top-4 firms (the C4 concentration ratio) holding more than 80 percent of the market. In 2017, 80 percent of U.S. business output was from industries with low levels of concentration, with that share increasing from 62 percent in 2002. Fifty-five percent of industries increased concentration between 2002 and 2017; 45 percent decreased. The average C4 ratio increased by just 1 percentage point between 2002 and 2017, from 34.3 percent to 35.3 percent, while the average C8 ratio increased even less, from 44.1 percent to 44.7 percent. There was a slight negative correlation between the C4 level in 2002 and the percentage point change in C4 between 2002 and 2017. Among the industries with increases in concentration, only one-third increased by greater than 10 percentage points. Of the 20 industries showing the greatest increase in the C4 ratio from 2002 to 2017, only 30 percent had C4 ratios above 80 percent in 2017. Of the 115 industries with a C4 ratio of 60 percent or more in 2002, the majority got less concentrated, with the average C4 declining 4 percentage points. For every advanced technology industry with a C4 ratio over 80 percent, there were 10 with a C4 ratio below 50 percent. Producer prices rose less from 2002 to 2017 in industries with higher levels of concentration than overall prices. In short, to paraphrase Mark Twain, the reports of the death of competition are greatly exaggerated. THE NEW TRUISM: MONOPOLY IS RAMPANT The “fact” of rising concentration, and even monopoly, has been picked up and commented on by a larger number of pundits and commentators. Brookings’ analyst David Wessel wrote, “There’s no question that most industries are becoming more concentrated. Big firms account for higher shares of industry revenue and are reaping historically large profits relative to their investment.”3The Economist concluded that two-thirds of the economy’s roughly 900 industries had become more concentrated between 1997 and 2012.4 Former chairman of the Council of Economic Advisors Jason Furman testified that market concentration has increased since 1997.5 Paul Krugman wrote that “growing monopoly power is a big problem for the U.S. economy.”6 New York Times columnist Eduardo Porter stated, “There is plenty of evidence that corporate concentration is on the rise.”7 Economist Joe Stiglitz wrote that a “deeper and more fundamental problem is the growing [concentration of market power](https://www.project-syndicate.org/onpoint/disruption-concentration-and-the-new-economy-by-raghuram-rajan-2019-01).”8 The neo-Brandeisian advocacy group Open Markets has referred to “America’s concentration crisis.”9 And the Center for American Progress has written about “America’s monopoly problem.”10 These claims have motivated hearings and potential legislation to reform antitrust. Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), chairwoman of the Senate Subcommittee on Competition Policy, Antitrust, and Consumer Rights, wrote, “We are seeing higher levels of market concentration across our economy, partially driven by waves of corporate consolidation.”11 Congressman David Cicilline (D-RI), chairman of the House Antitrust Subcommittee, has warned that America has a “monopoly problem.”12 Lina Khan, who has been nominated by the Biden Administration to serve as an FTC commissioner, has alleged that the United States faces a “sweeping market power problem” as a result of relaxing antitrust law.13 It has become an article of faith that concentration has increased to problematic levels and that this supports wholesale and even radical changes in U.S. antitrust policy. The Biden-Sanders unity task force released a list of recommendations in August 2020. They proposed a “Tackling Runaway Corporate Concentration,” which emphasized, Democrats are concerned about the increase in mega-mergers and corporate concentration across a wide range of industries, from hospitals and pharmaceutical companies to agribusiness and retail chains. We will direct federal regulators to review a subset of the mergers and acquisitions that have taken place since President Trump took office, prioritizing the pharmaceutical, health care, and agricultural industries, to assess whether any have increased market concentration, raised consumer prices, demonstrably harmed workers, increased racial inequality, or reduced competition, and assign appropriate remedies. Democrats will direct regulators to consider potential effects of future mergers on the labor market, on low-income and racially marginalized communities, and on racial equity. And as a last resort, regulators should consider breaking up corporations if they find they are using their market power to engage in anti-competitive activities.14 In other words, it has become an article of faith that concentration has increased to problematic levels and that this supports wholesale and even radical changes in U.S. antitrust policy. Former member of the Council of Economic Advisors under President Obama, Carl Shapiro, summed up this view in 2017: Somehow, over the past two years, the notion that there has been a substantial and widespread decline in competition throughout the American economy has taken root in the popular press. In some circles, this is now the conventional wisdom, the starting point for policy analysis rather than a bold hypothesis that needs to be tested.15 This report tests that hypothesis with Census Bureau data. CENSUS BUREAU CONCENTRATION DATA One way to test this hypothesis is with data. Some scholars have tried to evaluate whether concentration has risen.16 However, antitrust experts question the basics from many of these analyses, because definitions of the relevant market are debatable.17 To be fair, it is difficult to measure market power. Competition can differ at national and local levels.18 Imports have to be considered, which will lower measured concentration in many traded sectors. Potential entry, including from disruptive technologies, also needs to be factored in. And firms can compete with each other even if they are in different industries as defined by the federal government. As such, antitrust law has stressed for the last 40 years that concentration ratios (the share of sales in a particular industry accounted for by a certain number of firms) can never substitute for the detailed economic analysis of specific markets.19 Nonetheless, concentration ratios are a foundational set of data that can be used to look at the overall economy-wide state of and change in concentration and competition. The most common measure is from the U.S. Census Bureau, which as part of its quinquennial economic census releases sales data for the 6-digit NAICS industries (e.g., NAICS code 332913 Residential electric lighting fixture manufacturing) consisting of over 850 industries and details the share of sales of firms accounted for by the top 4, 8, 20, and 50 firms in the industry (known as the C4, C8, C20, etc. ratio). Our choice of granular industry classification (6-digit NAICS industries) is not random. **The more detailed the industry classification for market power analysis, the bette**r. For example, **using 3-digit or 4-digit** NAICS **codes**, which many have done, **is questionable**, as it is difficult to argue that a toaster (NAICS code 335210 Small Electrical Appliance Manufacturing) competes with an oven (NAICS 335220 Major Household Appliance Manufacturing), since both goods are classified in the same 4-digit NAICS code (3352 Household Appliance Manufacturing). Examples of 4-digit versus 6-digit NAICS codes are abundant (e.g., NAICS 333241 Food Product Machinery Manufacturing and 333242 Semiconductor Machinery Manufacturing are both in 3332 Industrial Machinery Manufacturing). Analyzing at the 3-digit level of NAICS code is even more problematic, as it is not imaginable that Animal Food Manufacturing (NAICS code 3111) competes with Dairy Product Manufacturing (NAICS 3115) if the relevant market considered is Food Manufacturing (NAICS 311). Another challenge to an accurate assessment is what to measure, or absolute share numbers of change. Those that claim that monopoly (a misused term, since it implies one firm controls virtually all of a given market) has become a problem simply measure the number of industries with rising concentration. Take an industry wherein the C4 ratio in the base year is 8 percent (each of the top 4 firms has an average of 2 percent of the market). In the most current year, it rises to 12 percent. Now, while the industry has become more concentrated, the top 4 firms average just 3 percent of the market—**far from market power.** Yet, those who want to paint a story of a dangerous growth in monopoly do not bother to mention that increases from a low level to another low level are meaningless from a concentration perspective. For instance, Grullon et al. cited the rise of concentration in Furniture and Home Furnishings retailers (NAICS code 442) within the four largest players as an alarming warning because their share increased 200 percent from 1997 to 2012, yet the concentration went from 6.5 percent to just 19.4 percent.20 In other words, on average, the top four firms had less than 5 percent of the market each. **The real issue is not whether industries are becoming more concentrated; it is whether industries are moving from being unconcentrated to concentrated.** Comparing sectors in one period to the next using Census data requires harmonizing the 6-digit NAICS codes over time, as there is always a change in the classification from one Census to another. Using the concordance available at the U.S. Census Bureau between two immediate Census years, the Information Technology and Information Foundation (ITIF) created a concordance between 2002 and 2017. For example, the industry classification for Internet Publishing and Broadcasting and Web Search Portals (NAICS code 519130) in 2017 included two industries considered in 2002: Internet Publishing and Broadcasting (NAICS code 516110) and Web Search Portals (NAICS code 518112). To combine these two industries in 2002 into one, ITIF used the weighted average of the concentration ratio using total revenue. An additional challenge is that while Census includes all domestic producers, it does not include imports, which take market share from domestic producers. This overstates concentration ratios in most traded goods and services markets and likely overstates the growth because the share of gross domestic product (GDP) imports grew from 13 percent in 2002 to 15 percent in 2017.21 For example, Covarrubias et al. found that the weighted average C8 ratio for high-import manufacturing industries rose by 6.7 percentage points from 1997 to 2012. However, adjusting for imports reduces the rise to just 1.6 percentage points.22 ITIF examined C4 concentration ratios for 2002 and 2017 at the most detailed 6-digit NAICS code level. A C4 concentration ratio of 50 percent, for example, would mean that the top four firms hold an average of 12.5 percent of the market each. While there is no hard-and-fast definition, generally C4 ratios above 80 percent are considered high in concentration, ratios of 50 to 80 percent medium, and below 50 percent low.23 Census collects and reports data on 851 industries for both years. Some industries, such as Construction and Mining, are not listed in one year but are in the other. Some industries do not have sales data because Census does not want to divulge proprietary information.24 Nevertheless, industries covered in this report represent more than 90 percent of the total private sector output in the United States.25 Concentration in 2017 In 2017, 643 industries (76 percent) were unconcentrated with less than a 50 percent C4 ratio (see figure 1). A total of 173 (20 percent) were moderately concentrated with a C4 ratio between 50 percent and 80 percent. **And just** 35 industries (**4 percent) were highly concentrated** with a C4 ratio of 80 percent or more. Even at 80 percent, this means the top four firms had only 20 percent of the market share if they split it into equal shares. Figure 1: Count of C4 concentration in 2017 NAICS codes26 Changes in Concentration: 2002–2017 **On average, concentration increased only 1 percentage point between 2002 and 2017** after taking the simple average across all industries of the differences between C4 from both years (34.3 percent in C4 from 2002 and 35.3 percent in C4 from 2017). Given that industries with C4 ratios below 50 percent are considered unconcentrated, this is a very low number. **The concentration of the eight largest firms (C8) increased even less, from 44.1 to 44.7 percent**. Even considering the eight largest firms, the concentration ratio remained lower than 50 percent. Overall, 467 sectors (**55 percent**) **increased in concentration**, **while** 384 (**45 percent) decreased** (see figure 2). Again, this is hardly evidence of widespread growth of monopoly. Moreover, **among** the sectors that saw an **increase**, **only** 152 (**18 percent of the total) increased by more than 10 percentage points.** [Table Omitted] Another way to assess trends in concentration is by looking at whether the increases in C4 ratio were mostly in industries with already high C4 ratios in 2002. In other words, did the concentrated get even more concentrated? Figure 3 presents this relationship, with the y-axis showing the percentage-point change in the C4 from 2002 to 2017, and the x-axis presenting the level of C4 in 2002. The trend line is negative (correlation coefficient of -0.23), indicating that, **on average, more concentrated industries got less concentrated from 2002 to 2017**. Even the outliers with higher C4 increases were in industries with lower levels of concentration in 2002. With these two outliers removed, the relationship is still negative at the same magnitude (-0.23). [Table Omitted] If policymakers are concerned about the growth of market power, as opposed to simply the growth in concentration, the key is to examine industries exhibiting higher concentration ratios; in this case, with C4 ratios of 60 percent or higher. **Only** 94 industries (**11 percent) saw an increase in concentration that produced a C4 of 60 percent or more** (and even at 60 percent, if each firm held an equal market share, this would mean that each firm had just 15 percent of the market). Looking at the 115 industries that had a C4 ratio of at least 60 percent in 2002, 55 percent saw a reduction in concentration ratio (see figure 4). On average, **these industries saw a decline of 4 percentage points in their C4 ratio.** Thirty-nine industries experienced a reduction of 10 percent or more, and 24 saw a decline of more than 0 percent to 10 percent. In contrast, only 13 percent of the industries showed an increase of more than 10 percentage points. **In other words, more sectors with higher C4 ratios in 2002 lost market share than sectors that gained.** [Table Omitted] Highly Concentrated Industries Some industries clearly got less concentrated, while others got more. Table 1 shows the 20 industries with the greatest increases in C4 ratio. Only 30 percent had C4 ratios above 80 percent in 2017. And even for some of them, there was little risk of firms exerting much market power. For example, industries such as other performing arts companies, luggage and leather goods stores, geothermal power generation, and paint and wallpaper stores all face significant competition from firms in other industries such as movie theaters, department stores, and natural gas power generation. For some other industries, the U.S. trade balance deteriorated, meaning that imports took a larger share and provided more competition.30 This includes newsprint and electrical lighting manufacturing, in which the United States is the largest importer (importing 20 percent of the total international trade for both industries).31 For other industries, such as taxi service and travel agencies, the Internet enabled significant economies of scale and cost reductions, such as with the rise of Uber and Lift for taxis and Travelocity and Expedia for travel. Finally, in a number of industries, technology has created new competitors for these industries. Over-the-air radio stations now compete with satellite radio and smartphones. The dramatic improvement of digital cameras has reduced the market for photofinishing laboratories, likely having caused consolidation as the market shrank. [Table Omitted] Table 2 lists the 20 industries with the highest concentration ratios in 2017. Fourteen were highly concentrated in 2002, with six joining them by 2017. And of the industries with a C4 ratio above 80 percent, many of them were naturally concentrated. For example, it’s hard to imagine why it would be more optimal for the guided missile and space vehicle industry, computer storage device manufacturing, or aircraft manufacturing to be less concentrated because of the enormous investments needed in research and development (R&D) and production to be successful. Others, such as HMO medical centers and warehouse clubs, and home centers, may be concentrated, but faced competition from other industries (doctors’ offices and other retailers, respectively). Other industries on the list faced technological competition. Passenger car rental faced competition from ride-sharing and also from personal rental companies such as Zip Car. [Table Omitted] Advanced Technology Industries Anti-corporate populists have taken particular aim at technology sectors, claiming that **“Big Tech,”** particularly the Internet industry, is concentrated. However, the number of advanced technology industries with high levels of concentration is modest (see figure 5). Using the Brookings Institution list of 4-digit NAICS code of advanced technology industries, ITIF constructed a list of advanced technology industries at the 6-digit NAICS code level.34 Of 135 industries, only 8 have C4 ratios above 80 and 10 times more have C4 ratios below 50. **Moreover, there were more unconcentrated tech sectors in 2017 than in 2002.** The argument that tech sectors are becoming concentrated does not hold. [Table Omitted] Selected industries, media, and pundits have singled out a number of industries for scrutiny for excess concentration. Table 3 lists some of these industries. In reality, the C4 ratio fell in some, including in automobiles, biotech drugs, computers, and semiconductors in manufacturing; and cable programming, other motion pictures, and software in services. Some industries, such as motion picture and video distribution and sound recording studios did see increased market share, albeit from low levels to still-low levels. For example, even with the rise of Amazon, the C4 ratio of electronic shopping and mail-order houses increased from 24 percent to just 37 percent. The C4 ratio for some industries did increase, but by modest amounts, such as for wired telecommunication carriers (58 to 64 percent) and music publishers (55 to 57 percent). Or they increased to modest levels: pharmaceuticals from 36 to 44 percent and hardware stores from 13 percent to 31 percent. The Internet publishing and broadcasting and web search portals industry did increase, but only to 54 percent. Assuming an equal division of the market, the four largest firms would have had just 13.5 percent of the market. And even in some industries wherein concentration increased and other industries provide little competition, such as scheduled passenger air transportation, the increase in concentration was beneficial. From 1995 to 2016, airline productivity grew four times faster than the overall U.S. economy, and prices rose one-third as fast as the rate of inflation. Investment in capital equipment went up faster than the U.S. average, and profits were below the overall U.S. corporate average.36 Likewise, the C4 ratio in the wireless telecommunications industry increased 63 percent to 86 percent. But this has does not appear to have come at the expense of consumer or overall economic welfare. Productivity in the sector grew 84 percent faster than overall non-farm business productivity.37 The productivity growth rate after the year 2000, when concentration was increasing, was more than three times faster than in the 13 years prior.38 Moreover, capital investment doubled in inflation-adjusted terms.39 And according to Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) data, nominal prices fell by 31 percent from 2011 to 2020.40 Finally, the C4 ratio in the taxi industry increased significantly to relatively high levels, from 18 to 77 percent, but this was presumably because of the entry of car-sharing companies such as Uber and Lyft, where the entry has increased service and held down prices, which led to consumer surplus of $6.8 billion just for all American UberX users in 2015.41 [Table Omitted] Share of Business Output It’s not enough to analyze individual sectors. It is important to also analyze the sectors as a share of the overall economy. To be sure, some sectors are more concentrated. But a key question is what share of the economy these increasing concentration sectors constitute. Figure 6 shows the percentage of sectors with low, medium, and high C4 in business output in 2002 and 2017.43 **Sectors with a low concentration ratio, below 50 percent, had a much higher share in business output than medium** (50–80 percent) **and high** (over 80 percent). Furthermore, low concentration industries became a larger share of the economy. While the low concentration sectors constituted 62 percent of the economy in 2002, by 2017, their share had grown to more than 80 percent. Inverse patterns occurred in medium and high levels of concentration. The share of economic output from highly concentrated industries fell from 10.6 percent in 2002 to 4.7 percent in 2017. In short, the U.S. economy is not becoming monopolistic, filled with giant rapacious firms gobbling up market share. Most of the economy is unconcentrated, and that share has been increasing. But surely the firms in the few concentrated industries must be making rapacious profits. It is to that we now turn. Concentration and Prices Surely concentration must enable firms to charge higher prices. In fact, **of the 36 industries with a C4 ratio of over 70 percent** in 2017, and for which there was data available on price changes from the BLS producer price index (PPI), 22 (**61 percent) saw price increases** from 2002 to 2017 that were **lower than the economy-wide PPI**. In fact, the correlation between the C4 ratio and the change in PPI was actually negative (-0.31), meaning the more concentrated the industry, the lower the price increase. Concentration and Profitability Surely concentration must enable the firms to earn higher profits. To assess this, ITIF combined aggregated profit data from the Corporation Complete Reports from the Internal Revenue Service with the Census C4 data at 3-digit NAICs code, as this was the level of aggregation in the IRS data set.45 ITIF was able to get data on profits and concentrations for 80 industries.46 ITIF used the measure of the ratio of net income over total receipts for profits. There is essentially no relationship between industry profitability and the concentration ratio in 2017 (a correlation coefficient of 0.04). [Table Omitted]

1. Wen Liu, ““Complicity and Resistance: Asian American Body Politics in Black Lives Matter,” October 2018 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Will Carless, “Proud Boys Saw Wave of Contributions from Chinese Diaspora Before Capital Attack,” January 4, 2021, https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2021/05/04/proud-boys-chinese-americans-community-support-donations/7343111002/ [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
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